“Interactive media technologies challenges and Risks among Youth in Sweden”. – 11 children’s and 11 parents’ thoughts and experiences about Internet and video games.

Angelica Ortiz de Gortari and Rawia Eltayeb
Preface

This final paper is the result of the work carried out by Angelica Ortiz de Gortari and Rawia Eltayeb.

Angelica wrote and edited the major part of the paper introduction and background, theoretical framework, definitions and main concepts, literature review, most parts of the methodology, results analysis, discussion and final comments. She also did four of the eleven interviews.

Rawia’s main contribution was to establish contact with parents, carry out seven interviews, and make the decision to perform a qualitative study instead of a quantitative one. She also contributed to some parts of the methods section: nature of the qualitative study, establish contact with parents, ethic issues, evaluation, results summary, contents and references format.

The results section was reported by Angelica and Rawia.
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Abstract

Interactive media technologies like the Internet and video games have opened new avenues of opportunity for many, yet at the same time they represent new challenges and risks, especially for young people.

In our study, eleven families were interviewed. Their perceptions, experiences and risk management are described in this paper. The children we interviewed were not high media consumers. The vast majority appeared to have a positive attitude towards the Internet, and had learned to handle common interactive media challenges and risk. Nonetheless some online behaviors which we consider risky were indeed commonly practiced. The most commonly encountered risk experienced by children in our study was exposure to undesirable content. Yet, in a group of eleven children two had been victim of cyberbullying and one had been harassed by some classmate or family member. The most recurrent negative comments parents made about the internet or video games and children were about the danger of being contacted by strangers, as well as the excessive use of the interactive media technologies.

Keywords: Internet risk, online challenges, online dangers, video games, digital competence and parents, children and internet
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1. Structure of the Study

The paper will be structured in the following way: In part one, the structure of the study followed by part two introduction and background and our perspective of the study and theoretical framework. The third part is the literature review which is based on the following: Media technology use among youth and internet safety context in Europe, main concerned about interactive media technologies, problematic exposure and online practice, online activities associated with higher risk, who appear to be more vulnerable?, parental role and the conclusion literature review. Part four include: Aims of the study. Part five the qualitative research methods chosen for the interviews is described; the questions and the sample as well as the questions for the interview are also presented. Also, different considerations that have to be taken into account when analysing and interpreting the results are explained. Part six presents the results from the interviews, which structured according to the areas of research. Finally a discussion and final comment is presented in part seven and eight, where the main points of the interviews are described. The questions for the interviews with children and parents and the letter are attached as appendices.

2. Introduction

2.1 Background

Today, young generations grow up having great contact with different kinds of interactive media technologies and digital media. They are easily acquiring “digital literacy” and live in a digital world to which adults are only ‘naturalized citizens’.

Tapscott (1998) talks to us about the meaning of growing up in a digital environment, referring to youth as the “Net Generation”. Children are socializing in a hybrid virtual space, learning in innovative ways, creating a new language and practicing multicultural values. (Tapscott, 1998). The main characteristics of the “N-Gen” culture are: independence, emotional and intellectual openness, inclusion, free expression and strong views, innovative, preoccupation with maturity, pleasure by the investigation, immediacy, sensitivity to corporate interest, authentication, and trust. (Tapscott, 1998 pp. 62-69).

As we examine the socio-cultural challenges now arising as a direct result from phenomenon associated with new interactive technologies, we can observe that old and new media share similar and diverse characteristics. As a cultural phenomenon however, it is interesting to highlight that both have raised concerns and created hopes within different societies, and most importantly, as Buckingham (2004) suggests, it is quite relevant how media technology is associated with and is influenced by childhood myths. Usually, the practices of youth have been perceived by adults as threatening or challenging. Some view the child’s participation in media technologies as participative, creative and spontaneous while others see the child’s role as vulnerable, innocent and one to be protected. (Buckingham, 2004).
Debates on new media technologies or Information Communications Technologies (ICT) diverge into two distinct directions. Some idealize media technology, adopting a utopian perspective, while others experience a “moral panic” as defined by Stanley Cohen (1972 in Buckingham, 2004) and have a dystopian outlook.

Survey results suggest that gaps between parents and children happens in different ways: Internet expertise, awareness of risk, acknowledgement of domestic regulations in place, and in what parents believe their children are doing versus what they are actually doing. (Livignstone and Bober 2005).

Anxieties about the safety, health and balanced use of interactive media technologies can be classified in three main groups: worries about the exposition to unwanted material, online victimization and the practice of dangerous online behaviors. What activities do young people do online? With whom do young people establish relationships? How much time do young people invest in online activities? What online behaviors do young people demonstrate? What is the impact of the online interaction in the life and in youth development?

2.2. Our perspective

Our analysis and understanding of online phenomena is based in the perspective that the use of internet and video games is positive; it is a crucial part of the young culture. Nevertheless, the interactive nature of these technologies, the great quantity of activities, the unsolicited reception of stimulus and the easy access to huge quantity different types of information presents new challenges. Young people can be very savvy using new technologies but they need to be able to protect themselves from psychological and physical harm.

To date, there is little empirical research carried out on children in relation to online safety issues. Commonly, most studies have consisted of quantitative research conducted in the USA or UK. Some Swedish studies have addressed certain questions in relation to internet safety, but we are not aware of any academic study made in Sweden specifically about internet risk and challenges.

The primary aim of our qualitative research is The main aim is to try to achieve a deeper understanding of the online interactions of young people between 11 and 16 years old, and the way youth and parents manage and experience risks and challenges related with the use of the Internet and video games. More specifically: What are the differences or similarities between children and parents in their: Online activities, digital literacy, Internet and/or video games perception, and management of risks? Which online challenges and risks are more commonly encountered by young people? How do young people react, manage, and confront online risks and challenges and if Is there a relationship between intensive use of the Internet and/or video games and encounters with risk.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Our study is based in a theoretical approach that considers children to have “a natural and spontaneous creativity, which is released by the machine” (Buckingham, 2000 in Buckingham 2003). “Young people are active agents who can manipulate, adapt, create, and disseminate ideas and products through communication technologies. (Berson and Berson,2005). According to Tapscott (1998), the digital literacy possessed by youth has given power to children in their relations with adults as well as autonomy in the world. Children are authorities on the internet.
(Rettie, 2002). Also, technological modern developments have contributed to the democratization of the family, especially in countries that are pioneers in Information Communication Technologies (ICT), such as Sweden. The domestication of media used by youth can be seen across “diverse individuals versus socially stratified culture, and nationally versus global identities and community” (Livignstone and Bovill, 2001: 326). The anxieties about “the solitary nature of new media use is contrasted by worries about lost community traditions and values”. (Livignstone and Bovill, 2001:327).

More specifically in relation to our aim the intensive or high levels of online participation or internet use has been associated with online risk (Michell, et al., 2003; Mediarådet, 2008). But, the simple use of internet cannot predict risk. (Enhancing Child Safety & Online Technologies, 2008 for Internet & Society at Harvard University, 2008).

From the development perspective, Adersen (2002) argues in relation to the use of the internet by youth that “the multiple sensory inputs are demanding on cognitive resources and can overwhelm children’s capacity to engage in thoughtful decision making (Andersen, 2002 in Berson and Berson 2005). At an early age, children are not aware of the risks, and they require adult supervision. During adolescence, a child’s ability to make life choices is still under development (Berson and Berson, 2005). In fact, adolescents have especially been often considered as vulnerable to risky behaviours like the consumption of drugs or alcohol (e.g Hawkins, 1992).

However, some of the online behaviors performance by children as well as adolescents classified as risky behaviors should be better classified as ‘online challenging behaviors’, since these online behaviors are commonly practice by youth today and in the most cases these behaviors are not associated with negative consequences. Many of these behaviors are encouraged or reinforced by the very structural characteristics of the virtual space, and sometimes the manifestation of certain behaviors is necessary in order to participate with others in cyberspace and enjoy the full benefits of online applications (i.e., publish photos in social networks, chat, interact or build associations or groups with strangers in video games).

Before continue with the literature review we will define some online risk concepts relevant in our study.

**2.4 Definitions of the main online risk categories**

In this study online risks have being divided in three main categories: Content risk due to the possibility of exposure to unwanted information, contact risk associated with online victimization (which includes online sexual victimization and interpersonal victimization), and dangerous online behaviors.

**Exposure to problematic content** can easily happened online since it is difficult to control what information the user receives while surfing the web or even opening E-mail or instant messages. Pornography, racism, fascination with violence and other antisocial attitudes can be accessed as primary content in web pages or as advertisements in chat rooms, forums, social networks sites and others popular places accessed by young people. (Wolak, et al., 2003).
Online victimization can be categorized as ‘online interpersonal victimization’ and ‘online sexual victimization’ (Ybarra, et.al., 2007). Experiencing multiple types of victimizations can also be called polyvictimization (Ybarra, et.al., 2007). Online solicitation or online sexual solicitation and approaches can be understood “as requests to engage in sexual activities” (e.g. cybersex, sexual talk, offering personal sexual information that was unwanted, and even whether wanted (Finkelhor, Wolak 2007 & Mitchell, 2001). It can include approaches and sexual harassment, and unwanted exposure to sexual material. (Wolak et al. 2006). This last one can be considered as victimization when is use for target or seduce a specific victim. Victimization can result in for example child pornography, possession, distribution or trade (Barnardos, 2004) or in aggressive sexual solicitation when it involves offline contact with the perpetrator by telephone or in person. (Wolak, et al, 2006).

The main online personal victimization is cyberbullying and it is defined as “an overt, intentional act of aggression towards another person online” (Ybarra and Mitchell 2004 in Ybarra, et.al., 2007a) and usually is a practice that takes place during some period of time. Operationally, it can be defined as “having been ignored, disrespected, called names, threatened, picked on, made fun of, or having had rumors spread by others.” (Patchin and Hinduja, 2006). It can be semi-public or public (Enhancing Child Safety & Online Technologies, 2008) and can take place in text messages, Phone calls (via mobile phone), Email, Chat-room, instant messaging, websites (Ybarra, et.al., 2007a); picture/video clips (via mobile phone cameras). The difference with online harassment is that harassment doesn’t involve the spread rumors.

Online risk or challenging behaviors has been defined in this paper as when a person becomes actively involved in online activities that expose or make them vulnerable to experience different risk levels or challenges. (e.g., chatting with “strangers”, revealing personal information online, visiting pornography sites, engaging in sexual activities like cybersex remove, engage in e-bullying, illegal practices or getting engages with controversial groups). Disclosure of personal information online includes either posting or sending personal information online. Posting information can be defined as displaying one’s real name, telephone number, school name, age or year born, or pictures of oneself online. (Ybarra, et al., 2007).

In the next diagram subcategories are outlined for each of the main classifications.
Figure 1. Categories of online risks
3. Literature Review

In the next section we will review shortly the media technology use by youth in Sweden, some of the previous research made about the online risks organize according the three categories of online risk in our study, as well as we will present some data about the digital literacy and the manage of online risk by parents.

3.1. Media technology use among youth and Internet safety context in Europe

3.1.1 Internet safety in Europe

There are different projects and organizations whose main objective is to promote the responsible and the safe use of the internet in Europe. Specifically in Sweden, Mediarådet, the Swedish Media Council is a committee under the Ministry of Culture. The Council is an expert organization on children and media in Sweden, and its aim is to protect children and minors from possible harmful effects of media content and use. The Council raises awareness of safety issues and promotes dialogue between children and adults.

Other organizations in Sweden have implemented various types of campaigns, projects or proposals to promote, motivate or encourage the safe, positive and healthy use of media technologies. Among these Bris, Friends, Staten Folkhälso Institutet, Surfalung, and UR.

3.1.2 Use of media technologies by youth

In Sweden, almost every child has access to the internet at home, and children begin to be familiar with computers at an early age. One in five 3-year-olds and one in two 5-year-olds have started using the Internet. Also, it looks like internet use has been on the rise in the recent years. (Findahl & Zimic, 2008).

A survey by Mediarådet (2008) reported that television is the more use common media, 78 percent of youth watch TV every day. Nevertheless, internet use has increased in 2008. More than 62 percent of youth between 12 and 16 years, and 30 percent of children ages 9 to 12 years old use the internet every day. According to the World Internet Institute survey (2008), the population between 14 and 18 years old use the internet every day, although those between 19 to 25 years old invest more time to the internet. The internet is a medium which 18 percent of children and youth are using three or more hours in an ordinary day. (Mediarådet, 2008).

3.2. Problematic Exposure

3.2.1. Exposure to problematic material

The Internet has changed the way the consumption of pornography takes place. People have greater possibility to access pornography through their own initiative or accidentally. (Mediarådet 2006).
UK going online research (2003) made with English population found that the 57 percent of 9 to 19 years old, have come into contact with online pornography. They encounters with pornography had happened in different ways. The most common was in pop-up advert, open porn site accidentally when looking for something else, in junk mail. Also 22 percent of 9-19 year old daily and weekly users have accidentally ended up on a site with violent or gruesome pictures and 9 percent on a site that is hostile or hateful to a group of people. (Livignstone and Bober 2005). Additionally, a national survey of risk, impact and prevention conducted by Michaell et, al. (2003) found that using the internet intensively, taking risk online, going to chat rooms, and using the computer in other people’s homes are the most predictive behaviors associated with exposure to sexual material on the internet. (Michell, et al., 2003).

3.2.2. Exposition to advertising and consumption of virtual items

Children and youth are constantly exposed to different types of marketing, not only by visiting web pages, but also through the practice of their favorite hobbies. Virtual online communities and video games include exposition of real life marketing inside the virtual settings. “Some communities transform children’s play into a way of gathering information”. (Chung and Grimes, 2005).

New kinds of games and virtual communities come into the picture when the user spends money to enhance the gaming experience (e.g. subscriptions, purchasing virtual items). Many of these virtual spaces are based on a real economic infrastructure where users Real Trade money (RTM) in order to buy, sell, and exchange virtual items or virtual money. (Ortiz, A, 2007). Parents have complained about some communities because they do not feel there is proper control of purchases and that the maximum purchase is too high. (Kvarntorp, 2007).

3.3. Online victimization

3.3.1. Online Sexual victimization

Online sexual solicitation appears to be more common in adolescent than children. (Enhancing Child Safety & Online Technologies, 2008for Internet & Society at Harvard University, 2008).

The Youth Internet Safety Survey, conducted by Crimes Against Children Research Center at the University of New Hampshire interviewed 1,501 youth ages 10 to 17 years that frequently use the internet found that the 19 percent of youth (77 percent were 14 years or older) have received an unwanted sexual solicitation via the web; only 24 percent of teens told a parent about the solicitation (29 percent told a peer); and 75 percent of teens were not worried by the sexual online solicitation. (Finkelhor, Wolak, and Mitchell, 2001).

In the Mediarådet report made mainly with Swedish. The 3 percent of children report that they have sometimes talked with someone about sex without wanting it, 1 percent say that it happened frequently and 12 percent report that it had happened occasionally.

The use of social media like like IM, chat rooms, social networks sites, email, and blogs have been correlated with online solicitation or have been harassed, yet these are common social media used
among all young people. Specifically, chatting has been positively correlated with online solicitations, cybersex (Lamb, 1998) and harassment. (Enhancing Child Safety & Online Technologies, 2008 for Internet & Society at Harvard University, 2008).

When the child received an online sexual solicitation, 69 percent block the person, 15 percent spoke with a friend, 11 percent spoke with his/her parents, 5 percent answer or chat with the person, 4 percent spoke with his/her sister or brother, 48 percent did nothing because they do not mind and 2 percent do not give any response to this question. (Mediarådet, 2008).

3.3 2. Interpersonal Online Victimization

Violence among peers in the school is a serious social problem. (Charach et al., 1995; Clarke and Kiselica, 1997; Hoover and Juul, 1993; Hoover and Olsen, 2001 in Li, 2006). Harassment among peers has become unlimited thanks to the youth’s access to the modern technologies. Bullying is occurred in a new territory, online (Li, 2006).

Studies suggest that offline bullying usually increases in middle school (Devoe et al. 2005 in Enhancing Child Safety & Online Technologies, 2008 for Internet & Society at Harvard University, 2008), but online harassment happens later and continues into high school (Wolak et al. 2006).

Ungar & Medier 2008 from Mediarådet, conducted a postal questionnaire with 1,000 parents and 1,000 youth and found that the 14 percent had been bullied in at some occasion, the 18 percent of youth (12 to 16) and 9 percent of children (9 to 12) had been victims of cyberbullying. More than 20 percent of parents report that their child has been exposed to bullying or that someone has been mean to their child on the Internet. (Medirådet, 2008).

Among the consequences reported from those who have been harassed, anger and frustration is commonly reported as an emotional response. 60 percent of victims report have negative consequences from online behavior at school, at home, or with friends. (Patchin and Hinduja, 2006).

3.4. Dangerous online behavior

Not only the exposition to unwanted material has been consider as a serious risk, but also the participation and the facility to become a member of controversial groups. Some youth may identify strongly with this sort of material and they may feel validated and encouraged to practice it. (Wolak, et al., 2003).

Ybarra et, al. (2007) studied found that “engaging in many different kinds of online risky behaviours explain online interpersonal victimization more than engaging in specific individual behaviours”. Interestingly, according to Ybarra et al., (2007) engage in online risky behaviour take place while youth is using the internet with friends or peers. (40 percent).

3.4.1. Publishing personal information & related concerns

According to ‘UK Going online survey’ (2003) 46 percent of the children in their study reported giving out personal information to someone that they met online.
The analysis conducted by Hinduja and Patchin (2008) in ‘Myspace.com’ found that youth usually include different types of information in their public profile at Myspace.com. 8.8 percent revealed their full name, 57 percent included a picture, 27.8 percent listed their school, and 0.3 percent provided their telephone number. Yet, according with the authors the majority of youth appear to be using the web site responsibly. (Hinduja and Patchin, 2008).

Risks associated with posting personal information include: identity theft, where youth publish personal information that can compromise their future (e.g., to disclose information on the use of drugs or some type of criminal activity as a youth that can be discovered by future employers).

(Moscardell and Divine, 2007) Also, posting personal information is considered to expose youth to victimization by child molesters, although it seems that there is not empirical evidence that supports this concern (Wolak, et al., 2008). Additionally, studies suggest that youth who have online profiles are more likely to be contacted online by strangers, but none of them report frightening or uncomfortable experiences. (Lenhart & Madden, 2007; Smith, 2007 in Wolak, et al., 2008).

3.4.2. Bullies

Studies have often found an overlap between cyberbullying offenders and victims (Beran and Li 2007; Kowalski and Limber 2007; Ybarra and Mitchell 2004a in Enhancing Child Safety & Online Technologies, 2008 for Internet & Society at Harvard University, 2008). Although, it is recognized that adults bullied minors, it is not precisely known how common it is. (Wolak et al, 2006). Other studies point out that minors are usually harassed by people of their same age. (Hinduja and Patchin 2009 in Enhancing Child Safety & Online Technologies, 2008 for Internet & Society at Harvard University, 2008). Males are more likely to be bullies and cyberbullies than females. (Li, 2006).

3.4.3. Socialization online and concerns

An Internet connection allows new ways to establish fellowship and support previous ‘based in real life’ relationships. Chats, forums, web pages and the most recent web 2.0 technologies allow people to interchange information and socialize in very creative ways. A Swedish study reveal that to be a member of one or several virtual communities is common. Approximately 55 percent of the youth 12 to 16 years old is member in some virtual community. The 67 percent of the girls and the 42 percent of the boys are member of one of these communities. Bilddagboken, Lunarstorm, Playahead. They also usually keep contact with their friends via chat or instant messenger. (Findahl & Žimic, 2008).

The Mediärådet survey found that, 9 percent of youth have met someone in person that they had only met online. Access to an Internet connection at home and high levels of internet use have been associated with the engagement in online relationships. (Wolak, et al., 2003).

Anxieties about youth’s online relationships tend to be regarding to the contact and socialization with strangers, and also regarding the use of technological tools to harm or molest someone as well as to be bulled. Although, according to Wolak et al (2002) “The majority of Internet-initiated connections involving youth appear to be friendship related, nonsexual, and formed between similar-aged youth and known to parents” (Wolak et al. 2002).
3.5 Video Games fears and controversy

Video games as the most immersive mass media to date, are not solely devices of entertainment, but are being used didactically and therapeutically. (Ortiz, 2007). Additionally, it has been corroborated their positive cognitive effects in relation to the improvement of spatial abilities and reaction time. (Lager, and Bremberg, 2005). Yet at the same time, “video games present new questions regarding the individual consequences of gaming in terms of the physical and psychological health of the participant, as well as broader social and ethical issues. How is the prolonged immersion in these fantasy worlds impacting the player?” (Ortiz, 2007).

Video game playing has been associated with different types of problematic. But, the prevalence of the most of these problems has not been probed deeply or consistently in most of the studies. (Griffiths, 2007).

- Excessive gaming or problems related to the self-regulation (“video game addiction” (Griffiths 2002)). There is evidence that when is video game playing is done in excess in some cases can be addictive (Griffiths, 2007), especially online video games that required to invest too much time for be played and the ones that do not have game over. (Chappell et.al, 2006 and Grusser, et al in 2007 in Griffiths 2007).
- Violent video game playing has been associated with aggressive play, behavior, feelings and thoughts (Aderson et al, 2007). There are also concerns about playing violent video games that can expose youth to experiences which model and reinforce violent responses, create perceptions of the world as a dangerous place, and identification with the aggressor (Dill and Dill, 1998; Anderson, et al.,2007).
- Health risks have been associated with video game playing, such as for example, obesity. (Vandewater, 2004).
- Also, play video games classified like ‘Mature’ video games by minors can be consider risky even thought video games ratings sometimes have small variation depends of the country. Video games content is rated by the European Game Information (PEGI) in Europe and by the American Entertainment Software Rating Board (ERSB) in America.
- Additionally, because today there has appeared new types of games with a strong economic component, where virtual items have real value a new problematic has appeared such as stealing virtual items, hacking accounts, etc; as well as the competitive components in the most popular video games have give place to practices ‘similar’ to gambling activities (e.g., Cash fragging, Pure skill betting by cash or virtual money, ‘Pot’ betting) (Ortiz 2007a) or playing simulated casino games and casino video games by minors (Ortiz, 2007b).

3.6 Who appear to be more vulnerable?

3.6.1. Children or adolescents?

Experts in the area affirm that Internet digital competence doesn’t guarantee that the individual will avoid the online risks. It seems that risks encountered increases with internet use. (Livingstone and Bober, 2005).
Determinate who is more vulnerable to the online risks is controversial. On one hand, in comparison with the older generations, children appear to be vulnerable to the online risk due to their inexperience and their poor safety practices. On the other hand, adolescents seem to be vulnerable to online risk due to the complexity of their online activities and their engagement in dangerous online behaviors. (Wolak et al. 2008b). They seem to be less “safety-conscious” (Brookshire and Maulhardt 2005; Fleming et al. 2006 in Enhancing Child Safety & Online Technologies, 2008 for Internet & Society at Harvard University, 2008). However, each day children increasingly use the internet (Mediarådet 1998) and this reality can make the youngest group more vulnerable to the exposure of risk over the time. (Michell, et al., 2003).

3.6.2. Gender prevalence in relation to the online practices and risk

It seems that not all the youth are exposed to the same level and types of online risks. According to UKCGO research boys do a more intense use of internet per day, they have more experience using the internet and have higher levels of online skills and self-efficacy. They also experience more risk to unwanted exposition than girls, especially exposition to pornography (Michell, et al., 2003). There is more common that boys seek out pornographic (e.g., Valkenburg 2006; Wolak et al. 2007b; Ybarra and Mitchell 2005 in Enhancing Child Safety & Online Technologies, 2008 for Internet & Society at Harvard University, 2008) violent/racist web pages and they also get engage with other people online (e.g, emailing, instant messaging, downloading music and playing games) as well as design web pages. (UKCGO, 2005). Girls for the other side are more susceptibe to experience contact risk (cyberbulling, talking with strangers, meetings with people from the internet). Usually girls are considering being at most risk than boys for online victimization. (Cheit & Braslow, 2005; Troup-Leasure & Snyder, 2005; Wolak et al., 2004 in Wolak, 2008) and be harassed (Agatston et al. 2007; DeHue et al. 2008; Kowalski and Limber 2007; Lenhart 2007; Li 2005, 2006, 2007b; Smith et al. 2008 in Enhancing Child Safety & Online Technologies, 2008) or cyberbullied specially the youngest. (Mediarådet, 2008). Although, boys who have identified with a different sexual preference or the ones questioning their sexual orientation, may be another population particularly susceptible to sexual online victimization (Wolak, et al., 2008).

3.7. The Parental Role

3.7.1. Digital Divides and Generational Gap

Tapscott (1998) uses the term “generational gap” to explain the differences between the people who have digital literacy and those who do not have it. Generational gap “is measured as the difference (in attitudes) between various age groups at a specific point in time; differences in attitudes of equivalent age groups at different points in time are not considered generational gaps”. (Rettie, 2002). Children usually consider themselves more expert than their parents. Among daily or weekly internet users, 19 percent of parents describe themselves as beginners, compared with only 7 percent of children. (Livignstone and Bober, 2005).

Tapscott (1998) and Alch (2000), children are authorities on the internet. (Rettie, 2002). In fact, Grunwald Associated (2000) conducted a study of 601 children, and found that 62 percent of teenagers reported to have retrieved product information on behalf of a family member. (Rettie, 2002). Today, the challenge of the generational gap is that: “If younger generations acquire new cultural values more quickly, this will create a generational gap until the older generations also acquire these values. Thus, “in periods of cultural change, generational gaps will initially increase”
This statement can probably explain the different perceptions of technology between children and some parents today, as well as some of the misunderstandings and even conflicts between parents and children in relation to the use of technology.

3.7.2 Parental internet perception and, and Risk Management

Parents usually exhibit worries and hopes in relation to technology. The ‘UK Children Go Online’ (2005) survey found that parents appear ambivalent toward the internet, showing positive attitudes (e.g., the internet helps children with school work and discover new things) as well as negative attitudes (e.g., the internet risks the child’s personal information and exposes them to pornographic or violent images) (Livignstone & Bober, 2004). Furthermore, the ‘Young People, New Media’ survey found that 95 percent of parents, mainly middle class parents, are broadly positive about computers, but certainly more enthusiastic for their children than for themselves. (Livingstone, 2007 in Cankaya, et, al., 2008).

Concerns and fearful attitudes toward Internet use has given place to the implementation of rules and strategies by parents in order to control their child’s online practices.

In the UKCGO (2005) filtering and blocking software was only associated with a modest reduction in unwanted exposure, implying that it may help. Various forms of parental supervision were not associated with any reduction in exposure. (Michell, et al., 2003).

The ‘Media & Ungna’ survey found that children and youth usually have rules for using different media but more children than youth have it. In this regard, usually boys have more rules than girls. But when it comes to internet use, girls have more rules than the boys (Mediarådet, 2008).

According to the European Opinion Research Group (Cankaya, et, al., 2008), the rules that families implement related to the use of Internet are: Not allowed to visit some sites, time restrictions on the internet use, not allowed to give personal information, not allowed to meet in person someone he/she only met on the internet, informing someone in the family if there is something on the net making him/her uncomfortable, not allowed to go to chat-rooms and talk with strangers, not allowed to use rude language in e-mails or chat-rooms. (Cankaya, et, al., 2008).

18 percent of parents in the ‘UK Going Online’ survey (2005) report that parents do not know how to help their child use the internet safely. Also, parents underestimate their child’s negative online experiences.. (Livingstone and Bober, 2005).

It seems that the youngest teenagers, and more females than males, reported having Internet safety discussion with their parents. (Michele, 2006). A study made by Mitchel, et al. (2006) in Australia found that youth who have participated in internet safety discussions have better safety practices.

4. Aims

The main aim is to try to achieve a deeper understanding of the online interactions of young people between 11 and 16 years old, and the way youth and parents manage and experience risks and challenges related with the use of the Internet and video games.
• What are the differences or similarities between children and parents in their: Online activities, digital literacy, Internet and/or video games perception, and management of risks?
• Which online challenges and risks are more commonly encountered by young people?
• How do young people react, manage, and confront online risks and challenges.
• Is there a relationship between intensive use of the Internet and/or video games and encounters with risk?

5. Methods

5.1. Choice of Methods

Data was collected through semi-structured qualitative interviews with closed and open questions. Since each question in our guideline was already classified under some category, an analysis of the data was conducted using a “thematic analysis frame approach” (Byrman, 2007:554). In this framework approach, “the data is organized initially into core themes, and then displayed in terms of sub-themes within a matrix and for each case” using different tables to distribute the data. “The data is organizing initially into core themes, and then displayed in terms of subthemes within the matrix and for each case”. (Bryman, 2008: 554). We use different tables for distribute the data. Using the qualitative research approach in our study allow us to establish an open, flexible face to face communication with the participants and we could find out more details about our topic.

According to Bell (1993), there are some major advantages with the qualitative interview that should be taken into consideration when designing and analyzing the outcome of the tone of voice, facial expression, and hesitation would be noticed and marked that could be of vital importance when analyzing and interpreting the final result. Also the fact that the interviewer can follow up ideas, probe responses, investigate motives and feelings, and develop clarify the answers further.

The interviews took place in the home of each family. The home can be considered a ‘natural’ environment since it is where the family lives together. Although, there are some factors that could create interference with our results.

First, since we were strangers, our own presence in the subjects’ home was already a source of interference and certainly we created some degree of reactivity.

Second, while the interviewees were apparently calm during the interview, especially the parents, they were conscious that they had been engaged in an interview, and not in a colloquial conversation, and our discourse may have been less natural than it superficially appeared, as Bryman (2008) points out.

Third, some of the questions bring to light exactly what role parents have with their child, and in some cases this awareness could promote the parent to provide socially acceptable answers.

Fourth, several of the questions directed to the child require that the child reveal to us their online activities and behaviors. Some of this information may be unknown by the parents and being in the
home setting creates a reactivity because the child is aware that her/his parents could be observing and because we are talking with their parents about similar topics.

In three cases, the parent and children were close by while we did the interview with them. It maybe not allowed that especially the children talk to use freely. However, we really do not know how much the parent or child heard us while we were conducting most of the interviews, even when we had the door closed. We were aware of this interference factor before we decided to move forward with the interviews, but because our participants were not contacted through their school the home setting was a more convenient place for the informants, as well the safest environment for the children.

Fifth, Some of the interviews were conducted in a language other than English, so how we phrased the questions may have varied in each interview. However, the nature of qualitative research allows some degree of flexibility. Also, none of the participants is native English speaking, which could have interfered in some way with their answers. Only one interview was simultaneously translated by someone in the family who spoke English.

5.2 Limitations

This is a small study with a restricted scope of findings and the generalization of results is not possible.

According to previous studies, the intense use of the internet has been associated with the exposure to a variety of risks. (Ybarra, et.al., 2007). Due to time constraints, our informants were not previously classified or selected based on the intensity or expertise with which they use the internet and/or video games. As a result, it turns out that most of the children in our sample are not considered to be high frequency users, which was determined by responses to our question about how many hours are invested per week. However, the participants provided us with rich and interesting material, although their answers to some our questions may be limited in comparison with those which could be provided by higher frequency internet and/or video games users.

5.3 Sample

The selection of informants was carried out without consideration whether or not they intensively use the internet or video games. This was due to the short time frame we had to conduct this project.

The majority of youth and parents interviewed were English speaking. Although, some participants did not speak English, in which case the interviews were conducted in Arabic, Spanish or Swedish. The majority of the children were between 12 and 16 years old. Although, exception were made and two participants were 11 years old soon 12. Six boys and 5 girls, the most children had born in Sweden and their parents are immigrant to Sweden. Only two children were not born in Sweden. Three of the parents have a Swedish partner.

Parents were given the option that either the father or mother could participate in the interview. Finally, seven mothers and four fathers, age from 34 years old to 50 year old participated. They were from different countries: Iraq, Bulgaria, Syria, Chile, Turkey, Poland, Sudan, Peru,
Bangladesh and Sweden. Some were middle class and other working class with a mix between parents who have some form of College or University Education and other who do not have formal education. They were living in areas close by Stockholm and Uppsala in Sweden. Most of the parents have more than one child.

5.4 Representation

The interviews answers of parents and children are considered to represent the personal internet and/or video game experiences only of these particular persons at some moment of their life. The interviewed participants do not represent any particular demographic group. Yet, it can neither represent immigrant families in Sweden due to the small number of the participants in this sample. However, the information that they provided to us can suggestively corroborate or refute some of the literature results which were reviewed included in this paper.

5.5 Letters

A letter was sent to the schools. Its purpose was to describe the study and to request the participation of parents in this study. We contacted three different schools by different mediums and asked them to help us distribute the letters to the parents. Only one school cooperated with us but in the end we didn’t receive any answers from the parents. The general reasons the schools gave us were that they didn’t have time to send the letter to the parents or that children were too busy and one said that the parents didn’t speak English.

5.6 Establishment of Contact with parents

Our strategy to find informants was through three different schools, as well as through our blog http://online challengesandrisk.wordpress.com for contacting Swedish residents, both failed. The final participants were contacted via “snow ball selection[1]” (Bryman 2008 pp.184). In some occasion we contacted the child, but in most of the cases we contacted the parents first.

Parents were first contacted by telephone in order to establish whether they were willing to be interviewed. Some of the parents asked for the questions in advance in order to be prepared. Others wanted take a look at the questions before starting the interview so that they could ask their older children for help with the English language. All of the interviews took place in their homes.

Before starting the interviews, we read the letter that was sent out by the schools to the parents. This was done in order to create a closer relationship with the parents and dissipate possible suspicions or fears prior to the interview.

5.7 Ethical issues

Snowball sampling is a form of convenience sample. The researcher makes initial contact with small group of people who are relevant to the research topic and then uses these to establish contact with others. (Bryman 2008 pp.184).
All participants were informed of the purpose of the study and that the participation was voluntary. Before starting the interviews we read the letter that were send to the schools to the parents as to guarantee them a complete anonymity and all their information will be anonymous.

The present study complies to the Swedish Research Council’s guidelines. The research is required to satisfy the research criterion, the research involved must be important and of a high quality, as well as the criterion of protection of the individual, participants, subjects and informants must not be harmed. The latter criterion comprises the rules of requiring information, consent and confidentiality, and stipulating how research data may be used (Vetenskapsrådet, 2007). The participants were also informed about their right to end their participation at any time.

5.8 Interview

The interview technique used in our study is called qualitative semi-structure interviews (Bryman, 2008 pp438.) Which is recognized by its open situation, “having great flexibility and freedom”. The main advantages of the use of interview as a research method are that:

- Allows the participant to describe what is meaningful or important to him or her using his or her own words rather than being restricted to predetermined categories; thus participants may feel more relaxed and candid
- Provides high credibility and face validity; results "ring true" to participants and make intuitive sense to lay audiences
- Allows evaluator to probe for more details and ensure that participants are interpreting questions the way they were intended
- Interviewers have the flexibility to use their knowledge, expertise, and interpersonal skills to explore interesting or unexpected ideas or themes raised by participants
- Sometimes no existing standardized questionnaires or outcome measures are available that are appropriate for what your program is trying to accomplish. (Sewell, ¶)

The main disadvantages are that:

- May be experienced as more intrusive than quantitative approaches; participants may say more than they intended to say, and later regret having done so
- May be more reactive to personalities, moods, and interpersonal dynamics between the interviewer and the interviewee than methods such as surveys
- Training interviewers and conducting interviews can be expensive and time-consuming, because qualititative interviewing requires considerable skill and experience
- Analyzing and interpreting qualitative interviews is much more time-consuming than analyzing and interpreting quantitative interviews
- More subjective than quantitative interviews because the evaluator/researcher decides which quotes or specific examples to report. (Sewell, ¶)

In our study we must mention that the interview question guide was not followed strictly and there could be questions asked not shown in the interview question guide depending on the process of the interview. Therefore the interview question guide was used as a model which supported the interview. Together with the guide questions we use a list of online
behaviors detected in 1497 youth according study made by Ybarra, Mitchell et al. 2007 (See appendices 3). Each interview took approximately 20-30 minutes. Some of the parents needed a long time to elaborate their answers. There was a clear engagement by many of the participant who were talkative and reflective.

5.9 Evaluation

We reach the following points after interviewing all the participants in this project, most of the children did not feel comfortable interviewing them in front of their parents or in their homes. It was the case in three interviews where children and parents where close by. The rest were interviewed by themselves and many seems to feel free and comfortable. Some of the children were a bit shy during the interviews.

Eleven interviews with children and their parents seemed to be a reasonable amount to interview, but lack of time and difficulties stood on the way for find more participants.

5.10 The Questions

Two interview guides where designed; one for the children and other for the parents. Both interview guides included demographic information and questions to know about the children and parents characteristics and basic internet use.

The interview guidelines and questions were built with the intention of targeting different categories of information.

In the children’s interview, the first question series (questions 1 to 5) have the objective of providing information on how regularly they use the internet/video games and to discover specific knowledge of their online activities, and in order to know with what type of internet/video games they participate. The second series of questions (questions 6 and 7) target information on their positive and negative internet use experiences. The third series of questions (questions 8 to 13) focus on discover of how aware the children are regarding the challenges and risks of the internet, including what they have experienced and how they manage the risk. The last series of questions target information on parental role, and how the relationship between parent and child is associated with the use of the internet/video games, and how children perceive the digital competence of their parents.

The parent’s guide line, as well as the youth’s in the first section (questions 1 and 2), retrieve information regarding online activities and the regularity of internet use by parents. The second series is about perceptions or preconceptions about technology among parents (question 3). The third section targets information to learn about the parent’s role, whether it is a passive or active one (question 4 and 5), and to know how parents are involved in relation to the virtual immersion of their children (question 6 and 7). The last section concentrates in how parents manage challenges and risks, and how they support or protect their children. Questions about where to find support, in case it is needed, were included in both guidelines.
The guidelines in general invited the parents to reflect about the internet risk and about what they would do in case that some problem related with the use of media technology occurred in their family.

Although the questions where designed to target specific information, flexibility in the response was not discouraged, and spontaneous questions were added during sessions, due to the uniqueness of the responses provided by each of the participants.

See appendices for see the guidelines use during the interviews.

6. RESULTS

6.1 Presentation of the result

The information gathered in the interviews was classified into 10 categories:

- Perception of technology, likes and dislikes
- Digital competence
- Parents awareness about children online activities
- Conflict and tension between parents and children
- Video games and ratings
- Looking for support by children and parents
- What online risk children had experiences
- Manage of online risks
- Additional interesting findings
- Risky profiles

Parent and child answers will be compared in the most of the sections. Additional interesting information and table of 2 case analyses found in our study will be reported at the end of this section. Some of the citations in this section are verbatim transcript from the interviews. However, in cases where the interviews where not conducted in English, the citations are the result of a translation made by us. We use the same words or expressions the participants articulated. (Please, identify the translated citations with the letter “T” next to the comment).

6.2. Results

6.2.1. Perception of technology, likes and dislikes

Children:

Six of the children say that what they like more from the internet is Chatting mainly with offline friends or family that do not live close, but also one participant said they like the possibility to get in
touch with many people around the world. Other things they enjoy are looking and finding different types of information, checking friend’s profiles, finding different games.

“You can meet people from different places… see how others think, find people with comment nature it hard to find in real life”

Girl, 14 years old

“The internet can provide information that can help me with my homework”.

Boy, 15 years old

“I like the internet. I find new games all the time and I can chat with my friends when I play video games”.

Boy, 14 years old

“There are many things you can do. You can kill the time if you have nothing to do… you can watch funny videos.”

Girl 11 years old

One participant mentioned that she enjoys the control because it is possible to choose what she wants to see, and another participant made an inference to dependency of being connected.

“You can decide what you want. In the TV you can choose what channel you want to watch. It is the same with the Internet you can choose which home page you want to open”

Girl, 15 years old

It seems that some children idealize the internet. Three children said there is nothing they dislike from the internet.

“The internet is a part of everyday life and there is nothing I don’t like about the internet”

Girl, 15 year old

The dislikes were associated with some online risks. Concerns were about computer viruses, slow connection, how rapidly bad pictures spread, encountering propaganda and political issues, people that can take advantage of children, web pages not for children, pornography that pop up or an ugly photos and bad comments that people can write in profiles in social networks sites.

“The unsafe virus that are going around really bother me and there is a lot of propaganda and a lot of violence that can affect some people”.

Girl, 14 years old

“When you have bilddabooken someone can get in and write things… when you are sitting in the Msn… there are girls, seven or eight years old that put photos and someone can tell them to take out your t-shirt when you have web… people that take advantage of the children.. One day a boy in bildabook wrote something bad in a page of a friend…. she blocked him” (T)

Girl, 11 years old

When we ask them about negative experiences related with the internet use or video games, even those that have being victimized at some level, said that they have never experienced something that make them feel bad.

“In Facebook people show photos where you can get shock but it is okay” (T)

Girl 15 year old
Parents:

When we ask parents how they perceive the use of the internet and video games by young people? Some parents only make positive comments.

“Internet is very useful to young people if it is directed and video games can develop children’s thinking“
Father, 35 years old

“Internet is the world language, modern language. It’s very important for all people men, women and children to know how to use the internet”
Father, 48 years old

“The internet connect me and my children with our relatives in our home country and other parts in the world, we can chat and see our relative and friend who we miss a lot”
Mother, 48 years old

Interestingly, one parent that does not use the internet shows a completely negative perception about the internet.

“Reading books can be more useful than using internet”
Father, 50 year old

Some “moral panic” (Cohen,1972 in Buckingham, 2003) or myths about use of interactive media technologies were also express.

“Internet is dangerous to children if they spend more than 3 hours per day it is not good for their health, children need movement but when they sit in front of the internet long hours it can lead fetma” (overweight).
Mother 45 years old

The rest of the parents have an ambivalent perception about the internet. They perceive it as a valuable tool for information and support for school work, job, for communicating with family who doesn’t live close by, but they are worried about the risks. Concern mentioned by different parents were about the possibility that their child get contacted by strangers with a bad intentions and also that they can spend too many hours using the internet and video games. Awareness about possibilities of fraud, and reduction of socialization at home were also found.

“I don’t have many education about internet only chatting and sending e.mails, buying things online with help for the children But its help me in many thing I learn and read new information in the internet every time… Children are not social at home there is not much family time. Most of the time children at home spend their time on the internet or playing video game”
Mother 46 years old

“Internet is good for the job. It can save a lot of time in the work office or for the school but, also I think is really bad for the pornography. Mainly the computers that have webcam. I know the girls that take naked photos and send to others. Other think I think is very bad is the chat. You need to be checking with who there are chatting. Older men can contact them. You can watch cases in the TV…(T).
Mother 43 years old
Mother: “...It is like something that has absorbed the children. It is like a magnet. It is like they got possessed...She just arrives from school and goes directly to the computer all the time. It is bad because they are so connected to the screen”. (T).

Mother 34 years old

One mother expressed that she has peace of mind when she knows her son is playing offline video games instead than playing online or using internet.

“You can get contact with wrong type of people... they can sit there hours and hours and they do not want to quite. I feel safer when they sit in video game than in the internet... when he plays video games he doesn’t get other information besides that from the game....they are not meeting the wrong people.

Mother 34 years old

Some parents expressed that they did not trust carrying out a transaction through the internet, and other parents expressed the opposite.

“I don’t trust the internet with paying my pills, I rather go to the post office its more safer. People can hack down your account and take your money”. Father, 50 years old

“I trust internet with my banking account especially here in Sweden” Father, 48 years old

6.2.2. Digital competence

Children:

Almost all the participants use the internet frequently, every day. Most invest in the internet between 5 to 10 hours.. One participant uses it after midnight on weekends. Video games also more invest between 5 to 10 hours.

More than the half play some type of games, or video games, and the most invest more time playing than using the internet each week. The most are not high interactive media consumers. The two participant that invest more time in the internet and/or video games in comparison with the rest of the participants present more online risks.

Most have a computer in their own room (7) and they access the internet mainly at home, but also sometimes in the school and at the homes of friends. Only one participant that doesn’t use much internet accesses it usually in the school.

“I have the computer in my room but you can now have the computer everywhere”(T)

Girl 13 year old

In relation to what activities children do online, they use the internet for homework and for looking for information, but also for entertainment. Some of our informants mention 2.0 technologies like YouTube and Facebook, Bildabook, as well as Msn. The ones that chat, usually do it with people they know in real life. Among the activities they do are: watch videos, listening to music, download music and films, looking for new games and play online games. Two of the participants play console video games. Two have their own profile in Facebook and one has created her on personal blog for sharing with others her favorite hobby.

Most of the children report that they usually log in alone. But one girl tells us that logging into internet is a social activity and that she uses it more with her friends.

“I almost never use internet....When I am with my friends we can sit many hours It is not fun to do it alone. Then we go to You tube.” (T)

Girl 13 years old
Some of the informants recognize they do not have too much experience using the internet.

“My parents use internet much more than I do” (T) 13 year old girl

“Everybody use the internet and I want to learn to use internet to interact with my children activities” (T) Mother 45 years old

Parents:

Five of the parents invest from 1 to 5 hours per week. Three parents said they use the internet intensively and two of the parents didn’t know how to access the internet. Those that use the internet are usually looking for diverse information and some chat with family or friends who do not live close by, watch videos or movies, and one woman shops for things online. Interestingly, the idealization of internet by the parents is correlated with their use of internet. Although, in general the most of the parents invest more hours in the internet use.

Talking about how young people are authorities on the internet, we can see these comments:

“My older son, who is 22 years old, is the one who makes decisions when it comes to the internet. He is the one who will support the younger ones if something happens”
Father 50 year old

“I give my older daughter the responsibility of protecting her brother from the internet she can use the internet much better then me, the computer it’s on her room”
Mother, 43 years old

“I sit beside my children some times when they are using the internet to learn from them information about the internet”
Mother, 48 years old

In the next table we can see the weekly hour investment by children and parents as well as the relation between the internet perception of internet and the time investment per week of the parents.
### 6.2.2. Digital competence

**TABLE 2. Parents and Children age and time invest in interactive media**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th>parent gender/age</th>
<th>*internet perception</th>
<th>internet use</th>
<th>children gender/age</th>
<th>children use of internet/ per week</th>
<th>children use of video games per week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Mother 45</td>
<td>+ and -</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td>Girl 16</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td>Every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>More in weekends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>Father 50</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td>Boy 14</td>
<td>10 to 15</td>
<td>Every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>20 to 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>Father 35</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>20 to 25</td>
<td>Girl 13</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>Every day</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15 to 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.</td>
<td>Mother 46</td>
<td>+ and -</td>
<td>10 to 15</td>
<td>Boy 14</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>Every day</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10 to 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.</td>
<td>Mother 48</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>10 to 15</td>
<td>Girl 14</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>Every day</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.</td>
<td>Mother 43</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td>Boy 15</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td>Every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>5 to 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>G.</td>
<td>Father 48</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>20 to 25</td>
<td>Boy 13</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>Every day</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>H.</td>
<td>Father 42</td>
<td>+ and -</td>
<td>25 to 35</td>
<td>Girl 13</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td>No every day</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>Mother 34</td>
<td>+ and -</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td>Girl 15</td>
<td>25 to 30</td>
<td>No every day</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Every month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.</td>
<td>Mother 43</td>
<td>+ and -</td>
<td>Not use</td>
<td>Girl 11 soon</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td>No every day</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.</td>
<td>Mother 34</td>
<td>+ and -</td>
<td>1 to 5</td>
<td>Boy 11</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>No every day</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10 to 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The parents perception of the internet were take from they answer to the question. What is your perception and opinion about Internet.
6.2.3. Parent awareness about what children do online

The most of the parents are aware about where and how much time the children invest online. Some rely in other persons for supervision because they don’t know about Internet.

Discrepancies between rules for accessing the internet, between what the parents think and how the child experiences it, were found in one family.

“My father knows about internet because he checks me… I need to ask him first … when I want to add someone in the msn… say that I need to ask first… then my father need to come and do many things in the computer and blablabla”

Girl 11 years old

Child: “I play when I am boring”

Girl 11 year old

Parent: ”She use it more when she is boring”

Mother 43 years old

6.2.4. Video games and Ratings

2 children play games consider violent games. Counter Strike16+[2] and Grand Theft Auto 18+[3]. In one case the parents are not aware about the ratings and in other case parentis aware but don’t pay attention as long they can watch how the children play the game.

“I know but I don’t check the ratings… I never buy game with a lot of violence. He has some of these games… I don’t like them, I don’t say something myself but I will not buy it myself…GTA. I hate this kind of games and I have no accepted that someone buy for him … he got one for his b-day and when I told the father of the other boy he broke the game because he is a police and he know that in this game you get points for kill a pregnant woman and polices but later on he got it again and it was the same game … but when he has been playing I had been watching how he is playing, how he is talking…if you need to kill the woman but he has not been playing in this way so I let him to play… he doesn’t play it so much so I don’t worry so much about it Mother 34 years old

6.2.5 Conflicts and tension between parents and children

Most of the parents did not tell us about any specific conflict in relation to their child’s use of internet or video games. A few parents commented to us about some interventions they needed to make on some occasions. For example, checking what their children had been doing online and what contacts their children have in their buddy list.

“I was controlling and I check in the history and I found he has been playing a video game for adult… with sex then I talk with him”

Mother 34 years old

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2 The Pan-European Game Information (PEGI) age rating system was established to help European parents make informed decisions on buying computer games

3 Ibid
“If I see someone in the list that I don’t know, I make it her delete it.”

Mother 34 years old

“It is very important that you as parent control the time because they can be there sitting 5 or 6 hours but I don’t experience too much problems. When I told him 2 hours he know that. He controls it”

Mother 34 years old

6.2.6. What online risk children had experiences?

Unwanted exposition was the most prevalent risk among the participant following by online challenge behaviours and dangerous online behaviour and last one online victimization more specifically interpersonal victimization. In detail, the online risks encounter occurred more frequent in this order: unwanted pornography and download copyright material, cyberbullying and flaming, playing mature video games, play violent video games, interchange of nudity or pornography links or mails and excessive use. Also the most talk with unknown people online, only a few disclosure private information like real name or photo, only one participant had meet a stranger in real life, flirting by webcam, receive an invitation by chat to visit a porno webpage, contact with drugs or unpleasant political propaganda or advertising. The next table show more specifically how many participants had encounter online risk and challenges and in what online application.
Table 3. Types of risk and application used

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of risk and/or challenges</th>
<th>Number of participant</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unwanted content</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pornography or nudity in web pages</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Pop-up, webpage open by mistake, social network, adult game among children games webpage, porno link send by chat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Webpage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Webpage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unpleasant Propaganda or advertising</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Webpage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online victimization</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online sexual solicitation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Invitation to visit porno web pages while chatting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cyberbullying</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>chat and cell phone by someone they know in the real life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harassed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flaming</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>video games and Msn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dangerous behavior and/or challenging online behavior</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch pornography or nudity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Web pages send by Email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flirting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Webcam with strangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disclosure private information</td>
<td>2 Real name 1 photo</td>
<td>Social networks, chat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Mature video game</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Console games and online games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive internet use</td>
<td>2*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting in Real life</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialization with strangers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Chat, instant messenger, video games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Video games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Download copyright material</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pornography or nudity</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Reception of e-mail and links in chat send it by friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offline conflict</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Fight for video game in the school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In one case a child reported sleep deprivation during the weekends caused by using the Internet and her parents complained about her excessive use of the Internet. In other case, a parent also complained about the excessive use of the internet. In both cases, the number of hours spent on the internet and/or video games is high in comparison with the rest of the participants.

In the next section we will review each one of the online risks categories found among the children.


6.2.6.1. Online victimization

A. Interpersonal Victimization - Cyberbullying

Three participants had been victimized online at some point; an 11 year old girl and one 14 year old boy had been cyber bullied, another 15 year old boy had received bad comments from a classmate, which can be classified as online harassment. All of them had been victimized by someone they know. In each of these cases, real life problems or fights took place over the internet as well. Also, one boy had a fight at school over a video game.

Children: “I have received bad comments… before a guy who don’t like me send messages saying bad things about me”.

Interviewer: What did you do?

Children: I told my teacher… we talk and now we are friends” Boy 15 years old

A few children seem to be aware of the e-bullying. One participant talked to us explicitly about what had happened in her school with relation to cyber bullying by cell phone.

“Bulling had happen in my school but more by cell phone… Two friends send jokes by the cell phone, say something not nice, and by the cell phone you never know if is a joke or not, so the others take it badly and then they fight” (T).

Girl 13 years old girl

B. Online Solicitation

One participant has received porno webpage link while he was chatting with his friends. It can be consider as a online sexual solicitation.

“Someone send me a porno web when I was chatting with my friends but I ignore it” Boy 13 years old

Some participants report that flaming [4] is common while they are gaming:

It was primarily the children who participated in gaming that reported exposure to insults and hostile comments during online sessions. Although, most of the time these comments were not intended specifically target the participants, and most were expressed in public online spaces.

“There is some people in the game that say things, they really don’t care about the others… they really don’t go specific… it is stupid but it is not big deal it is only text. It don’t feel it hurt you if

4 Flaming is a hostile and insulting interaction between Internet users. Flaming usually occurs in the social context of a discussion board, Internet Relay Chat (IRC) or even through e-mail. (Wikipedia, 2009)
When I am in the game there are many people from other countries and sometimes they write "nope" all the time.  
Boy 11 years old

"Some people from nowhere send messages and say Hi!. I don’t answer them I just ignore them."  
Boy 14 years old

6.2.6.2 Unwanted content

The most prevalent risks common among some of the participants was finding pornography online by mistake, in the form of Webpage pop-ups, sexual games or adult games mixed with games for children. For another boy, it was nudity in online profiles or emails.

Two boys play games consider violent and one had found violent and guns Webpage. It was interesting how one of the boys talks to us about the advantage that it represents for him:

“Some web pages are not for children, like games with sex. I have found them when I looking for online games. There are between the children games”  
Boy 14 years old

“While I was surfing with my friends we come in contact with web pages that show weapons”.  
Boy 13 years old

“Sometimes homepages that show nudity pops up”.  
Boy, 15 years old

“There is much risk in the internet. For example in Facebook you can put a lot of information. People say they will travel, and when they arrive to the place they are kidnapped”(T)  
Girl 15 year old

6.2.6.3 Online Dangerous behavior

In relation to dangerous behavior, we found that two girls receive or exchange emails and Webpage addresses with nudity content from friends, the same participant have online friends and have meet some online. She use the webcam with strangers. Several boy downloaded films and videos which are illegal in Sweden.

The majority of participants never talk with strangers online, and two do it but they never reveal their real life identity. Two girls participate and have profiles in social networks like Facebook and Hi5, but in one case her profile is private and in the other case she has different personal information than her real one.

Four participants showed concerned about viruses and they get support from friends.

“Sometimes friends send me web pages where it says tips to not get a virus” (T)  
Boy, 11 year old
The most of the Children are not consider “high media consumer” as Mediarådet, 2008 suggest because they do not invest 3 or more hours to internet or video games). The participants don’t use the internet intensively but they have encountered some challenges. We consider them “challenges” because in most cases the children have not reported negative consequences. Yet, we observed that the two participants who invested more time in the internet presented greater risk in relation to the use of media. In the next table we can see more specifically the internet use per hour in relation to the online risks found among the participants.In the next table we can see the relation between the time investment and the risk related with the interactive media found among the children.

**Table 4. Risks encounter in relation to time investment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>children gender/age</th>
<th>Internet/ Hrs per week</th>
<th>video games Hrs per week</th>
<th>Child Encounter with risk</th>
<th>Dangerous online behaviour or related to media</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Girl 16</td>
<td>1 to 5 Every day</td>
<td>Any</td>
<td>Drugs sites</td>
<td>Download copyright material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>More in weekends</td>
<td></td>
<td>Friends send porn links</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>while chatting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Nasty comments by stranger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>Boy 14</td>
<td>10 to 15 Every day</td>
<td>20 to 25</td>
<td>Bullied in school</td>
<td>Fight for game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mature game</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Violent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mature video games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pages for learn self defense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Download copyright material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>Girl 13</td>
<td>5 to 10 Every day</td>
<td>15 to 20</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Download copyright material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.</td>
<td>Boy 14</td>
<td>5 to 10 Every day</td>
<td>10 to 15</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.</td>
<td>Girl 14</td>
<td>5 to 10 Every day</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.</td>
<td>Boy 15</td>
<td>1 to 5 Every day</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>Nasty comments while playing</td>
<td>Download copyright material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cyberbullied</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.</td>
<td>Boy 13</td>
<td>5 to 10 Every day</td>
<td>5 to 10</td>
<td>Stranger invite to porno</td>
<td>Download copyright material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>web pages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Web pages that</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>show violent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and show weapons.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.</td>
<td>Girl 13</td>
<td>1 to 5 No every day</td>
<td>30 minutes Every month</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>Girl 15</td>
<td>25 to 30</td>
<td>Any</td>
<td>Porno site</td>
<td>Met ‘stranger’ real life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Friends send porno</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>or nudity mails</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Use webcam</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>stranger</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

34
Some children are aware of some risk because they hear about some cases in the news.

“I hear in the news that a girl was raped from a man she met online” (T)

Girl 15 years old

“What I don’t like about the internet is that people can publish harmful things without control. For example, in Youtube you can find crazy films or photos… in the school, someone can film something embarrassing of another classmate and put it on the internet without he/she knowing about it” (T)

Girl 13 years old

“You can get caught up in the internet… You can obsess with the internet” Boy, 15 years old

### 6.2.7 Manage of online risks

**Children:**

Most of the children were aware of some risks. The main risks acknowledged were related to the possibility of being contacted by someone, as well as regarding computer functionality. Concerns about revealing private information in social networks or establishing contact and chatting with strangers, and having antivirus software installed on the computer to protect against online dangers were commonly expressed by the participants.

“I don’t think its necessary to put your personal information on Facebook, I like the messenger better you don’t have to reveal your life to other people you don’t know”. Girl, 14 years old

“I don’t chat with stranger I don’t think it safe to chat with people you don’t know. People can lie to you in the internet”. Boy, 15 years old.

“Its fun to chat with stranger. I never give out my real identity, I chat with false name and age, you can pretend that you are someone else”. Boy, 14 years old

“I can play online, but in my game there is an option where you can block the option to chat with someone. My mother says I must have it like that” (T) Boy 11 year old
The typical action that children take when they accidentally encounter pornography in the internet is to close the web page immediately. Some of them said they do it because they are aware of their parent’s supervision.

Apparently, even though some of the children had been exposed to some of the situations considered to have risk, they don’t perceive it as something negative because when we ask them “if they have experienced something which made them feel bad while surfing in the internet or related to the internet”, they answered that they have not experience anything.

“Not, it cannot be serious because it only online” Boy 11 years old

Child: “sshh..Porno… I was accessing a webpage that my teacher told me to visit …and then I make a mistake and I access a porno webpage…

Interviewer: What did you do?

Child: I put the cross… (Shy laugh)

Interviewer: Did you tell someone about it?

Child: No, (shy laugh). I went to the browsing history and I delete it

Interviewer: Why?

Child: I was ashamed because maybe my father thinks I am doing other thing… (Shy laugh)(T) Girl 11 years old

In this example we can observe the digital literacy of the children, and how it is easy for them to avoid their parents’ knowledge of their actual online activity.

Parents:

Most of the parents in our study had some strategy or rules in relation to the internet and/or video game use. Usually parents prefer to talk with their child in general about internet risks, or more specifically about the risk of being contacted by strangers. Some rules included the limiting of time online, or in the case of one family, to keep the computer in a social place. Only one family uses software to control internet access and avoid that their child freely adds contacts to their Msn.

In the next table we can see that even though most of the parents have some negative associations with the use of internet by their children, they did not implement strategies or have some rules for internet use all of the time. Although in most cases, parents expressed that they felt capable of supporting their children if they had some problem related to their internet use.
Table 5. Relation between internet perception, strategies or rules and support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Parent gender/age</th>
<th>Child Gender</th>
<th>Child Encounter with risk</th>
<th>Parents Negative association with internet and children</th>
<th>Strategies or rules</th>
<th>Feel they can support children with online risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Mother 45</td>
<td>Girl 16</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Obesity</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>Father 50</td>
<td>Boy 14</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>It was better in the old days than today with the technology Excessive use</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>Father 35</td>
<td>Girl 13</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Talk to the children about the risk in the internet.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.</td>
<td>Mother 46</td>
<td>Boy 14</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Less socialization with the family</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.</td>
<td>Mother 48</td>
<td>Girl 14</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Talk with children</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.</td>
<td>Mother 43</td>
<td>Boy 15</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Have the TV in the living room. Chat only with friends.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.</td>
<td>Father 48</td>
<td>Boy 13</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Use internet three hours a day. Check what they do online.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.</td>
<td>Father 42</td>
<td>Girl 13</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Bullying Pedophiles</td>
<td>Only allow use google and wikipedia</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>Mother 34</td>
<td>Girl 15</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Excessive use Pedophiles Contact strangers</td>
<td>Limit of time Delete contact we do not know</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.</td>
<td>Mother 43</td>
<td>Girl 11 soon 12</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Pedophiles Webcam nudity exhibition Contact strangers Excessive use</td>
<td>Software block add contacts and web content</td>
<td>No, husband</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.</td>
<td>Mother 34</td>
<td>Boy 11</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Get in trouble Contact by strangers Violence in video games Excessive use</td>
<td>No chat strangers Sometimes check what page they access Talk about online risks</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“I trust my child with the internet I talk to him all the time about what he should and shouldn’t do on the internet”.  
Father, 35 years old

“I always tell my son to use the internet only at home, and he is aware about internet risk”.  
Father, 48 years old
I tell my children not to chat with stranger and if they do don’t talk about who they are.

Mother, 48 years old

“I don’t know how to protect them from online risk that why I always talk to my daughter who know what he brothers are doing in the internet. I tell her if they are doing something wrong talk to them and if they didn’t listen to you tell me”.

Mother, 43 years old

“She just starter to be interested in the internet, I suppose she will be interested more and more… I just trusted her right now but maybe in the future we need to have some rules.. just tell her or warm her that is bad people out there... I know that there are some software for block but we have not use it yet but I know we need to talk to her

Mother, 42 years old

A cyber bullying conflict had been resolved in one family.

“She had a problem with a cousin. Her cousins used to send messages by Msn and the cell phone to scared her… we will come after you when we see you in the street… and other silly things… We collected these messages and we showed them later to the parents” (T)

Mother of 11 year old girl

In one case, a parent shows more concern for her youngest child and confidence about her son’s safe use of internet.

“I can trust in him. He knows what is wrong and what is right. He knows what to do in case someone contact him. I don’t need to watch him. I am more careful with my younger yes. I have more control with him“

34 year old Mother of 11 year old child

“Internet and video games are good but you need to be carefully.., you need to use technology…to hurt someone else. Because I know cases of youth people that get messages or face book. All this Chat rooms and all this pedophiles come pretending to be a young…it’s the negative otherwise it is greater.”

Mother, 45 years old

6.2.7.1 Whom parents and children ask for help in case they need it

Children:

It seems that the children in our study have a good support network and they can find help or guidance regarding their online inquiries. If children experience some problem online, they will talk with their parents; an older brother teacher or friends. Most children found that they could bring an issue to their parents and resolve some problem related to internet and the most of the parents as well felt capable of supporting their child.
“If something happened while I’m is using the internet. I will talk to my friend or my teacher at school or the student counselor and ask them for help”. Girl 15 years old.

“My father will help me if something went wrong on the internet he can contact the school or I can talk to my teacher and ask for help”. Boy, 13 years old

“I will talk to my computer teacher at school he can help me”. Boy, 14 years old

“I will talk to my older brother he can help me” Boy, 14 years old

But also, two participants say they will try to resolve problems by themselves, but it depends on the situation.

“I will tell my parents, it is depends what is the problem, but for example if a friend writes something in a blog, I will tell him to take it away. If that doesn’t work then maybe I will make a meeting with my friend and our parents”(T)

Girl 13 year old

“You can block or report people that are bothering you in the game”(T) Boy 11 year old

Parents:

When it comes to more serious problems, parents say they will/would go to the police, to the school or ask for help from a psychologist.

“I will ask my friends to help me or I can call my daughter school and ask them for help and advice”. Mother, 45 years old

“I know where to find help and if the problem is very serious, I can get in contact with the police. Father, 35 years old

“I will call the school immediately to help be solve the problem” Mother 48 years old.

6.2.8 Additional interesting findings

6.2.8.1 Online family activities

It seems that the domestication of internet use at home has contributed positively in the relationships between parents and children. Some children mention do things in the internet together with their parents in the internet or gaming. One girl has created a blog with the help of her father.
‘I have blog that I did with the help of my father but I upload all the information myself”
irl 13 years old

“My mother sits sometimes next to me while I am on the internet. She wants me to chat with her cousin. She tells me what to write to her”(T)
Boy, 11 year old

“My mother come and play games with me sometimes, she think its fun to play games”
Girl 14 years old

“if I can use the internet like my children I will sit for long hours like them”
Mother 48 years old

"I encourage my children to use the internet, I use it every day I travel a lot internet is part of my daily life.
Father 45 years old

“My children start using internet in a very early age I want them to be capable from using the internet from a young age”
Girl 14 years old.
### 6.2.9. Risky profiles

**Table 6. Participant consider with a risk profile**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th><strong>Case 1</strong> Boy 14 years old</th>
<th><strong>Case 2</strong> Girl 15 years old</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online activities &amp; online habits</strong></td>
<td>Play video games</td>
<td>Chatting with real life friends and online friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Find new games</td>
<td>Youtube, facebook, Hi5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chat with friends</td>
<td>Do homework or study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Looking for information</td>
<td>Looking for information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Download music</td>
<td>Login at home and when she can at the school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 to 25 hours video games and 10 to 15 internet</td>
<td>Login usually alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use internet every day</td>
<td>Use internet everyday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Game experience: 1 year.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Joke with other people online</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk</strong></td>
<td><strong>Online Dangerous Behaviours:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Unwanted exposition:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Play violent video game</td>
<td>Pornography in web pages and mails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mature +16 (CounterStrike 1.6):</td>
<td>Meet online friends in real life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More consumption in hours of Mature game than the 1 of 8 in the study of in the study Olson, et.al. (2007)</td>
<td>Probable Flirting online or online solicitation: Use webcam with online friends or strangers in other they meet her.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The boy is the one of the informant that reports play more hours per week playing video games.</td>
<td>“Yes, sometimes someone told me to model for them, but I said, I am not like that, I don’t give shows. I am not a model. If I put the camera online here for you, it is for you to meet me. That is all”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“I can learn self defense by practicing what they do on the game with my friends. I learn what kind of movement the hero use. If someone attacks me in real life I will fight back. I know many movements. I usually play Counter strike. I use guns in the game. I like the way you can protect yourself from a gun by jumping and kicking the gun off from the other player”. Boy 14 years old</td>
<td>Role play: Personal profile in 2 social networks sites with different age and nationality, and photo</td>
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<td></td>
<td>He also play other games for learn self defense</td>
<td>Use the internet:</td>
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<td>“I play games and there Web pages that you can play games where you learn self defense”</td>
<td>Sleep deprivation on weekends:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>♦ Interviewer: How do you learn self-defense from CS?</td>
<td>Use of internet 3 hours in weeks and weekends can be until 5 o’clock in the morning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>♦ Mats: By shooting a gun</td>
<td>More than 25 hrs per week</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Interviewer: How do you learn self-defense for the real life?</td>
<td>“I use it every day from 7 to 10 from Monday to Thursday. The weekends I can use it all the time I want from 7 to 5 am or 2, 3. Until, I feel tired then I go to sleep” (T)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Mats: I learn the movement but I cannot shot the gun.</td>
<td>Interviewer: What would you do if you couldn’t have an internet connection?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Interviewer: What will you do if for some reason you cannot play more CS?</td>
<td>Gina: This could be difficult... I would watch the TV, but actually... I live in the internet a lot. It is something I like it a lot. In the computer I have the internet, but if I don’t have the internet, if I cannot have internet it makes me feel ‘hysteric’ because I cannot take the computer”.</td>
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<td>Mats: I don’t play. I am not addicted!”</td>
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<td><strong>Cyberbullied victimization:</strong></td>
<td>Cyberbullied by a classmate</td>
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**6.2. 10. Individual Case Analysis**

During the analysis of our interviews, we detected two individuals whose profiles stood out, in comparison to the rest of the participants, and for this reason we consider the analysis of these specific individuals important to this study. This section must be read in a critical way. The intent of this section is mainly to invite to reflection, and to encourage relevant dialog, more so than to arrive at any particular conclusion, since further investigation is needed. In most cases, the online activities and behaviors analyzed in this section may not always represent a risk in themselves, but the presence of all these factors in one individual is what could be an indicator of dangerous risk levels for that person.

“Mats” and “Gina” are two participants that invest a greater number of hours using internet each week in comparison to the rest of the participants in this study. In the case of Gina, more than 25 hours per week, and with Mats at most 15 hours per week in the internet and 25 hours playing a favorite video games like Counter Strike (CS), a First Person Shooter online video game. For this reason they are considered “high media consumer” (Mediarådet, 2008). Interestingly, we noted that they also experiences related with the use of interactive media technology. Mats risk is due to his exposure to violence, behaviors and thoughts about it, whereas Gina’s risk is mainly due to her online socialization practices, as well as her intense use of internet.

Intensive or high levels of online participation have been associated with online risks. (Livingsgstone and Bober, 2005; Berson and Berson, 2005). According to Livingstone and Bober in
their report UKCGO (2005), “not only the most skilled young people fail to avoid online risk, but their risk encounters increased with increased use”. In our study, the hours invested each week were positive when correlated with higher exposure to risk, as in Gina and Mats.

Gina was classified as a risk taker because she became engaged in various online risks behaviors such as, the use of webcam with strangers, meeting people in real life, and we are suspicious regarding her viewing online pornography, also she reported sleep deprivation during weekends due to being connected to the internet since she has a computer in her room. Furthermore, her mother reports her intensive use of internet.

*Mother: “...It is like something that has absorbed the children. It is like a magnet. It is like they got possessed...She just arrives from school and goes directly to the computer all the time. It is bad because they are so connected to the screen”. (T).*

During her interview Gina tell us this:

**Interviewer: Did you have someone threaten, bother or harass you online?**

“Yes, sometimes someone told me to model for them, but I said, I am not like that, I don’t give shows. I am not a model. If I put the camera online here for you, it is for you to meet me. That is all”(T)

**Interviewer: What you would do if you couldn’t have an internet connection?**

*Gina: This could be difficult... I would watch the TV, but actually... I live in the internet a lot. It is something I like it a lot. In the computer I have the internet, but if I don’t have the internet, if I cannot have internet it makes me feel ‘hysteric’ because I cannot take the computer” (T).*

Waterman (1984) suggested that “adolescents try out different youth activities as part of their process of identity exploration, and that these activities are primary source of material for identity exploration” (Waterman, 1984 in Dworking et al, 2002). The behaviours manifested by Gina can be consider as part of here development stage. Some of her online behaviours can be due to her “lack of experience that leads...” Gina “…to an error of judgment regarding level of risk or in which…” her “…sense of invulnerability results in a failure to consider risk or the need to act in a deliberative way” (Green, Krcmar, Walters, Rubin, and Hale, 2000 in Berson and Berson 2005), or also due to her “failure to categorize actions as falling within the moral domain of behavior so that personal gain is emphasized over safety for herself” (Willard, 2000 in Berson and Berson, 2005). Elkind (1974) stated that adolescents are distinct from others ages in that they believe that no harm can come to them. This concept have used by many research for explain why adolescents are more likely to engage in dangerous behaviours or risky situations. (Elkind, 1974 in Ryan, 2009). Gina seems to underestimate the online risks because she thinks she can control what happen online, she stated that If she doesn’t like something, she can eliminate it and that is all. However, the online behaviours shown by Gina expose her to a higher risk of online victimization, at least to a higher degree than girls that do not become engaged in these online behaviors. Nevertheless, because she reports not reveling personal information, and she is seems to be aware of some online risks, this may protect her.
In a study by Ybarra, et al., (2007b) study found that meeting people online in multiple ways, talking about sex with unknown people, and having multiple unknown people in one’s buddy list are associated with significantly higher probability of online interpersonal victimization. Also, “engaging in many different kinds of online behaviours explains online interpersonal victimization more than engaging in specific individual behavior” Furthermore, youth who interact with unknown people online and show different risky online behaviors are more likely to receive aggressive sexual solicitation than the ones that interact with strangers online but do not engage in other online risky behaviours. (Wolak, et al., 2008). A comparative analysis on challenging online behavior of adolescent girls in the United Stated and New Zealand found that as adolescents get older the “odds of agreeing to risky behaviour increases”, 17 to 18 year olds are almost four times more likely to meet a stranger than 12 to 13 year olds. Yet, the 15 to 16 year olds were found to be the most vulnerable. Almost 7 percent of the 16 year olds and 6.7 percent of the 15 year olds engage in risky behavior (Berson and Berson, 2005).

In the next section we will analyze the case of Mats.

Mats had fight though a video game in the school, and also he has been cyberbullied by a classmate and also he visits web pages to look for games and to learn self defense techniques. His father also reports that he is playing GameBoy “all the time” or with his computer. As a note, he had been playing Counter Strike (CS) for at least one year, which is rated by the European Game Information (PEGI) plan as a 16+ authorized game, and by the American Entertainment Software Rating Board (ERSB) as a 17+ authorized game, yet he is 14. CS is one of the most popular games among the 10 percent of Swedish youth between the ages of nine and sixteen who play video games, and 19 percent, ages 12 to 16 years old. (Mediaråder, 2008), Based on our interviews, we observed that Mats doesn’t have regular adult supervision or regulation in relation to his use of media. According Anderson, et al. (2007), parents are a very important influence in the minimization of the negative effects of violent video games, mostly by limiting the types of games and how much time is spent with game play.

During his interview he told us:

   **Interviewer:** What games do you play?

   **Mats:** "I play games and there are web pages that you can play games where you learn self defense".

   "**I can learn self defense** by practicing what they do on the game with my friends. I learn what kind of movement the hero use. **If someone attacks me in real life I will fight back.** I know many movements. I usually play Counter strike. I use guns in the game. I like the way you can protect yourself from a gun by jumping and kicking the gun off from the other player”.

   **Interviewer:** How do you learn self-defense from CS?

   **Mats:** **By shooting a gun**

   **Interviewer:** How do you learn self-defense for the real life?
Mats: *I learn the movement but I cannot shoot a real gun.*

Most likely, learning self-defense from a game it is not in itself a problem. In fact, Mats may feel empowered or have a sense of self-confidence from the possibility of learning game skill movements and skills. Yet the problematic we see with Mats is that he is planning to respond with aggression to an aggression. His preoccupation with being prepared for an attack, and thereby focusing on preparation for such an event, was concerning to us, even though he was learning “fight” technique from the game. Of course, we cannot establish that his behaviors were developed, or originated from the game. Also, we cannot show that any previous conflict he experienced in school contributed to his apparent need to protect himself. And although we do not know if this was an isolated incident, Ybarra and colleges report that “youths who receive rude or nasty comments via text messaging are significantly more likely to also report feeling unsafe at school (Ybarra, et al., 2007a).

It seems that together all of these events put Mats at risk factor. Certainly, in the development of aggressive behavior patterns, there are always proximal risk factors (e.g., provocation, social stress, pro-aggression beliefs), and distal risk factors (e.g., family practices, media violence, personality and genetic factors). (Anderson, Gentile and Buckley, 2007:47). The engagement in violent video games by Mats could certainly be a risk factor.

Nonetheless, there is certainly evidence surrounding violent video games that invites further discussion. According to Gentile et al (2004) “violent video game exposure has been both directly associated with physical fights and indirectly associated, with trait hostility mediating the effects of violent video games exposure on fights. The relation between violent video game exposure and physical fights is stronger than that between violent game exposure and arguments with teachers”.

It is unclear whether the types of games that Mats plays increase aggression in “the short term, or over time, because they typically involve more cooperation, planning, and social interaction and less violence than the typical shooting and fighting games”. (Anderson, Gentile and Buckley, 2007:36). Moreover, according to social-cognitive theory we note that a “long term effect of media violence exposure on aggression by observational learning that affects one or more of three social-cognitive structures: hostile world schemas (e.g., hostile attribution bias), social problem – solving scripts, and normative beliefs about the acceptability of aggression”. (Anderson, Gentile and Buckley, 2007:9).

### 6.3 Conclusions (Summary of tendencies in the findings)

The following results were found

As we can see from the interviews all of the children chat with their friends.

All of the children like the Internet in some way. There are more things children like about the Internet than they dislike. The things they do not like about the Internet are associated with the risks of using the Internet.
None of the children experienced anything that made them feel bad when using the Internet or playing video games, besides the fact that one said that he feels bad when he loses a game.

The positive perception of parents about the Internet relates to the things they do on the Internet, such as working, accessing information or using it for courses. One parent had a completely negative perception of the Internet, while four had a mainly positive perception of the Internet. Indeed, some of the parents didn’t really know how to use the Internet by themselves.

All of the children who participated in the study use the Internet frequently or on a regular basis. The amount of time varies from one child to another but they are not high interactive media consumers. Video games take a great deal of some children’s time on the other hand not all children play video games.

Some of the parents also invest time using the Internet. The amount of time various between the parents as well, depending on their ability and experience with the Internet. Parents use the Internet from 1-5 hours per week up to 25-30 hours per week. Some parents invest more hours than the children in the Internet.

All of the participants had computers in their homes. The most have the computer in their room with an Internet connection a few have computers in the family room and the in older sibling’s room. It is clear that all the participants have computers in their homes and that they usually they log on alone.

Most of the children are aware of some risks and they can protect themselves against online risks. Children have encountered different risk online but they do not report any bad consequences.

Unwanted exposition was the most prevalent risk among the participant following by online challenge behaviors and dangerous online behavior and the last one online victimization more specifically interpersonal victimization. In detail, the online risks encounter occurred more frequent in this order: unwanted pornography and download copyright material, cyber bullying and flaming, playing mature video games, play violent video games, interchange of nudity or pornography links or mails and excessive use. Also the most talk with unknown people online, only a few disclosure private information like real name or photo, only one participant had meet a stranger in real life, flirting by webcam, receive an invitation by chat to visit a porno webpage, contact with drugs or unpleasant political propaganda or advertising.

Like some of the children that found pornography online, while they were surfing or playing games most of them close the window or when they are chatting stranger send links to pornography pages. Children encounter risk but they do not get involve. Some of the children are aware about chatting to strangers concerned as a risk or it’s a dangerous thing to do.

Some of the families say they use to have rules when the children were younger. Only one family uses parental control software. Mainly parents talk with children.

In case the children experience some problem they will turn to their parents; school to talk with some of their teachers or older siblings.
Two participants were considered with a risky profile due to their online practices or due to how they manage their use of media.

7. Discussion

7.1. Media perception and use among children

Young people “are searching for independence and control, and the internet gives it to them like no other media” (Harris Interactive apud Medoza et al., 2003 a, p2 in Barbovschi and Diaconescu, 2009) Today, as Mediarådet (2008) found in their survey, 40 percent the youth living in Sweden have a computer in their room. In our study, most of the youth have their own computer, which gives them autonomy.

What children like or value more about the internet is its diversity, an ability to have multicultural contact, a fraternity, possibilities of leisure and entertainment, to have control and autonomy, and the possibilities for playful identity experimentation. However, some idealize the internet and say that there is nothing they do not like from the internet, and dislikes among the children were associated with online risks which primarily were with regard to unwanted exposure to content like nudity or pornography, pop-ups, political propaganda, shock photos, online interpersonal victimization (e.g., the rapid distribution of “bad” personal photos; dislikes included sexual victimization (e.g., abuse of children), dangerous risk behaviors (e.g., publishing private information, webcam flirting by young children, be bothered by other people while playing, bad words). They also disliked viruses and slow connections likewise the study of Valkenburg and Soeters (2001) in relation with the “inevitable technical malfunctions”.

Chatting is the most popular online activity among Swedish youth, following by watching videos in YouTube, gaming, and social networks. (Mediarådet, 2008).

We found that children perceived the internet as a useful medium for communication, socialization, entertainment and information gathering.

Online socialization was mainly practiced to enhance existing social networks, but also to meet new people around the world. Chat was a favorite application among all the participants to establish contact, although some also use email, and a few participated in social networks. Entertainment was associated with passive activities like watching videos in YouTube and listening music, but we also found some interest in interactive activities like build a blog and game playing. Playing video games is usually more popular with boys than girls (Mediarådet, 2008), and in our study some girls played games, but mostly notably more moderated than with the boys similar than Medirådet (2008) and World Internet Institute results (2007).
7.2. Media perception and use among parents

“The Net Generation” (Tapscot, 1998) were those born into these technologies, and they easily assimilate it. These children perceive technology as part of their environment, whereas adults adapt themselves, which represents a more difficult a learning process (Tapscott, 1998) especially for those who have witnessed the revolution of communications with the birth of the television because they are less familiar with interactive media. In our study parents easily accept their child’s use of the internet and video games, sometimes even with over self confidence regarding such use by their children. In other cases, parents expressed complaints, although not all demonstrate an ability or willingness to establish limits. It seems that among all the population internet is accepted as “a part of the real world...” of young, as it was pointed out at the Council of Europe’s Pan-European Forum (2006) on Human Rights in the Information Society: Empowering children and young people (Barbovschi and Diaconescu, 2009).

The ‘Young People, New Media’ survey found that 95 percent of parents were broadly positive about computers, but certainly more enthusiastic for their children than for themselves (Livingstone, 2007 in Cankaya, et al., 2008) In our study the parents’ idealizations regarding internet use seems to be correlated with their own weekly investment of increasing amounts of time, in all cases with exception of one person. The most of the parents have in general positive perceptions about internet. Some even visionary, perspective in relation to the educational possibilities. Parents perceive the internet primarily as a valuable tool for information gathering and communication, but some also view it as an acceptable or positive entertainment medium, and with one parent, as a good way to purchase goods or services. Yet similar with what UKCGO (2005) survey found the most parents exhibited also concerns or even a “moral panic” (Stanley Cohen ,1972 in Buckingham, 2003). Interestingly, the comments of some parents and children reflected a clear influence of the media as a precursor to moral panic, especially with those parents who had little or no familiarity or experience with the internet. Their opinions about the existence of risk were stronger.

The most recurrent negative comments parents made about the internet or video games and children were about the danger of being contacted by strangers, as well as the excessive use of the interactive media technologies. Also included was the possibility of getting into problems, isolation, the effects of violence in video games and cyberbullying were mentioned by some of the parents.

Interestingly, most of the children spent their time online establishing contact with people, or they used online applications like chat, games or social networks where parents know children could be contacted by strangers. This is probably why parents tend to worry about their activities, especially regarding the possibility of sexual online solicitation, which was openly reported by a few parents. Yet, there were no parents who specifically told us a negative association related to online pornography, a risk to which the children in our study are more susceptible. Certainly, when we ask the children how they react when they encounter pornography in web pages, in the typical response was that they close the webpage immediately and that they do not mention it to their parents. This is possibly part of the reason why parents are not aware of this risk, or maybe they do not consider it to be harmful or a serious risk. A study about the exposure of youth to unwanted sexual material found that the short term effect seems not to be harmful or distressful for the majority of youth. Although, one quarter of those exposed were very or extremely upset and one fifth had some apparent stress symptoms related with the episode. (Mitchell, Finkelhor and Wolak, 2003). In our study the children who have been exposed to pornography articulated they do not like it but they said it was not significant. Although, it is important to consider as suggest Mitchell, Finkelhor and Wolak (2003) that “unwanted exposure may affect attitudes about sex, attitudes about the internet,
and young people’s sense of safety and community’ and also it can create guilty feelings and a belief that the revelation of such event can create conflict or restrictions to the internet use among young. (Mitchell, et al., 2003).

Interestingly, a girl, one of the youngest in our study, when she found a pornography site by mistake, she went to the search engine history and deleted the webpage, explaining that she would be ashamed if her father found it out. This is a good example of youth’s digital literacy. Ironically, this was the only family that has software installed to prevent access to unwanted material or adding contacts to messenger. Our findings in this regard coincide with what Livingstone and Bobery (2005) and Fleming, et al. (2006) found, “filtering and blocking software it is only associated with a modest reduction in unwanted exposure”.

7.3. Digital competence and media use

Most of the children in our study are frequent internet users, and most take part in a number of activities that their parents do not, investing the majority up to 10 hours per week on the internet, and 10 hours per week for gamers. In fact, many parents actually invest more hours per week in the internet than the children. Most of the children were not considered to be “higher media consumers” (Mediarådet, 2008) because they didn’t spend three or more hours per day using the internet. In our study we found that usually they use internet alone at home, but that they also use the internet to some degree in the home of friends, and some in the school.

In the most of the cases the children were viewed as more competent with the computer than their parents as point out for (Aarsand, 2007). In a few families among our participants, the oldest son or daughter had the role of supporter for the younger sibling, or even for their parents with respect to internet use. The digital competence of youth seems empowers them in the world of adults. (Tappscott, 1998).

The internet allows youth to take a role of “child-initiated shared decision with adults. Children and young people have the ideas, set up the project, and invite adults to join with them in making decisions”. (Mongomery et al., 2003 pp. 242). Children take an active role, and even though most of the parents do not share in online activities with their children or talk so frequent about what children do online, some parents get involved in projects or daily activities like chat, building a blog, gaming or simply surfing to learn from their children. In fact, when it comes to risk management, some children say that they will try to resolve it by themselves, and when it is not possible, they will arrange a meeting to unhinge the conflicts.

7.4. Rules and protective strategies

The ‘Media & Ungna’ survey found that children and youth usually have rules imposed by their caregivers for using different media, yet we see this more with children than adolescents. In this regard, usually boys have more rules gaming related rules imposed than do girls. Yet when it comes to internet use, girls have more rules than the boys (Mediarådet, 2008). In our study, most parents implemented different types the strategies, primarily to talk with their children about what they should not do in the internet, and also to limit their time of use. Parents use other strategies to monitor their child’s media use, including having the television in the living and/or computer in the living room, regularly checking what they are doing online, and deleting contacts from messenger account. Only one family uses parental control software. Most parents express trust with what their
children do and say and most parents feel they can support their child when it comes to internet risk and problems. Parents express that they would seek assistance from law enforcement, school officials or community psychologists if they felt it was necessary. The children we spoke to said they would talk to parents, teachers, or older siblings if they needed to.

7.5. Online Risk encounters

Most participants in this study had been exposed to some type of online risk, however, levels of risk were diverse and it seems that they are capable of protecting themselves. Examples provided included ignoring uncomfortable or inappropriate comments and invitations, closing pornography web pages, or reporting had been cyberbullying (2 of 11) or harassed (1 of 11) at some point by someone they know. Any none of the children, even those had been victims of cyberbullying, reported negative experiences associated with their internet use. Only one boy say he feels bad when he lose in the video game. However, some refer back to the risks they had encountered online, but they expressed that it was not serious. Livinestone and Bober (2005) found that the 57 percent of 9 to 19 years old, have come into contact with online pornography. In our study we found pornography to be the most common risk encounter among the participants. It usually occurred when encountering web pages pop-ups or by clicking on a Webpage link by mistake. Less commonly, we found some where the source was email or links sent by friends during a chat session.

According to Livingstone and Bober (2005), boys experienced more risk toward finding unwanted pornography content, or violent/racist web pages. Also, various studies have found that is more common for boys to seek out pornographic material (e.g., Valkenburg 2006; Wolak et al. 2007b; Ybarra and Mitchell 2005 in Enhancing Child Safety & Online Technologies, 2008). It was not the case in our study. Even though there were fewer girls in our study, a greater percentage of girls (than boys) reported that they found pornography, and it seems that girls between the ages of 15 and 16 years interchange emails and links with nudity or pornography in our study. Yet, it seems that in most cases, exposure to pornography is unwanted rather than wanted. However, a few boys reported that they found themselves in contact with unwanted violence in web pages yet more common wanted in video games. In fact, 2 boys in this study, 11 and 14 years old, played mature video games, which seems to be a commonplace practice with this sample and age group. A study conducted in the USA, with 1254 participants of both genders ages 12 to 14, found that playing mature-rated games is common among 12 to 14 years old. Almost half played at least one violent (mature-rated) game regularly (68 percent of boys and 29 percent of girls). (Olson, et.al., 2007). This can also be observed in some game centers in Sweden.

Other reported child related risks included receiving nasty comments, mainly while they are gaming or chatting. Some (3 of 11) of the participants had been victims of cyberbullying by someone they know by cell phone and/or instant messenger. According to Mediarådet 18 percent of youths between 12 and 16 had been victims of cyberbullying. The risk seems to increase for those whose parents are born outside Sweden, 3 percent versus 1 percent of those whose parents are born in Sweden. (Mediarådet, 2008). Most participants in our study are the children of second generation immigrants to Sweden. Excessive use of the Internet is supported in one case by the participant’s self-report of sleep deprivation during weekends caused by using the Internet and dependency on being connected. The mother also complained of the excessive use. In another case, a parent reported excessive use of the Internet and playing of video games. Sleep deprivation can be worrying if it is prevalent. Although as Mark Griffiths points out, it is necessary to distinguish between “excessive activity and addictive activity (admittedly they do over lap on occasions), the
difference between healthy excessive enthusiasms and addiction is that healthy excessive enthusiasms add to life, whereas addiction takes away from it”. (Griffiths, 2005 in Griffiths, 2007). In both cases we see some negative consequences (see the “individual cases analyses” for details) but there are only some factors and may not be associated with addiction. Signs of addiction or related symptoms were not investigated.

The transmission of links via a chat application or instant messenger is one of the strategies commonly used by pedophiles (Barnardo’s, 2004) and is considered an online solicitation. In our study, one participant received an online solicitation, but ignored it.

Evidently, as suggested, (Ybarra, et.al., 2007). “many types of online behaviors considered risky are becoming normative”. We found that contact with strangers and the downloading of copyrighted material is commonplace, at least with our participants.

Almost half of our participants’ downloaded copyrighted material. This coincides with the Mediarådet survey which found that 27 percent of internet active youth download music, movies, games or software. We found this to be a risk related behavior solely due to it being a practice of acquiring copyrighted material without legal foundation.

Establishing contact with online strangers is a behavior encouraged by the online socialization in chats, social network communities and video games. (Wolak et al., 2002).

These studies have found that “the majority of Internet-initiated connections involving youth appear to be friendship related, and nonsexual, and formed between similar-aged youth and known to parents” (Wolak et al. 2002). In our study, even though most do not socialize with strangers, the ones that do it report to never disclose private personal information.

8. Final comments

It seems that the participants of our study have learned to manage internet risk, and that this medium offers these children more opportunities than dangers, yet not less daily challenges. For the most part, the children in our study appear to be aware of risk and are in the practice of protecting themselves. None of the children in our study reported strong negative consequence or experience relating to their use of such interactive media technologies. Only one boy have fight for a video game in the school and one girl show sleep deprivation during weekends by use the internet. As previously suggested (Ybarra, et.al., 2007)., “many types of online behaviors considered risky are becoming normative” in the life of youth. As we examine online risk, it is necessary to consider that “in general, behaviors manifested by large numbers of people, fail to predict events that are relatively uncommon”. (Wolak, et al. 2008 in Wolak, 2008). It seems that “Psychosocial factors, family dynamics surrounding particular minor are better predictors of risk than the use of specific media or technologies. (Enhancing Child Safety & Online Technologies, 2008for Internet & Society at Harvard University, 2008). Yet, it is surprising and worrying that in a group
of 11 children 3 had been victim of cyberbullying some time by some classmate or family member. Although we do not know how often this have happened.

Concerns of adults and authorities regarding the use of new media technologies among youth, in some cases are grounded in fact, and in others cases are due to a generational gap (e.g., different perceptions or attitudes toward technology between youth and older generations). The implementation of a safe, healthy and balanced use of interactive media technology strategies seriously challenges us to protect youth from possible online dangers without depriving them of online opportunities. We cannot, and should not, avoid embracing the potential of our new digital era. Rather, we must diligently work to optimize the psychological and social benefits of emerging interactive virtual technologies while finding effective ways to reduce the risks or dangers it can present in some cases.

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Appendices

1. Letter

Stockholm University
Department of Child and Youth Studies

Dear parents,

Our names are Angelica Ortiz and Rawia Eltayeb. We are studying a course called “Children, Culture and Globalization at Stockholm University. As our final project, Uppsats-C, we would like to conduct qualitative research.

Today, the intensive use and access to media technologies such internet and video games by our younger generations have brought us many new opportunities; but also, it represents new challenges in order to ensure the safety and healthy development of our youth. For this reason, we are interested in exploring the challenges and risks related to internet use among young people.

In order to attain our goal, we must conduct interviews with children between the ages of 12 and 16 years old, as well as their parents.

We hope that you and your children will want to collaborate with us. The interviews will be in English, although we speak and understand Swedish, and will need to be recorded. It may take 30-50 minutes with your child and 30 – 60 minutes with you, at a location and time that is suitable for you. We intend to conduct these interviews in April and no later May 11th. The interviews with the children will take place at the school for their security and your peace-of-mind.

Please, do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to take part in this interview or if you have any further questions.

Also, we would be very thankful if you could recommend to us anyone you feel may be interested in participating.

With your collaboration, the result of this thesis will be presented at Stockholm University in the beginning of June 2009. If you are interested, we would be happy to share a copy of our thesis with you.

We want to emphasise that you and your child are guaranteed complete anonymity. All data will be decoded and your names will remain anonymous. The records used during the interviews will be destroyed after the thesis is finished.

Thank you for your participation and we look forward to meeting you!

If you have any questions, you can contact us via the contact information shown below, or if you prefer, you can contact our supervisor Karin Sandqvist. Karin.Sandqvist@buv.su.se

You are welcome to visit our blog at: http://onlinechallengesandrisks.wordpress.com

Rawia Eltayeb
Rawia60@hotmail.com
Angelica Ortiz
Angelica.ortiz@cyberpsyke.org
2. Guide lines

2.1 Children guide line
Gender  M  F  Age ____________  Grade________________________
School __________________________

I. Child Profile

1. How many hours do you use?
   Internet  Video games
   a. 1 to 5  a. 1 to 5
   b. 5 to 10  b. 5 to 10
   c. 10 to 15  c. 10 to 15
   d. 15 to 20  d. 15 to 20
   e. 20 to 25  e. 20 to 25
   f. 25 to 30  f. 25 to 30
   g. More than 30  g. More than 30

2. What do you usually do online?

3. Where do you usually access internet or gaming?

4. Do you log in alone?
   Internet  Gaming
   Yes  Yes
   No  No

II. Preferences & Online activity

5. Could you tell me please what you like most about the internet?

6. Now could you tell me what you like least about the internet?

7. Do you reveal to them your real life identity online?
   a. Posted personal information
   b. Age or year of birth
   c. Real last name, telephone number, school name, or home address
   d. Picture

Optional question:
Do you have online friends?
Have you met these people in RL? No. Why?
Do you think this is a safe thing to do?
II. Challenges, Risk & impact

8. Do you think there are dangers or risks in the internet?

9. Have you ever experienced something that makes you feel bad while you were surfing the internet or while you were gaming?

Optional questions based on their answer:
- How does it make you feel?
- Did you tell someone about it?

10. Did you ever feel worried or threatened because someone was bothering or harassing you online?

11. Have you ever received nasty comments, threatening or aggressive comments via chat, text message, web pages, or mobile sms? how and what happened?

Optional questions base in the answer:
- Did you know the sender?
- What do you think about it?
- How do you think you could avoid it?

12. While surfing the internet, or via chat or e-mail, have you been in contact with any web pages that show nudity, drugs, violent or some similar taboo topic?

III. Parents role

13. How do you think your parents understand/perceive your online activities?

14. Do you talk with your parents about what you do online?

15. If for example something happened while you were on the internet, that you think is wrong, unwanted, inappropriate or offensive do you know with whom you can talk about it or where you can ask for help?

2.2 Parents guide line

Age ___________________________ Gender M  F
Children ______________________

I. Parent profile

1. Do you use, or are familiar with, any of these applications or concepts?
   a. Webpage information
   b. Blogging
   c. Forums
   d. Chat
   e. Instant messenger
f. Online 3d communities  
g. Online Gambling  
h. Other. What _______

2. How many hours per week do you use the internet?
   Internet
   a. 1 to 5  
   b. 5 to 10  
   c. 10 to 15  
   d. 15 to 20  
   e. 20 to 25  
   f. 25 to 30  
   g. More than 30

III. Perceptions or preconceptions about technology

3. How do you perceive the use of the internet and video games by young people?

IV. Parents role

4. Do you get involved in the online activities of your child? Yes, No Why

5. Does your child talk about his/her online activities? Yes, No, why do you think?

V. Child online habits

6. Where does you child use the internet or gaming frequently or typically?

7. How many hours per week does your child use internet and/or video games?

VI. Risk management

8. Do you have strategies to protect your child from his/her online interactivity?
   a. Rules  
   b. Filters  
   c. Antivirus  
   d. Discussion about risk or activities online  
   e. 

9. Do you think you child is aware of internet risks?

10. Do you feel capable of supporting your child in the case he or she presents to you an online problem?

11. If it was a more serious problem, that you feel you could not resolve in your family, do you know where find help?

2.3. Online Risk  Guide line use during the Interview

Characteristics of Specific Online Behaviors in 2006 detected in 1497 youth adapted from study made by Ybarra, Mitchell et al. 2007.

Online Behavior
Disclosure of personal information
- Posted personal information
- Age or year of birth
- Real last name, telephone number, school name, or home address
- Picture

Sent personal information
- Age or year of birth
- Real last name, telephone number, school name, or home address
- Picture
- Sent picture to more 1 person

Harassing behavior
- Made rude or nasty comments to someone on the Internet
- Someone else started making the rude and nasty comments
- Made comments to someone youth knew in person
- With friends or other kids when did this
- Made comments to someone youth only knew online
- Respondent started making the rude and nasty comments

Used Internet to harass or embarrass someone youth was mad at
- Someone else started making the rude and nasty comments
- Made comments to someone youth knew in person
- With friends or other kids when did this
- Respondent started making the rude and nasty comments
- Made comments to someone youth only knew online
- To _1 person

Talking with someone met online
- Had people on “buddy list” known only online
- Meeting someone online (number of ways)
- People met online in other ways (eg, instant messaging)
- People you get information from
- People met through online dating or romance sites
- People met through family

Sexual behavior
- Talking about sex with someone met online
- With friends or other kids when doing this
- Thought person was an adult
- Adult started the talk about sex first
- Youth started the talk about sex with the adult
- Posting a sexual picture of self
- Sending a sexual picture of self

Pornography seeking
- Going to X-rated sites on purpose
- With friends or other kids when doing this
- Went to site because another kid you knew in person told you about it
- Went to site because of an online search
• Went to site because of pop-up advertisements in Web sites
• Went to site because of spam e-mail
• Went to site because another kid you met online told you about it
• Went to site because an adult you met online told you about it