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# WHO LIKES IN THE END? METHODS FOR IMPROVING THE SAFE USE OF THE INTERNET[**]

## Introduction

New forms and spaces have appeared along with the omnipresence of the Internet; however, the Internet includes several risks in addition to its countless advantages. Its users can become victims easily if they are not sensible enough in the online space. That is why in this study I outline the use of the Internet by young people, then, I present electronic bullying as one of the online dangers, which nowadays is becoming increasingly problematic among young people. Finally, in the practical part of my study, I introduce student-oriented and training-based solutions, methodological tips, and practical exercises that can be adopted easily in order to educate students to become more aware and ethics-driven Internet users.

## Young people in the online space

In the 50s and 60s, books, the radio, the theatre and the cinema were the most important means of cultural transmission, but they were replaced by television in the 70s. The use of telecommunication media like television and the radio became an important component of the Hungarian way of life. That was the only information and educational opportunity for many people. Television became a medium that transmitted values. Computers became more widely available from the end of the 80s, which considerably changed every area of everyday life (Valuch 2001). Leisure time was the product of the industrial society, and, likewise, the information society also produces a new and specific form of time: the e-time, which is a social

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construction, a new organizing principle of social life. This creates a new type of disorder, blurring the boundaries between work, leisure and entertainment. People do not have to postpone their relaxation until they finish work because a flexible view of time that characterizes e-time opens the way to making choices based on their individual preferences. People can spend even the smallest amount of time for their personal purposes and whenever they wish to by using ICTs (Fekete-Tibori 2018).

With the penetration of web 2.0 applications and the global spread of the Internet, information explosion started, which also has an impact on the rising generation (Tóth-Mózer 2013). For today's children/young people, the Internet is not only a means of telecommunication but also a tool of personal communication, a field of self-fulfillment and an opportunity of expression. The Internet provides new forms of personal communication, meeting or contacting other people (Ujhelyi 2015). It can be concluded that people used the Internet only via their computers until 2008, however, by 2016 the access to the Internet exceeded the spread of computers (laptops or tablets). There was a sharp increase in the spread of ICT devices owned by young people, and in 2012 every second mobile phone included an Internet subscription, whereas, according to the latest statistics, 70% of these devices have an Internet connection today. 88% of people between 15 and 29 may be considered daily Internet users, while every fourth person in this age group is online on a permanent basis. In addition, 79% are members of an online community site, which meant mainly Facebook in 2016 (Hungarian Youth cited by Bene 2018a, p. 77.). Based on the results of the 2016 survey, it can be assumed that the major part of young people's conversations with their friends is made online. It can be said that the digital culture we are living in now is the individual's culture that has crystallized mostly with the spread of smart phones (Fekete-Tibori 2018).

The creation of this digital Eden has to a certain extent been imposed on young people organizing their everyday life, including online food ordering and purchasing, writing or sharing various posts or comments. Hankiss Elemér (1998) wrote in his study entitled *Proletarian Renaissance* that in our society, purposes, values and behaviors underwent a deep transformation. It can be observed that the importance of "we", namely the community, has been replaced by the importance of "I", in other words, by the individualist approach. This kind of culture has been largely shaped by digital culture. Regarding the significant role of social media, it is worth reflecting on the (particularly important) role of likes. In the online space, the number of shares or likes means prestige. Digital self-representation, the idea of "Show yourself" has appeared. In the digital space, positive personal feed-

back has been replaced by likes that represent values. It can be even said that the number of likes has become a new status symbol, in addition to the fact that this secures a livelihood for influencers, in other words, it can be converted into economic capital.

Performances or situations shown online do not need to be real – in the online world, it is enough to create the illusion of reality. Experience shows that the desire to share opinions exists also online, which is also intensified by the increased feeling of freedom (Csepeli 2014). Young people continuously post pictures about their everyday life, by which they create a pretended life they wish other people believed they lead. Users find confirmation that other people like them. Researchers from Brunel University London conducted a study investigating a possible connection between a Facebook situation and self-assessment. The researchers revealed that those persons who get more likes and comments enjoy the benefits of social acceptance, whereas the users who get fewer likes or comments feel ostracized (Havey-Puccio 2018). The users who share contents, even if occasionally, do better on social media platforms. That fact was confirmed by researches from Humboldt University of Berlin and Technical University of Darmstadt. They discovered that the people who are simple observers in the social media world are more likely to experience negative emotions. In particular, the visual circus on Facebook arouses such negative emotions (Klausz 2017).

A research made in 2013 pointed out that young people cannot imagine living without using social media. There are roughly 2% of those who do not visit social media and approximately only 2% of those who do not have a Facebook account (László-Danó 2015). It is worth mentioning that Facebook and other social media are not communities in the classic sense of the word but they are places that provide opportunities for social meetings that can and do create communities (Aczél 2015 cited by Andok 2016). However, social media do not create a community, but a sense of community (Papacharissi 2014, 2015 cited by Andok 2016).

Vodafone Hungary and NCR carried out a study among people between 16 and 37, confirming that 89 % of Internet users have a smart phone and this ratio is even higher for young people between 16 and 21 (95%). Internet users spend, on average, 3.1 hours a day surfing the Internet and 1.8 hours using social media. They spend 22 hours a week surfing the Internet, watching mainly funny contents or films and listening to music online. They use Facebook, Facebook Messenger and YouTube in order to maintain contacts with others and gather information. The very first thing 30% of them do at school or at work is check their social media, and 55% of them get annoyed

if their friends report on everything (ca. 30 % of Hungarian young people are addicted to social media (Press Release Vodafone 2017)).

## Dangers of the online space – what people should know about electronic bullying?

Communication on the Internet can have consequences if a user attributes a psychological meaning to a technical problem; physical separation also appears to be an issue, as well as the changing role of the Internet space. In addition, communication on the Internet is characterized by the fact that it is text-based and there are not many nonverbal signs. Despite emoticons and language softeners, conversations are made with difficulty and messages may seem to be colder, which, among others, can lead to frustration. It should also be noted that a major part of online communication is recorded (Ujhelyi 2015 cited by Domonkos 2018). Brain studies prove that the stimulus threshold in adolescents has increased, they hardly tolerate frontal work, and they prefer multimedia to the dominance of texts (Tóth-Mózer 2013). However, everyday experience and the latest research challenge the assumption that this age group can manage digital tools easily (Fehér-Hornyák 2010, Buda 2013). In many cases, the proliferation of digital tools is not in direct proportion to the appropriate level of information literacy. Information literacy should be improved by developing a conscious way or form of thinking tailored to people's interests, and not by using technical tools (Rab 2007). Although students spend a lot of time in front of their screens, only a few of them can creatively use new media in the learning process, which is caused by the fact that not many students produce and/or develop individual/social contents. Technical knowledge is therefore not age-dependent (Tóth-Mózer 2013). One of the consequences of the inappropriate use of the Internet can be cyberbullying, or, in other words, electronic bullying.

Cyberbullying can be committed, among others, via social media platforms, e-mails, SMS and MMS messages (Klausz 2017 cited by Bene 2018b). There are several types of electronic bullying. Based on the works by Klausz Melinda (2017) and Nagy Tamás (2010), the following cases can be listed (cited by Bene 2018b):

– anonymous messages with an upsetting content;
– unauthorized access to a user's personal account;
– online identity theft or fraud;
– distribution of private information without any consent;
– editing or distribution of personal pictures or videos in order to humiliate a given person;

– anonymous calls;
– creation of a homepage or a blog in order to discredit someone;
– hacking and altering a homepage or a blog;
– providing incorrect information to authorities and Internet service providers in order to cause adverse consequences for someone;
– spreading vicious rumors via online tools;
– preventing online access;
– neglecting or discrimination in the online environment.

Electronic bullying can have serious emotional or social consequences for the victim, it can even harm the victim, to such an extent that the person can commit suicide (Lile 2017 cited by Balas-Timar et al. 2017). The importance of social capital is worth mentioning at this point. Social capital consists of all the actual and potential resources that include such things as the possession of a permanent network of more or less institutional relations of mutual acquaintances or recognition. In other words, these are resources based on a membership in a particular group (Bourdieu 2010). Social capital has a significant role to play if a person falls victim to online bullying. Such a victim is isolated and insecure, has few friends and low self-esteem (Gradinger 2009, Limber 2002 cited by Domonkos 2014), what is more, the person's relations with classmates are poor (Domonkos 2014). A passive coping strategy is ineffective in general, and the victims who speak to someone about intimidation or try to manage the problem report fewer health problems (Wöllink et al. 2013 cited by Domonkos 2014). It is important that the family stands by the victim because, as numerous studies show, emotional support mitigates the negative consequences of online bullying and reduces the probability of being cyberbullied again. Thus, it is important to activate a wider environment as well as observers and peer groups (Nixon 2014; Barlinska, Szuster, Winiewski 2013; Völlink, Bolman, Dehue, Jacobs 2013 cited by Zsila, Ujhelyi, Demetrovics 2015). Given the foregoing, it is essential what network of connections the victim has because this is crucial whether the person can discuss their problem with anybody and ask for help, and whether the person's environment stands by them in the case of bullying. Albert Fruzsina and her co-authors (2017) write in connection with social integration that close and important personal relations mean that the individual has social resources from which they can get physical and mental support in a difficult life situation (Albert et al. 2017). Based on the foregoing, it is important to claim that assisting professionals dealing with young people acquire new roles and learn methods, so that they could draw the attention of youth to the dangers of the Internet.

This article responds to a range of phenomena related to electronic bullying; however, it is worth making a few brief remarks on the issue of adult content which also influences the development of the younger age group. Majority of people have already seen such content; however, it is still a TABOO. On average, children come across adult films at the age of 11, and 60-90% of young people at 16 have already seen hardcore porn. Additionally, one third of teenagers believe the quality of sexual relations is determined by porn. Young people's sexual receptiveness is transformed by hardcore porn. In the worst case, hardcore porn justifies violence (Havey-Puccio 2018). Anthony Jack and Professor Gary Wilson (2015) write in the foreword of their book entitled *Your brain on porn* that porn can cause sexual dysfunctions in late adolescence. In addition, pornography is the most deterrent example of how the Internet can depersonalize people. Another interesting question regarding this issue is: Why do young people search for such content? Havey & Puccio (2018) list the following ones: curiosity, pleasure, and pressure from their peers. Many adolescents believe they can learn from pornography. Hevesi Krisztina (2014) clarifies in her book entitled *Szextrém* that the purpose of pornography is nothing else but triggering sexual arousal. One finds adult content online accidentally as it is difficult to find in search engines any word that would not be connected with sexual content. Online erotica causes people drift apart from true and real relations. Pornography emphasizes the technical side of sexuality and it strengthens egocentric pleasure instead of intimacy and emotional involvement. Hevesi (2014) also agrees that minors are a particularly endangered group. They lack any preliminary experience, and thus regard online adult films as an authentic source of information, collate themselves with it, and try to apply what they see in such films in life. However, the main question is what future parents, teachers or social professionals can do: How can they speak to young people about such and similar issues? Havey and Puccio launched the RAP project in 2012 (Raising Awareness and Prevention), in which the issues of personal safety, online porno, cyberbullying, like-spamming, and sexting are explained to young people. Since many teenagers use porn as a sex instruction manual, they no longer believe that physical closeness is an open and intimate dialogue between two people who are important to each other. In conversations about relations, they mention the following relation development sequence: friendship, emotion, intimacy.

## The role of a training method in developing safety on the Internet

As mentioned before, assisting professionals (mediators, school social workers, teachers, etc.) who work with young people have to learn new methods

and roles in order to help young people prepare for digital self-defense or cope with problems adequately: they should help victims and act against offenders in a constructive way.

Assisting professionals should be digital guides (Fegyverneki 2017) that effectively help young people find their way in the online labyrinth. For this reason, I briefly present the methodology of the training and, next, describe how this training method can be used in classes or sessions dedicated to Internet safety.

The word "tréning" is the Hungarian equivalent for the English word „training". During the training, the trainers can develop, for example, social skills required for establishing human relations. The participants' empathy, openness and creativity can be developed. The knowledge acquired through this method can be useful for everyone and it can be used everywhere (Koncz 1993). The person who applies this method should have an assisting personality. Such a personality sees others and otherness positively, has strong empathic skills and intuition, and is driven by prosocial motivations. Trainers have the following personal features: intellectual and interpersonal skills, success orientation, stable personality, intellectual curiosity, organizing and managing skills, program development and management skills (Koncz 2015). Participants using this method can gain personal experience, acquire new knowledge about themselves, other people, and their attitude to different situations through empirical learning. To achieve all this, various games, simulation exercises, and role plays are applied by the trainers (Légrádiné 2006).

Below, I present some ideas that can be used in sessions on online safety:

**Example 1. Brainstorming**
The purpose of brainstorming is to create as many ideas as possible through the cooperation within the group. This mainly includes analysis, understanding a problem or negligence, and finding development possibilities. The stages of this brainstorming are as follows: 1) formulating a brainstorming question: it should be formulated without any suggestions, so that the problem remains open-ended 2) setting the purpose: it should be clearly stated for what purpose brainstorming is conducted 3) describing the rules (Páskuné 2006).
Exemplary questions:
*How could you most effectively help a person exposed to electronic bullying?*
*How can you reduce the risk of becoming a victim of electronic bullying?*
*Why does a person become a victim?*
*Why do you think a person becomes an offender?*
*Who can you contact if you became a victim of electronic bullying?*

**Example 2. The Internet is like. . .**

The purpose of this word association game is to help children capture certain aspects of the Internet by triggering verbal or visual associations. The associations can explain the essence of these aspects by way of similes. Incidentally, the citation at the beginning of this study is also a result of this exercise. It is recommended that the participants produce a sentence, write it on the board so that everybody can see it all the time. It is worth using this exercise as a tuning in at the beginning of the session. This exercise can also be adapted to the online participants by using the Mentimeter software[1]. The results of the exercise can be presented as follows:
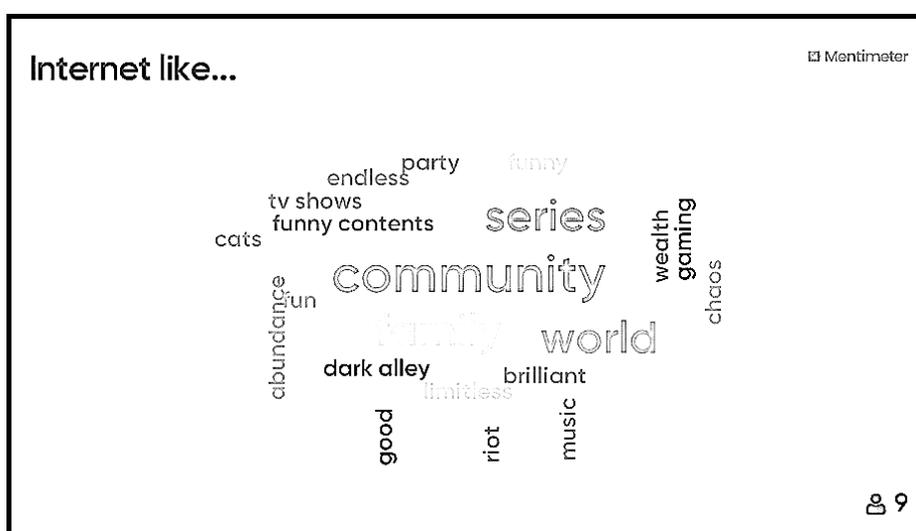


Figure 1. What comes into your mind when you hear the word "Internet"? – Results of
an online safety workshop.
*Source:* Author's own work.

As far as the use of the Mentimeter program is concerned, it is important to mention the advantages of learning supported by mobile devices. Interactivity is one of the advantages of mobile learning as digital texts, pictures, videos and sounds popping up on mobile devices provide instant

[1]The visualization of the online learning environment and social platforms as learning spaces connects offline school environments with online scenes, which raises new issues concerning the role of online representation and Internet safety in addition to the methodological issues of teaching theory and teaching information technology. If online platforms are used as learning environment, it is worth considering the features of the Internet and social media as the social environment Internet (Domonkos 2018).

feedback. Further aspects not to be underestimated are its motivating and activating effect. For example, the use of ICT devices in classes motivates students because thereby they consider the tasks more interesting and more colorful. Based on the theory of digital culturally responsive pedagogy, one can say that the teaching-learning process can be more effective if students carrying out a task can apply their favorite technical devices used by them their free time. Last but not least, these devices can open the way towards testing new methods, namely individual, pair or group work can be made more exciting and mobile devices can be involved into discovering learning, cooperative learning and project pedagogy (Fegyverneki-Aknai 2017).

**Example 3. Role play**

It is a simulation game. Role playing is characterized by dramatizing visualization which is a reality test without consequences, and where roles are implemented using behavioral toolbox. Some of its advantages are that students get into a lifelike situation and learning is suggestive and convincing; they learn to think with somebody else's head; it increases students' empathic skills and develops their cooperative skills; the observer role can help develop critical behavior, etc. However, this method requires much time and commitment and it can be a source of conflicts within a group (Páskuné 2006). Also, major arrangements are required from the trainer here. In my experience, for introducing the issues of Internet safety and electronic bullying, a situation chosen should be based on a true event. The trainer can select a case from a news article or a blog entry. Next, the trainer makes case cards for the roles based on the true story and hands them out to the training participants. It is also important that observation criteria are established in order to engage other participants in the following conversation.

Due to editorial limitations, in this article, I could present a discussion based on only a few methods used; however, there are countless techniques and methods that can be applied in trainings. According to Rudas János (2007), the following types of tasks can be used for training purposes: warm-ups, tuning-in tasks; interactive exercises; self-evaluation questionnaires; aquarium exercises; group task solutions; combined task solutions; role plays; closing exercises (Rudas 2007 cited by Juhász 2009).

**Summary**

At the beginning of the article, I showed what young people should learn in the online space, what they are involved in, by what values they are guided in their everyday life. In the second part, I discussed the essential role of social capital if young people fall victims to electronic bullying. Finally, using the training method, I attempted to give an idea of what tasks can

be included by assisting professionals holding a session on Internet safety. It should be also added that it is important that professionals should have knowledge on the issue or methodology, so that they can to lead a session in a correct way, be able to manage disputes, and give a credible response to the questions that were raised.

## Literature

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# WHO LIKES IN THE END? METHODS FOR IMPROVING THE SAFE USE OF THE INTERNET

**Keywords:** training methods, Internet safety, ICT devices, cyberbullying.

Educators and social experts must face a new challenge caused by the digital revolution. The online sphere, especially social media, plays an important role in young people's lives. Due to the Internet, they can easily gain information, use their creativity and create vlogs and blogs. On the other hand, the Internet has a dark side, which consists in cyberbullying, fake news and self-esteem issues. For some experts, it is difficult to keep up with these changes and talk about them with young people. Nevertheless, they must reach young people and help them find balance in the digital paradise. The article presents the phenomena of electronic bullying and the importance of training methods in education. The author discusses good practices and gives examples of how ICT devices support participants' learning.

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# KTO W KOŃCU LUBI? SPOSOBY PODNIESIENIA BEZPIECZEŃSTWA KORZYSTANIA Z INTERNETU

**Słowa kluczowe:** metody kształcenia, bezpieczeństwo w Internecie, urządzenia ICT, znęcanie się bullying.

Nauczyciele, edukatorzy muszą zmierzyć się z nowym wyzwaniem, które spowodowała rewolucja cyfrowa. Przestrzeń cyfrowa, zwłaszcza media społecznościowe, odgrywają ważną rolę w życiu młodych ludzi. Dzięki Internetowi mogą z łatwością uzyskiwać informacje, mają szansę wykorzystać swoją kreatywność i tworzyć blogi lub videoblogi. Z drugiej strony Internet ma „ciemną stronę", na którą składa się cyberprzemoc, fałszywe wiadomości i problemy z samooceną. Niektórym nauczycielom trudno jest dotrzymać kroku narastającym zmianom i rozmawiać o nich z młodymi ludźmi. Niemniej jednak muszą oni dotrzeć do młodych ludzi i pomóc im znaleźć równowagę w cyfrowym raju. W artykule przedstawiono zjawisko cyfrowego znęcania się (bullyingu) i znaczenie metod kształcenia w edukacji. Napisano o dobrych praktykach i wskazano przykłady, w jaki sposób urządzenia ICT wspierają proces uczenia się uczestników.