



*Guidance and Learning
App for Adult Digital Education*

GLAD **Guidance and Learning App** **for Adult Digital Education**

Handbook for Educators

Building the Capacity of Parents in the Digital Era

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PREPARED AND DEVELOPED BY THE GLAD PROJECT TEAM



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Welcome!

About GLAD

GLAD – “Guidance and Learning App for Adult Digital Education” – was a 2-year European project funded by the Erasmus+ programme. The project aimed to empower adults, adult carers, and adult educators in improving parents’ digital literacy and developing useful skills and strategies that will lead in the effective digital education of children.

Through the GLAD project, we developed:

- A safe pattern of training for parents, focusing on the relation between parents and children in technology usage.
- A better understanding on how technologies affects the parent-child relations.
- Ready-to-use educational and entertaining materials, including the Handbook for Educators, a set of interactive Toolkits for Parents, and an innovative Game Application for parents and children.

In this way, we contributed to the current situation in Europe regarding the digital literacy of parents, by creating better-equipped adults, educators and adult carers to support their digital education, so that in turn, parents can ameliorate their influence on child development.

Our Team

The GLAD team comprises of six dynamic organizations from Poland, Cyprus, Italy, Spain, and Romania, with long experience in project management, education, and the training of professionals.



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<https://www.oic.lublin.pl>



<https://www.eurosc.eu>



<http://www.goneisdemotikonlca.com>



<https://www.neo-sapiens.com>



<https://www.polygonalngo>



<https://www.facebook.com/MixtSource>



How to use this Handbook

The purpose of this Handbook is to equip adult educators, trainers, and facilitators with relevant skills and competences regarding the digital education of parents, through teaching them ways to become more digitally aware and foster a good cooperation and communication system with their children using technology and the media.

The Handbook should be considered more of a guidance book; it does not aim to “tell adult educators what to do”, but rather enhance their role as facilitators and supporters in guiding parents and carers in establishing stronger relations with their children through and with technology.

The activities and theoretical material embedded can be modified or adjusted in any training setting and context, and used based on trainees' individual needs and expectations. Through reading the Handbook, educators will be introduced to new perspectives in the areas of digital and parental mediation, as well as training and facilitation methodologies and techniques that will help them build a comprehensive learning experience with the parents.

Structure

The Handbook for Educators is divided into 2 main parts:

PART 1: Let's Dive In – The Theory

This first part of the Handbook will focus on theory, as educators will be introduced to major concepts and methodologies regarding the digital education of parents. At first, educators will be able to define methods to foster parents' engagement and collaboration with their children and learn about ways to facilitate their knowledge-sharing abilities. Moreover, Part 1 will dive in crucial strategies to ensure parents and children's online safety, ways to efficiently search for information online and assess the reliability of online resources, as well as parental control techniques. Finally, educators will explore the meaning of Digital Wellbeing and why it matters to parents, including the various threats and risks children encounter online, as well as the core rules of “Netiquette”.

Part 1 includes the modules:

- Engaging Parents
- Resourcing the Internet
- Promoting Digital Wellbeing

PART 2: Let's Get Practical

The second part of the handbook will be more practice-oriented, as it will provide educators with the main principles of facilitation, actively learning techniques and useful ICT Tools and mediation methods to apply during a training activity. Moreover, educators will learn ways to foster parents' creativeness and critical thinking, and gain valuable insights to create accessible spaces and participative environments, based on parents' social and cultural characteristics and digital skills. Finally, Part 2 will explore the basic steps in order to organize a learning activity with parents, from selecting the right methodology to implementing assessment and evaluation methods.

Part 2 includes the modules:

- Facilitating Digital Competence Learning
- Empowering Parents
- GLAD to Teach! How to Set Up a Training Activity
- Assessment

Each module contains:

- An introduction highlight the main topics to be covered in the module
- A theoretical content covering the most important elements of each topic
- Case studies and good practices from Europe and around the world
- Individual and group activities to help educators assimilate and test the knowledge provided
- A summary of the main outcomes and "lessons learned"
- Questions for educators to reflect on the topics covered

In addition to the training modules, the Handbook also includes a complete bibliography, a glossary with important terms and definitions, as well as a treasury with additional resources (articles, publications, videos, websites, etc.) to enhance further the knowledge of educators regarding digital education, parental

Methodology

The development on this Handbook was largely based on a quantitative and qualitative research conducted by the GLAD partnership in Poland, Cyprus, Italy, Spain, and Romania, using questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The field research involved 97 parents and 52 educators, who provided their insights regarding the skills, channels, media, and competencies needed by both groups in order to facilitate adequate functioning in the area of digital technologies. The analysis of these results led to the creation of a digital competence profile for parents and adult educators. Visit our website www.digitalparent.eu and discover more information about our research.

Enjoy reading the Handbook!
The GLAD project team



PART 1

Let's Dive In

The Theory

MODULE 1: Engaging Parents

In a Nutshell

The first module of the Handbook introduces the concepts of digital mediation and literacy and the importance for parents to engage in the digital life of their children. The module sets the theoretical ground of the rest of this Handbook and explores definitions, concepts, and methodologies that will be explored afterwards.

In this module, educators will learn about:

- The principles of good parenting
- Digital mediation
- Principles of parents' involvement applied to technology and media use
- Engaging parents in children's digital life
- Steps for the creation of Parent Communities

Dive In

Screens are here to stay. Emerging technologies, social media, and the internet play a much more significant role in our lives than ever before. More crucially, they have drastically changed the way family members communicate and spend time with each other, solve daily problems, and engage in common activities. In the light of this new reality, parents are faced with everyday challenges when it comes to raising their children. Undoubtedly, the fundamental role of parents remains unchanged: *parents and caregivers need to nurture, protect, and guide children, empowering them to become good citizens and recognizing their values as persons with their own rights. Yet, giving the increasing use of technology and media by children and adolescences, parents should not only participate in the digital age, but actually understand their children's activity and behaviours online, be able to recognize potential threats that children might encounter, and act as "digital providers"* (Milovidov, 2020).

Like all parents, parents in the digital era need to become responsible role models, establish notions of trust and communication, and actively engage in their children's digital life. There is now growing research suggesting a variety of approaches that allow parents to "mediate" or regulate children's online activities (e.g. Livingstone and Helsper, 2008; Valcke et al., 2010). While one could argue that technology and devices might undermine family practices – for example, spending too much time texting during dinner – at the same time, they provide a myriad of benefits and opportunities for collaborative learning, communication, and entertainment. For example, new forms of family connections have become possible with the use of cell phones and social media, making it more feasible to coordinate busy schedules, be in frequent

communication, share news, and create common experiences in cyberspace. Yet, in order to raise competent and skilled children, educators should first work towards “creating” strong, confident, and knowledgeable parents, aware of the many aspects the digital world brings to the forefront

In order to engage parents in their children's digital life, an adult educator should keep in mind that **good parenting** promotes positive characteristics, such as *empathy, honesty, self-reliance, self-control, kindness, and cooperation* (Fox News, 2021). These characteristics have not changed with the increased use of technology; if anything, parents need to be cautious to be even more diligent in observing these principles with the precipitous changes brought forth by technology and media use.

To facilitate parents' abilities to interact and collaborate with children, an educator should be aware of the various principles of **good parenting**, so as to transfer these attitudes and skills to parents while on training.



According to Steinberg (2005) the ten core principles of “good parenting” are:

1. What you do matters
2. You cannot be too loving
3. Be involved in your child's life
4. Adapt your parenting to fit your child
5. Establish rules and set limits
6. Help foster your child's independence
7. Be consistent
8. Avoid harsh discipline
9. Explain your rules and decisions
10. Treat your child with respect

The core of these principles remains intact, despite the massive invasion of technology and media use. In short, these principles of “good parenting” help to raise confident, healthy, and empowered children, in an environment where understanding, empathy, and good behaviour prevails.

Parenting and Digital Mediation

As we will examine in the following modules, to understand parenting in the digital age, it is fundamental to monitor children's behaviour on the internet, as this is an environment where they experience very diverse outcomes. We can list risks and threats, seeing upsetting pictures or videos, receiving unwanted messages, over-using technologies, and experiencing social isolation as some of the negative experiences associated with online activities. On the other hand, children also experience opportunities and discover new learning possibilities through videos, tutorials, games, and other resources, which help them express their creativity and equip themselves with valuable skills.

What is more, the growing presence of the Internet of Things (IoT), digital interaction (like intelligent speakers) and other house technologies have changed the interpersonal relations among families considerably, making technology an integral part of the communication relations families are faced with (Trilar et al. 2019).

Consequently, a crucial part of digital education within the perspective of family learning resides in parental mediation, defined as "a form of parental socialisation because parents, as the primary socialisation agents, influence their children's behaviours and attitudes to become more competent technology users" (Youn, 2018 in Smahelova, Juhová, Cermak & Smahel, 2017). Different parental mediation styles in digital education exist and have been investigated throughout the last decade, and in fact is a relatively new concept within the concept of wider parental mediation.

Active Co-use	Technical Restrictions	Interaction Restrictions	Monitoring
e.g. when a parent asks children what they are doing. It also involves restrictions associated with the communication of personal information online, shopping online, completing forms, etc.	the parents make sure that different restrictions are in place and they mainly refer to software installation and technical barriers	it is associated with the prohibition of contacting others (e.g., using e-mail, chat, game playing etc.)	it is the process of feedback that a parent seeks after the use of Internet technologies or other online activities

Zaman and Mifsud (2017) state that those types are common styles by which parents – especially in western cultures – mediate technology and children's media use across a broad age spectrum. Also, digital mediation is a dynamic process and underpinned as well as tightly connected to different parenting styles. This process is co-constructed by the parents and the

children in the context of the actual situation experienced. In reverse, within this co-constructed digital mediation, children also shape parents' media use. Technology and media usage in families does not happen in a "social vacuum", but is rather part of daily routines depending on time and place demands.

The Principles of Parent Involvement

Teaching parents the significance of setting rules and expectations for web access and technology is equally important in explaining those rules and applying them consistently. Children are always testing and pushing their own limits since the day they are born, so the probability of parents encountering instances of rule breaking, especially during adolescence, is high. As frustrating as this can be, it can also serve as a teachable moment to further responsible decision-making. Parents must understand that they cannot be present all the time while their children are using technology and media, so the ultimate goal is to foster accountability and independence, to ensure that their children can make safe choices for themselves and take ownership of their actions. In fact, according to research (Stattin and Kerr 2000) parents' efforts to discuss or monitor their children's online activities are less effective if children do not trust their parents.

Parents' perceptions towards technology is also an important factor that affects the parent-child relation. That is, parents' positive beliefs regarding the use of technology and devices (e.g. the internet provides opportunities for learning) is linked to more favourable attitudes, fosters communication, and enhances children's appropriate use of the Internet (Nikken and de Haan, 2015).

Figure 1 and the bulleted list presents the interrelated principles of parents' involvement and offer specific suggestions of ways they can be applied in this era of technology and media immersion.

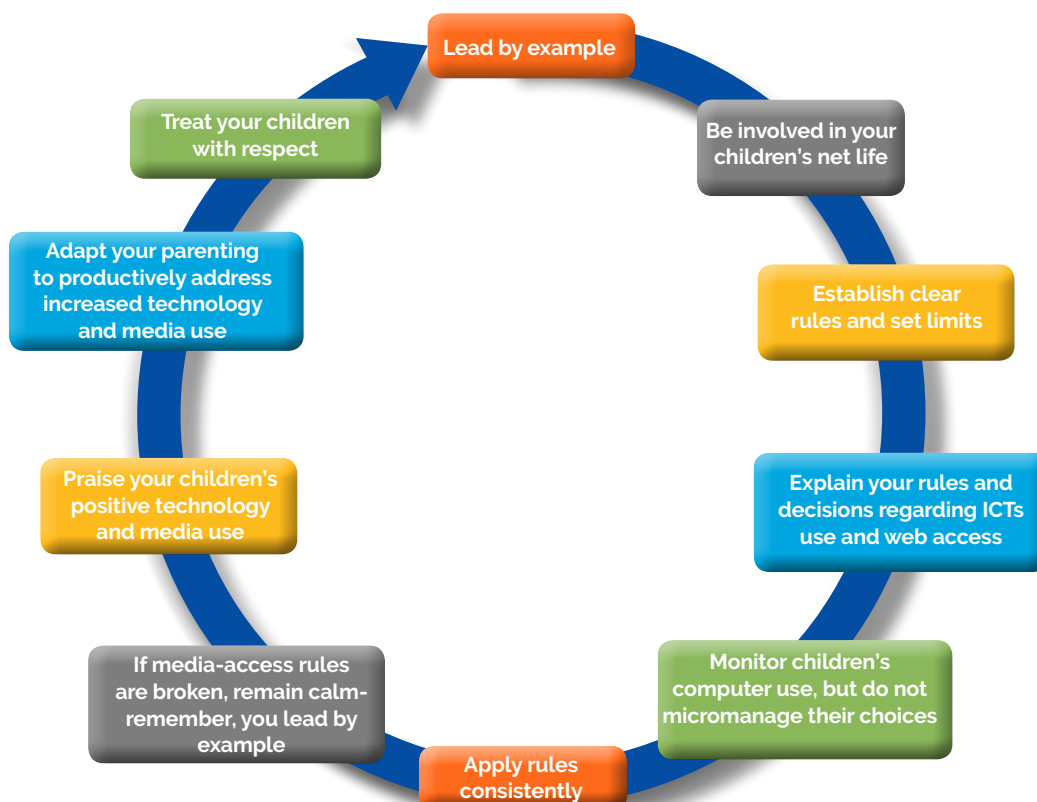


Figure 1.
Ten interrelated principles of parent involvement applied to technology and media use
(from Patrikakou, 2016, pg.18)

Let us take these principles one by one:

1 Lead by example. How many times do parents find themselves asking children to stop playing with their phones or other devices, while at the same time, they themselves are emailing and texting? Encourage parents to avoid being constantly in front of the glowing screen and engage in meaningful family moments when this is needed. They should email, text, and browse online in a way they would like their children to use these communication tools.

The excessive or problematic use of technology by parents has enjoyed so much attention, that it has even generated a new term: technoference. Coined by professor Brandon McDaniel, technoference refers to everyday interruptions in interpersonal communications caused by paying too much attention in personal technological devices (e.g. checking phones for text messages, without eventually listening to your child).

A recent study by McDaniel and Radesky (2017) indicates associations between technoference and child behavioural difficulties, raising an alarm regarding the negative impact of excessive or problematic use of technological devices on family relations. Other studies show that heavy use of mobile devices by parents is linked with reduced verbal and non-verbal interactions between parents and children and may well be associated with further parent-child conflicts (Jago et al., 2012; Radesky et al., 2014)

2 Be involved in your children's net life. Parents should be aware on how children spend their time in virtual environments, like the websites and platforms they visit, the social media channels and apps they use, and the type of movies they like to watch. They could also try playing their favourite video games together—*beating a parent is always fun!*

3 Establish clear rules and set limits for web access, downloading, and generic screen time. It should become clear to children that technological use and web access for entertainment is a privilege—disobeying the rules might result in losing it.

4 Explain the rules and decisions for computer use and web access, even the most obvious ones. For example, parents need to highlight the reasons for blocking content that is considered inappropriate; as we will see in modules 2 and 3, educators should support parents in reviewing and reviewing and discuss web dangers with their children and brace themselves for occasional eye rolling.

5 Help parents foster their children's independence by closely monitoring their computer use, without but not micromanaging their choices (e.g. in music and games). If these choices are within parents' established rules, then parents are ensured that their children are able to make safe choices for themselves.

6 Apply rules consistently. Clarify to parents which of the rules should be negotiable and which ones should not be — giving in to avoid children's whining is not a sustainable solution for any parent.

7 **If media-access rules are broken, remain calm.** Instead of investing in a shouting match, parents should apply consequences by turning rule breaking into a teaching moment for children. This will contribute to raising responsible children, capable of keeping themselves safe and taking control of their own lives.

8 **Praise children's** positive technology and media use, online kindness, and thoughtfulness towards other people. Children too crave for acknowledgement.

9 **Adapt parenting** to address emerging technology and media use effectively. Explain to parents that they should not resist technology, but rather try to become part of their children's digital life, explore the many opportunities it brings, and be open to learn their tech-savvy ways. Parents should also teach their children technology from a young age, discuss with them the various benefits as well as the risks associated with it.

10 **Treat children** with respect, as you would like them to treat others, in person and online. Parents should become attentive to what children say though online communication, and acknowledge their perspectives and opinions.

Engaging with Children

In a world where technology is inevitably part of children's life, it is crucial for educators to provide parents healthy concepts of digital use and lifestyle, by offering them relevant skills on the topic. Here are some tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics to communicate to parents to help them engage with their children in the digital world (in GUADUSD, 2018):

- **Do your homework.** Many apps and websites can be labelled "educational", giving the assumption that they are appropriate and useful for children. Parents should be able to distinguish between the "appropriate" and "inappropriate" websites and apps. Organizations like Common Sense Media can help parents identify age and content-appropriate apps, games, and programmes, so as to make the best choices for their children.

- **Draft a plan for media use.** As we will see in module 3, when media is thoughtfully and in appropriately boundaries, it can lead to a number of positive outcomes for children's development. However, when used inappropriately or without proper supervision, media is perceived to undermine important activities such as adequate sleep, and obesity (Fuller et al., 2017). On the other hand, offline activities can stimulate creativity and socialization. Therefore, parents should aim to achieve a good balance between children's online and offline time, by encouraging them to be engaged in both online (e.g. playing video games, chatting with friends on social media) and offline activities (e.g. playing outdoor games, reading a book, discussing with their families about important issues).

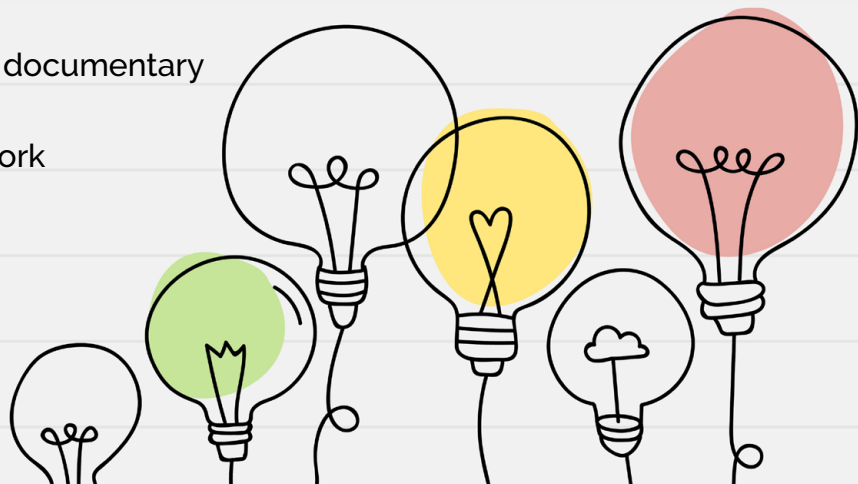
- **Tech-free time.** Achieving the online-offline balance means to also invest in family moments where technology is no used at all. These can be family mealtimes, social gatherings,

board game nights, or simply discussing and narrating old stories with children. Background television or music could be turned off, so as not to disturb the face-to-face interactions.

- **Screen time shouldn't always consist of "alone time".** While families can invest in tech-free zones, at the same time, parents are encouraged to co-view, co-play, and co-engage with their children when they are using screens — when sharing screen time, this becomes an interactive and real-world experience for children, as it fosters social interactions with their parents, bonding, and learning together. Parents should not just monitor their children— they should rather try to spend time with them, so they have a clear idea of the activities children are engaged with and become an active part of this process.


Some ideas for parent-child sharing screen time:

- > Watch a movie or a TV series – parents can introduce and share their own life experiences and perspectives.
- > Play a video game or an app game – as we mentioned, beating a parent is always fun!
- > Read an e-book or watch a documentary
- > Find resources for schoolwork
- > Listen to music



- **The importance of online behaviour.** Children explore the web as part of their personal and social development. Yet, as any relationship in the real world requires a good basis to develop, children also need to remember how to behave appropriately, respecting other users and without violating their rights. Parents should be able to teach these values to their children, keeping lines of communications open in case they have questions or concerns.

- **Be prepared.** Children and adolescence need to be extremely careful when sharing information with other users, as sometimes this might lead to a chain of problems that might not be easily solved. Educators should make parents aware about the importance of privacy, as well as the many threats and dangers of online activity.



- **Be alarmed, but in a positive way.** Parents need to remember that along the way of using the internet, children will make mistakes and clumsy choices. Educators should encourage parents to treat these mistakes with empathy and turn them into teachable moments. Where serious incidents appear, like bullying or self-harm, parents should be alarmed so as to take immediate actions. Where they face difficulties in dealing with these issues, parents should enlist professional support.

- **Invest in open dialogues.** Finally, parents should establish regular and honest conversations with their families, encourage children's critical thinking and motivate them to become good digital citizens, in order to avoid unwelcome experiences. To achieve this, parents should become good listeners, and identify ways to deal with issues by cooperating with their children.

Each of the above-mentioned topics will be thoroughly discussed within the following modules

Fostering parent communities for growth and child protection empowerment

A good strategy that can support parents in becoming more engaged in their children's digital life is to build **Parent Communities** that will provide the space and opportunity to discuss concerns, questions, challenges they may face concerning children's digital life and their involvement as a parent in it.

Communities allow parents and caregivers to establish a common space, whereby they can interact, share experiences, and resolve issues. With an evolving online world, a community that exchange insights and strengthens parents' capacities as to how they can improve their relationship with children can be a vital resource for the continuous learning of parents. Online communities may be restricted on the boundaries of a town or a neighbourhood, or even go beyond to connect parents from around Europe and the world. It is important that parents feel respected, acknowledged, and appreciated within their communities (CSSP, 2010)

How to guide parents to create communities

Since the first time they have appeared, parent forums have been set up in most major areas across the continent, being mostly supported by schools, local public authorities and NGOs. Still, realising the importance of having an organized structure to rely on for help and support, parents across Europe have created communities and forums without benefitting from the protection or influence of other organizations. These kinds of forums – online and offline – have

been successful in empowering parents and children, promoting digital awareness, setting up fund-raising schemes and becoming information repositories for inexperienced parents.

Below are some steps you can share with parents to help them set up their own online or offline community (from CSSP, 2010):

STEP 1 SET UP THE STEERING GROUP

The initial step is to find other parents to create coalitions and start running the community. These parents will first need to share some common interests and learning needs, and be able to provide ideas for the creation of the community. The parents might derive from local support groups, carers' centres, or already established groups with well-known members.

Once the steering group is formed, it is important for parents to distribute tasks and responsibilities, to avoid confusion and repeated actions. This will help to identify each parent's role within the community and the group to become more organized and structured. Advise parents to distribute responsibilities according to each parent's strengths and capabilities.

At this stage, it will be helpful to nominate a person to act as:

- **Leader** – to organize meetings, initiate discussions, and support the group in the decision-making process.
- **Secretary** – to take notes on the agreed decisions, distribute the tasks, and announce the next step and actions.

STEP 2 DEFINE THE MISSION

Once the steering group is formed and responsibilities are allocated, parents will need to agree on the specific **aims** and **objectives**, in order to a clear mission statement for the community. Setting up the aims and objectives will help parents define what needs be achieved through the various activities of the community.

For example, a given community might aim to raise the necessity in various local communities regarding parents' digital education

To get more parents involved and spread the word among other people, the community's mission statement can be distributed using leaflets, websites, and newsletter. Moreover, based on the aims and objectives, parents need to decide who is eligible to become a member of the community.

The following eligibility criteria can be used, always in accordance to what the community aims to achieve:

- **Status** – parent, career, teacher, doctor, school administrator, etc. – it must be someone that is connected to the targeted children
- **Age** – the community may target, for example, young parents or parents with children up to 19 years old.
- **Geography** – is the community going to involve parents from the surrounding neighborhood, area of town? In the case of an online community, will it involve parents from around the country or Europe/the world?
- **Topic** – will the community focus on a particular theme (e.g. the digital education of children with disabilities)?
- **Other attributes** – will community target specific groups (e.g. single parents or parents with low digital skills)?

STEP

3

PLAN HOW THE FORUM WILL OPERATE

This crucial step will define the way parents will collaborate and communicate with each other to achieve things. The way the community will operate depends on the geographical area it covers. In the case of a **local group**, it will be relatively easy to organise meetings and events that most parents will be able to attend. Parents might, for example, decide to hold monthly or three-monthly meetings of the community, each lasting for a couple of hours.

In the case of a **large or online group**, large events can be held once or twice a year where parents can be invited from across the country or, alternatively, meet online. Meetings and events provide an opportunity for parents to discuss current issues, prioritise actions over the coming months, and provide feedback to the progress made within the community.

Through these discussions and meetings, community members will be able to draft the purpose of the community (STEP 2), including:

- What the community aims to achieve
- Roles and responsibilities
- Frequency of meetings and events
- Attendees and members
- Selection of the representatives
- Decision-making processes

If the community decides to implement large-scale actions, it will be helpful to create a **bank account**, with one or two persons responsible for writing cheques.



STEP 4

DECIDE ON A NAME AND SPREAD THE WORD

While discussing the aims, objectives, and ways to operate, a parent community will also need a name. It will help parents to come up with an inspiring name that will encourage other people to join.

To spread the word and make the community well known, information can be spread through advertisement, word of mouth, or by distributing articles and leaflets. Moreover, creating a website dedicated to the community will be a helpful tool to promote its activities and aims, and reach out to a wider spectrum. The website is best fitted with an online forum, where members can provide advice and exchange ideas for a long period of time.

STEP 5

SET UP THE INTERNAL PROCESSES POLICIES

For any community to operate properly, it is important to have written processes agreed so that all members have a clear idea about how the community works, and misunderstandings are avoided. These written processes can be posted on the website as well – if there is one, in order for them to be easily viewed by visitors.

Having clear policies and procedures will also help to ensure that all involved members know how to deal with occurring situations. Therefore, it is preferable to decide on these policies and procedures from the initial stages of developing the community, to avoid problems later.

Policies do not need to be complex or lengthy. They can include issues of:

- code of conduct
- equality and diversity
- safeguarding
- data protection
- social media
- financial policies

Examples of relevant Online Communities

CafeMom: an online website that began operating in 2006. According to the website, it aims to “*help families raise happy, kind and confident kids*”, by offering advice and tips on a variety of topics, like health, lifestyle, school, education, and establishing good relationships with children. This online community allows mothers from the same or different areas to connect and stay in touch with each other.

Website: www.cafemom.com

Tinyhood Circle: this virtual community is dedicated to all parents and caregivers, allowing them to become part of a wider supporting parenting community, create or join existing groups, and participate in discussions. The group offers expert-led classes and courses, as well as parenting tips in topics like safety, nutrition, learning and development.

Website: www.tinyhood.com

ParentsTogether: a non-profit organization with the mission to provide information about latest policies, research, and trends in the areas of parenting, so that parents become more competent in raising their children. ParentsTogether attracts over 2.5 million parents online, offering knowledge in education, health, science, and lifestyle.

Website: www.parents-together.org



Did you know?

Google Families ©

Google has recently launched a platform to foster the collaboration and communication between parents and children through technology. The platform contains information, apps, and resources on a variety of topics, such as ways to keep children safe online, tools to communicate with them, game for family entertainment, learning apps for children, and tools for parents to promote healthy digital habits for their families.

Source: Google (2021) Your family on Google. Retrieved from: www.families.google.com

Let's Practice

Principles of Parent Involvement

Present to parents Patrikakou's 10 interrelated principles of parent involvement:

1. Lead by example
2. Be involved
3. Establish clear rules and set limits
4. Explain your rules and decisions regarding computer use and web Access
5. Monitor children's computer use but do not micromanage their choices
6. Apply rules consistently
7. If media-access rules are broken, remain calm
8. Praise your children's positive technology and media use
9. Adapt your parenting to productively address increased technology and media use
10. Treat your children with respect
11. Lead by example

Start a discussion around each of the principles. Ask parents to reflect on whether they apply these principles with their children, if they agree or disagree with these principles, and whether they would improve their parenting mediation based on them..

I can try out this activity: with the parents

Questions for Digital Mediation

Prepare a list of questions for a training session, which focuses in digital mediation workshops for parents. The aim of the workshops will be to develop parents' skills to establish the rules of using electronic devices by their children. To develop your questions further, discuss the list with an experienced educator, to verify their relevance and effectiveness.

I can try out this activity: on my own and or with a fellow educator

Drafting a Parent Community strategy

Ask parents to pair up or form small groups. Each group needs to prepare a strategy for the creation of a Parent Community. Some questions to help them create it:

- What will the group aim to achieve?
- Who will be involved?
- What activities, meetings, or events will be implemented?
- How will other parents, experts, teachers, organizations, etc. will be involved?
- Are there any specific policies or rules each member needs to follow?

Once all strategies are prepared, ask each pair/group to present them to the rest of the parents, and discuss them.

I can try out this activity: with the parents

In this module, we have learned that...

- Different parental involvement levels can be associated with different child achievements.
- Creating a forum is a useful and facile way to connect like-minded parents.
- Parents should be encouraged to engage with their children's online activity in order to effectively monitor and supervise their digital behaviour.
- A crucial part of digital education within the perspective of family learning resides in parental mediation.
- Parent communities provide great opportunities for parents connect and discuss

Questions for reflection

- What techniques can be taught to parents so they become be effectively involved in their children's digital life?
- What are the ten principles of parent involvement in relation to technology and media use?
- What are some good techniques for parents to interact and collaborate with children in an effective way?
- What does parental mediation mean and how can it be taught to parents?
- Do I consider technologies/devices functions when supporting parents in choosing the most appropriate digital parental mediation strategy?



MODULE 2:

Resourcing the Internet

In a Nutshell

This module aims to introduce ways for parents to improve their understanding of online usage and make effective use of online resources for everyday activities. Moreover, it contains practical outcomes for a proficient usage of online material, so that educators can support parents in improving their technology savvy skills.

In this module, educators will learn about:

- Ways to help parents search for online information in an effective and proper way
- Safe strategies to search for online sources and portals
- The principles of parental control

Dive In

Searching Online in a proficient way

Nowadays, more and more parents go online to look for supportive information, searching for scientific data and answers on various topics, like health and education. What is more, parents often help their children with their homework through searching information online (Planting and Daneback, 2009). As most already know, the Internet contains a myriad of information, but how can parents properly search for it and avoid being lost when everything seems important? What role do educators play in this process?

Simply: invest in teaching about “smart searching” to help avoid a lot of wasted time. Teaching parents to think critically about search results will help them locate better information. For example, they can support their children to find more accurate, reliable, and secure information about their schoolwork. Smart searching will allow parents and children to think more critically about any information found on the Internet.

In this sense, searching online requires parents to be thoughtful and good planners.

Smart Searching – Tips for Educators

Below are several recommendations, insights, and tips educators can pass on to parents in order to teach them effective and safe online searching:

1. Check Your Sources

When looking for online sources, both educators and parents need to make sure that these sources are **accurate**, **valid** and **appropriate** for the purpose needed, as well as whether they are truly important. In fact, many children search for online content very quickly, but do they always have the right capabilities to assess whether sources are reliable or if they are secure?

When searching for resources, a user needs to check the following (from PEHS, 2018):

- Currency (is the information up to date?)
- Security (does the website ask for too much personal information or prompt virus warnings?)
- Scope (is the information in-depth?)
- Authority (does the information come from a trusted expert?)

As an educator, you should challenge yourself and the parents to benchmark the different sources they consult, or invite them to search on official and reputable sources. Particularly, it is important to recommend them to avoid simplistic solutions to more complex problems, particularly the ones regarding health or other private needs.

2. Ask Good Questions

Searching online means defining combinations of words, which can lead you to one or more answers that can give solutions to your needs. While being online, we continuously do online searches for different reasons (“I need to know this”, “I need to understand this”, “I need to purchase a product”, and so on. In this sense, the longer time we spend online, the more necessary we feel to look out for information.

As a first action, we normally use search engines, i.e. software that “organise” the information for the users to make websites and their contents organised in a friendly way (e.g. Google). In



fact, for many people it has become more and more common to search anything online, and to do it in a sort of “unconscious way”.

Why does some material come before other in the search engine results? In other words, why is a website put before another? Before answering these questions, it is important for parents to be aware of how to plan a research and then critically evaluate the sources that come out from this search.

When searching online, parents should use synonyms, as well as more refined terms to reach their desired results. Moreover, they should compare the different sources according to your question. In this way, they may start from general terms and work their way towards more specific ones.



Let us take an example:

A parent is searching “healthy styles” online and comes across thousands of websites that either describe the importance and impact of a healthy diet, exercising, sleeping time, or technology usage, anxiety, etc. This is very vague set of results provides useful but no specific information. Hence, the parent should add more terms in this search, like “healthy diet to follow when jogging” or “which food is ideal when jogging every day?”

Of course, this can be also applied when children look for information for their homework. So, instead of writing “World War Two”, you may write “The life of a partisan in Italy in World War Two” or “The cause of invasion of France in World War Two” etc.

Remember: the more narrowed a search is, the easier it is to come across the desired results.

A good way to exercise would be to compare the results and discuss how changing a few words can generate different information.

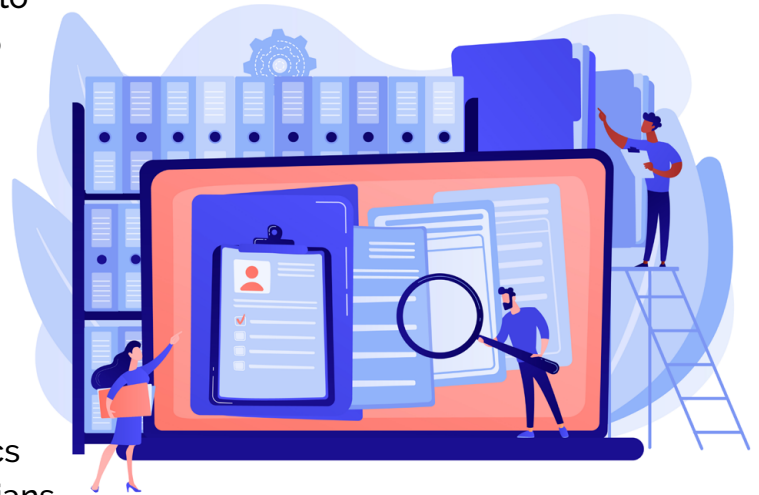
Main tips to communicate to parents in order to search in a good way online:

- Try to define your research according to specific terms
- Make more combinations of words on the same topic
- Try to use synonyms to vary your search
- Go beyond Wikipedia results! Wikipedia is a free-content encyclopaedia, written by volunteer users through an open collaboration. Therefore, be careful about the reliability of information found in Wikipedia.

3. Go Beyond the Surface

As studies show, when people search for information on Google, they are most likely to stop at the first five results that appear, without looking any further, missing out the most relevant and critical information (Dewey, 2015). In addition to that, kids, and teenagers later, mainly stop at the first Wikipedia result to understand something about a topic or copy texts to improve their essays and group works. As such, kids have understood how the “first results” are the most trustworthy ones, but research requires them to pursue information from different sources to gain a broader perspective.

As educators, you have to invite parents to critically assess their sources and consult you when it comes to the need of scientific information. There is a growing trend of parents looking for information online on health issues or various issues children face; however, a lot of them avoid discussing topics with specialists, educators, or children technicians just because they rely “on Internet results”.



In this sense, going beyond the surface is a skill that parents and children should acquire to resource the Internet in a critical way, and still to use more formal sources of information to review what they have learned online (e.g. schoolbooks, teachers, and children specialists).

As such, simply going beyond the second page of the search results is the first step to have a more sound variety of information to compare and to assess. Going beyond the surface means that parents strengthen their social relations with institutional sources to get scientific and informed information.

Therefore, as an educator, try discouraging parents from saying
“This is what I have read on the Internet...”

We have to be aware that parents often rely on **word-of-mouth** or on **social media groups** where information is shared among parents (like WhatsApp © groups, Facebook © interest groups, etc.), therefore it is important to instil on the critical thinking approach through varying the sources of information.

Main Tips to communicate to parents:

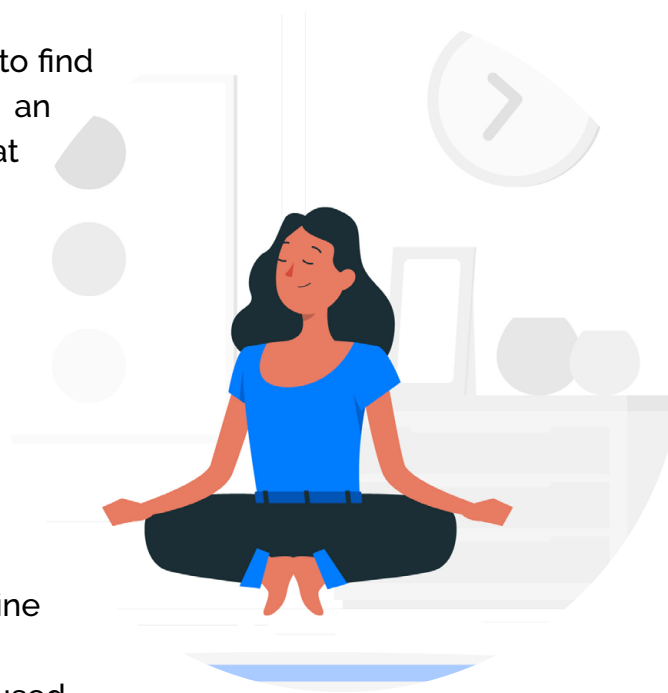
- Do not only rely on the first result you find – look for as much information as you can
- When writing a piece, derive information from at least more than 5 different sources
- When searching for information, divide your research question into small sections, to make searching more specific

4. Be Patient

Many times, children are frustrated because they wish to find answers immediately and with zero effort. In fact, as an educator, you should stress the importance of time; that is, of dedicating the right effort to enrich one's personal knowledge rather than fulfilling a task. In this sense, being patient means to give the right value to the things a child does. Hence, parents can have a positive influence if they somehow gamify the research work.

To practice patience, teach parents to:

- Define questions which cannot be googled
- Ask to find curiosities about a topic and define all the search terms they have used
- Make a question tree of the research words used



5. Oh, it's online, so I can use it!

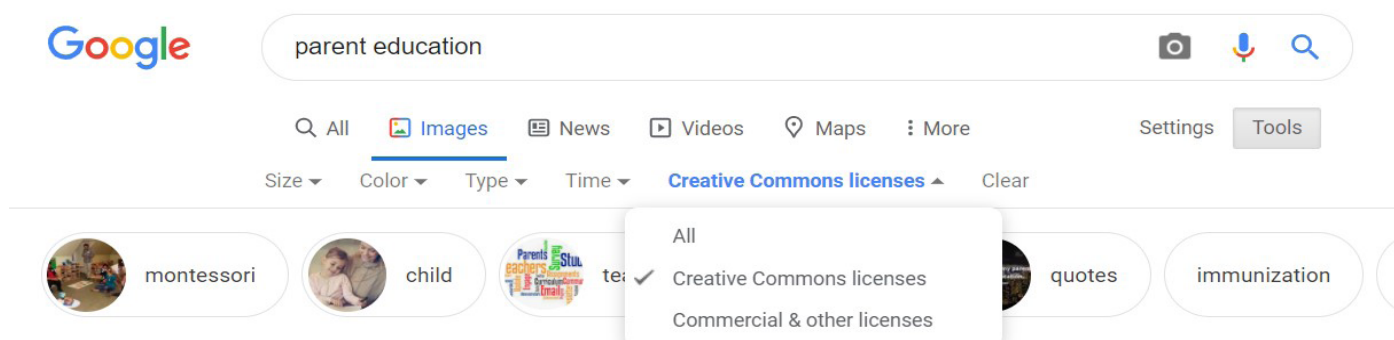
While being online, we have to show respect to **property rights** of creators and producers. Many times, young people copy or modify text, photos, and videos for personal purposes, but do not cite them or take into account the required permissions. In general, any material found online contains usage rights, and these are regulated through online licenses. *Therefore, how can parents understand the way to properly use online pictures, videos, and texts?*

At this point, we could introduce a few concepts.

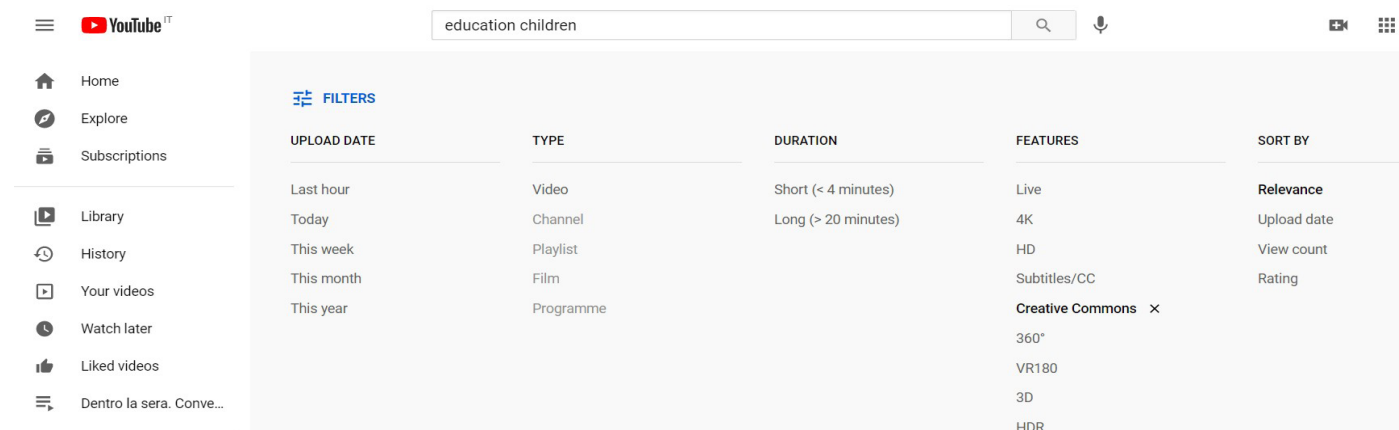
Online licenses are regulatory tools that provide instructions as to how online content can or cannot be used. The most common online license is **Creative Commons** – a non-profit organisation that provides free licenses for creators, to be able to share their work to the public. Under the Creative Commons license, creators can give permission to other users in a standardized and simple way, so they can copy, distribute, edit, remix, and improve the content, always in accordance to copyrights principles and limitations.

One simple way to define how to make proper use of online sources is to define the property rights through the “Creative Commons licenses” option, for example on Google images and YouTube:

Searching for images with a Creative Commons license on Google:



Searching videos with Creative Commons license on YouTube:



By ticking this option “Creative Commons”, parents and children can download the content safely and reuse it for other purposes, for example children's homework.

Check out Creative Commons on the website www.creativecommons.org

What about the rest of the content found online?

The European legislation has not adopted the so-called “fair usage” approach yet, which is popular and affirmed in the United States of America. What is it? As long as you use copyrighted contents (i.e. the majority of all the online contents) for educational and non-profit purposes, then no problem should normally occur. However, if one wishes to make profit out of a content, there is no way to use copyrighted material.

The dangers of passing the limit

So, what if a parent or a child decides to make use of online content without examining copyrights? There are several ways to pass the limit and be faced with important consequences. Let us look some major examples:

1. Plagiarism is a highly serious issue that is not always taken into consideration by parents and children, above all when it comes to online searching. In other words, just because on a set of materials is available on Wikipedia does not mean that a parent may copy it to complete their children's homework.

2. Illegal downloading and consumption of copyright-infringing content (e.g. for TV programmes, music, and film) is another widely spread practice, especially before the existence of platforms such as Netflix © YouTube © and Spotify ©. Although it is declining across the European Union is declining (based on data results by EUIPO, 2019), digital piracy remains a significant problem, as many young people might illegally download contents and infringe the copyright features of digital products. Even through, nowadays, children and teenagers are heavily users of media and streaming platforms, they still need to make sure that they are using them responsibly.

Main tips to communicate to parents:

- Try to go online and active the Creative Commons option to download media
- Make sure that children have the correct sources use for homework
- Use multiple sources when for information online

Parents and their networks

As an educator, you should be aware that parents tend to distinguish between '**the online**' and '**the offline**', configuring them as distinct realms of both children's activity and parental influence. Parents feel they have much more control over and input into their children's offline engagement compared to their online activities.

Educators should be aware that parents heavily rely on their social networks to share and gather relevant information. Such networks create that phenomenon of mirroring thinking that deeply influences how parents assess information and how they influence themselves (*read more about this topic in module 3*).

In this way, it is crucial to encourage critical thinking and support partners in sharing and digesting information that is considered trustworthy. If parents do not search for reliable sources, their children will be likely to acquire this attitude. Many children often use platforms – like Facebook ©, Reddit ©, and Wikipedia © – to collect information and put it in the works; however, they face problems in distinguishing between sharing and plagiarising.

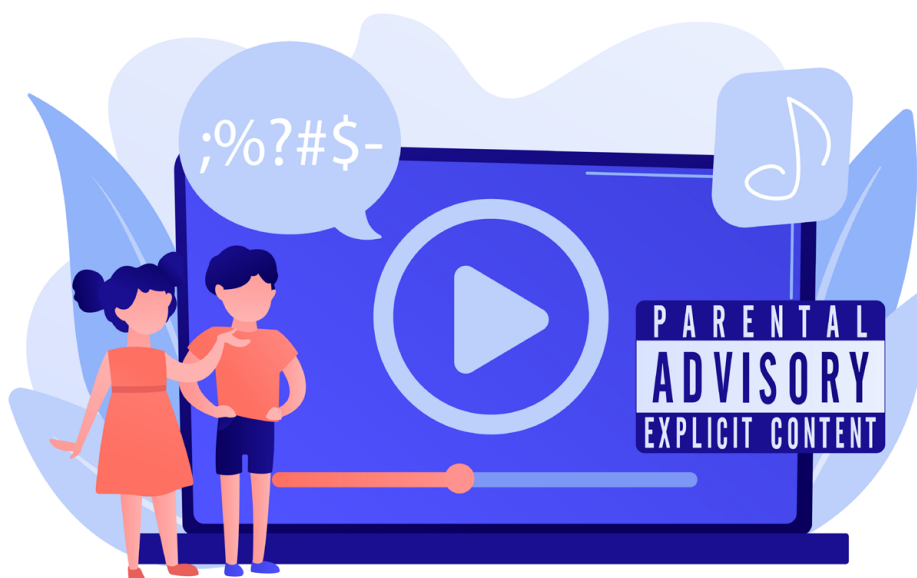
Parental Control

What educators should know

As we will see more thoroughly in the **next Module**, many parents try to take advantage of various tools and techniques to effectively monitor their children's behaviour, activities, and time spent on technological devices, as a way to take care of their wellbeing. For example, research shows (Anderson, 2016) that a vast majority of parents monitor children's web history, social media, and phone calls records or use means to block or filter teenagers' online activities, in order to protect them from being exposed to "excessive screen time" or harmful content. In other words, parents tend to use **parental controls** techniques to manage effectively their children's online activity.

Parental controls are software tools contributing to children's online safety, through restricting or managed their activity and media content in which they are exposed. To effectively make use of parental controls, it is essential for any parent to have a good understanding regarding the kind of websites and online activities their children engage with

As we will see in the next pages of this Handbook, the internet contains many risks and threats for children. For example, many games include interactive elements like chats and online competitions, or stores where children can purchase additional game features. Therefore, it is up to educators to inform parents about how to effectively use parental controls to monitor these activities, so as parents, in turn, may protect their children.





A good example is **Parental Controls™ by Nintendo**.

In 2017, Nintendo – one of the world's largest video game companies – launched Parental Controls™, a free [App Store](#) and [Google Play](#) application, to help keep parents aware of their families' gaming activities on Nintendo Switch, a video game console released in the same year. The application allows parents to track children's playtime, set limits for being online with the game system, and add restrictions (for example, restrict gameplay in VR mode or select games rated for ages 3+ up to games rated for ages 18+).

The application can even set up notification alarms to warn children when their playtime is up and how much time they have been over the time limit.

Watch this [fun video](#) with parents where Nintendo presents the application and its features.

Source:

Nintendo (2021) Nintendo Switch Parental Controls mobile app.

Retrieved from: www.nintendo.com/switch/parental-controls/

When implementing a training session with parents, parental control should constitute a major topic of discussion, so as for parents to appreciate what the experience of playing games or spending time online encompasses today. Try to incorporate examples and good practices, like applications, websites and guidebooks that will help parents enrich their knowledge on this subject.

Concluding with a final note, parental controls are not a single solution to staying safe online; let parents know that they should be encouraged to talk to their children and make them feel comfortable to discuss their interests, so they can find together age and content-appropriate sites through user-friendly search engines.

***Discover more details about Parental Control in GLAD's Toolkit for parents
"My children and I in a technological world".***

Did you Know?

Generazioni Connesse - Safer internet

Safer Internet Centre – Generazioni Connesse (connected generations), is a project co-funded by the European Commission under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) Program. It aims to provide information, consulting and support to children, adolescents, parents, teachers, and carers who deal with the digital transition and the risks of using the internet. The project platform allows stakeholders to report any illegal and dangerous content or material found online. The overall purpose of the project is to develop innovative and quality services, to guarantee online safety while guiding users to browse secure and reliable information online.

The project even includes a certified online training for educators and parents.

Source:

Generazioni Connesse (n.d.) Retrieved from: www.generazioniconnesse.it

Let's Practice

Which engines are suitable?

During training, ask parents to list out kid-friendly search engines they are aware of. Discuss with them what makes a search engine safe for children and then follow up with a discussion related to potential risks and threats children might encounter online. Some specific kid-friendly search engines include:

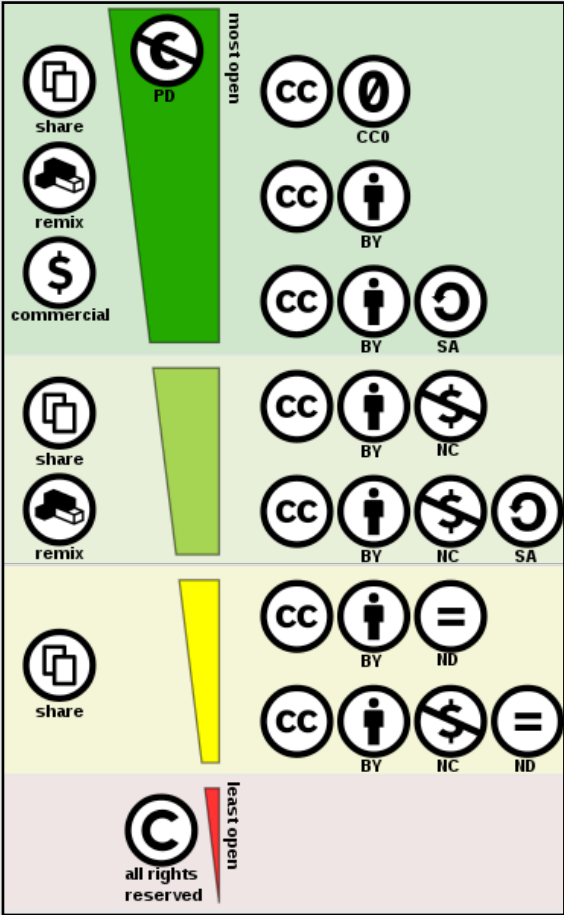
- *Kiddle* (www.kiddle.co)
- *Kidtopia* (www.kidtopia.info)
- *Famhoo* (www.famhoo.com)

I can try out this activity: with the parents

Source:

California Casualty (2020) Kid-Friendly Search Engines. Retrieved from: <https://mycalcas.com/2020/02/kid-friendly-search-engines/>

Getting to know Creative Commons



Present Creative Commons along with a spectrum of individual licenses and permissions, available in the link below. The parents need to search for information or images of their choice (through their laptops/smartphones) and check the website for intellectual property rights.

This activity is highly based on reflection and brainstorming, and will teach parents how to search for or produce content in compliance with copyrights, data protection and legal regulations.

I can try out this activity: with the parents

Source:

Creative Commons (n.d.) 2.1 Copyright Basics.

Retrieved from: <https://certificates.creativecommons.org/cccertedu/chapter/2-1-copyright-basics/>

Image Source:

Wikipedia:https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Creative_commons_license_spectrum.svg

Critical thinking – Responsible Use

Sometimes, people take a picture, alter or change, as an effort to prove something. They can also use a picture that looks like it makes sense, but it actually originates from a different time or place. Using our critical-thinking skills and online tools can help us discover the real facts.

Let's look at two pairs of pictures: In the first pair, let's find out what has changed. Then, discuss why someone would change the picture. Then, let's look at the second pair: The picture was used like it was taken in a different place and time.

Why would someone change the pictures to look different?

When we see people using pictures to prove something, and how can we tell if they are real?

After you discuss it with a parent or a fellow educator, let's check for some answers!

1st pair

Original headline:
Scientists make
friendly robot

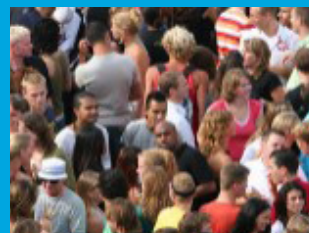


Changed headline:
New robot gets angry
at scientists

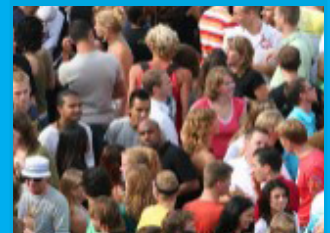


2nd pair

Original headline:
A crowd waits for a
band to start playing



Changed headline:
Thousands gather
to protest



Solutions:

The picture with the robot might have changed to convince people that robots are bad or scary. The second picture might have been used to portray a protest to convince people that a law or rule is wrong. If you read a story that uses a picture to prove something, you can drag the picture into the web search to find out where it originates!

I can try out this activity: with the parents

Source:

Common Sense Education (n.d.) News & Media Literacy. Retrieved from: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1yldihO3NSv3h1FGoQoSjrh1RVlKiY7cSjWnHOnR0ye4/edit#slide=id.g3d07a721d2_1_47

In this module, we have learned that...

- Research requires pursuing information from different sources to gain a broader perspective.
- Sources of research have to be accurate, valid, important and appropriate depending on the occasion and need.
- Searching online implies using synonyms and try to use terms that are more refined.
- Parents should not rely on the first result they find, but rather go beyond the surface.
- Comparing the different sources one finds online leads to reliable and appropriate answers.
- Online licenses are regulatory tools that explain to a user how they can or cannot use a content.
- Creative Commons licenses are the most common online licenses and depending on the specific license terms, they can be used, reused and changed.
- Plagiarism and illegal downloading are serious issues that cause important consequences.

Questions for reflection

- How many parents I support browse information online?
- Are parents I teach or support proficient users of technology? If so, are they keen on looking for information online?
- What tips and insights can I communicate to parents so they safely navigate the Internet?
- Which sort of information do the parents I teach or support look for? Do they verify the sources of the information they browse?
- Which main risks should a parent be aware about when searching for information online?
- Am I aware of the copyright issues when mentioning or processing information to develop content for parents?



MODULE 3:

Promoting Digital Wellbeing

In a Nutshell

This module focuses on digital wellbeing, a complex concept that receives a great deal of attention, especially among parents. The module will guide educators in the different ways and strategies that need to be transmitted to parents to effectively handle their children's mental, physical and emotional impact of using technology from an early age and encourage the proper use of technology.

In this module, educators will learn about:

- The concept and aspects of Digital Wellbeing
- Online risks and threats children can encounter online
- The core rules of Netiquette
- Screen time
- Establishing a healthy Digital Media Diet for families

Dive In

Within the realm of the technological world, children who use the Internet or online services are exposed to various risks, which need to be addressed by parents and carers. Thus, it is essential to empower you as an educator to be confident in supporting parents to be engaged in children's digital activities, and to promote their **Digital Wellbeing**.

In simple terms, **Digital Wellbeing** is a concept used to describe the *"impact of technologies and digital services on people's mental, physical, social and emotional health"* (Jisc, 2019)

Parental involvement and supervision during children's online activity is crucial to prevent potential risks or threats. Therefore, as an educator, you should highlight the importance of this parental involvement and recommend parents to supervise their children during their online activity, in order to be aware of the content relevance according to their age.

At first, educators should inform parents about the series of specific rules and norms when using the Internet. In official terms, this is called **Netiquette**: Netiquette refers to the code of good behaviour on the Internet, which includes different types of online communication or gaming. Educators should teach parents the necessity of following "Netiquette" while being

online, and, consequently parents need to teach their children how to behave responsibly in the real world. It is equally important for the parents and children to behave responsibly in the virtual world.

Furthermore, being aware of the **possible risks** and the ever-changing threat landscape that a child could might encounter, whilst engaging in online activities, is integral part of the online safety. As educators, you should inform and recommend to parents the different ways and strategies they can follow so as to implement proper practices for keeping their children away from risks and threats and preventing them from becoming victims of online threats.

The key to be protected from those risks and threats, which are often underestimated, is to develop a good security mind-set and user awareness.

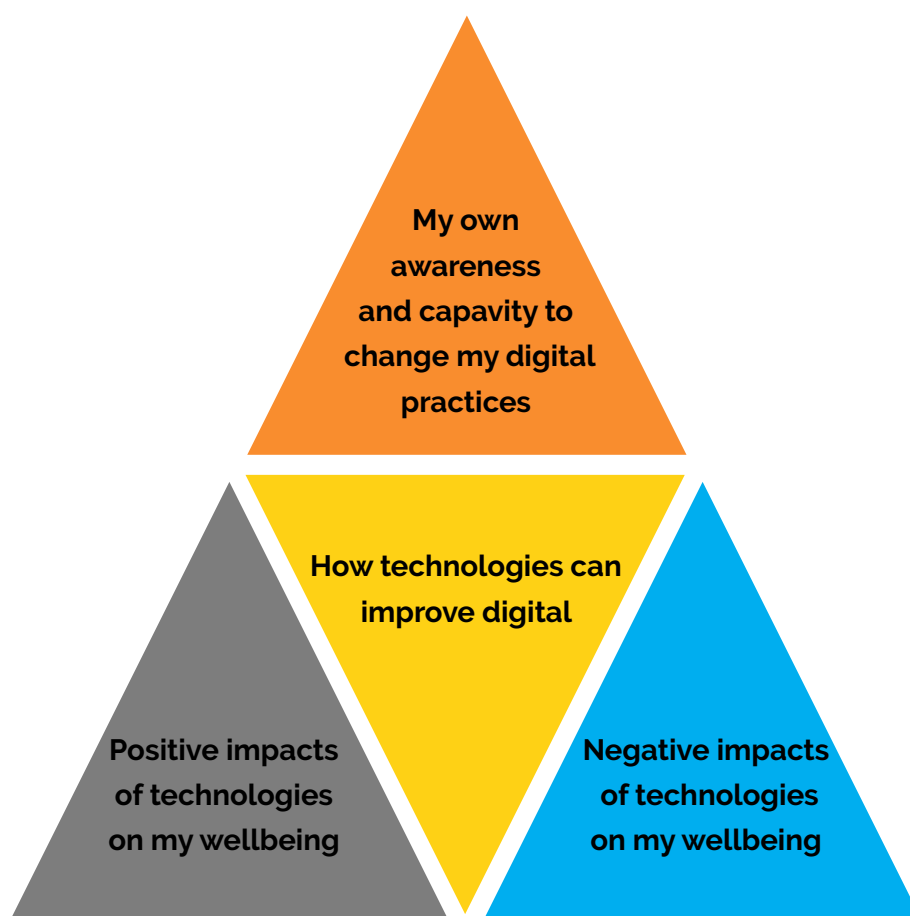


Digital Wellbeing

The mental, physical, and emotional impact of using technology

Digital Wellbeing does not necessarily reflect only the negative impact of media and technology use. It is rather a complex concept that expands across different contexts and situations, and can be viewed from different perspectives. According to Jisc (2019), there are four main different aspects of digital wellbeing concerning individuals: the first two concern the **positive** and **negative impact** of technology, the third one focuses on **how technology can improve wellbeing**, while the fourth focuses on need **for individuals to be aware and capable of changing their digital practices**.

This final aspect is especially important to the audience of this Handbook; educators should remember that not all parents have the ability or capacity to manage the impact of technology on their children's lives, since they might not acquire the knowledge and skills to do so. Therefore, educators can play vital role in parents' awareness about digital wellbeing. This includes advising them regarding the content of the media, the context in which it is used, and the impact on their children's mental, physical and emotional health.



The four aspects of digital wellbeing (Jisc, 2019)

Going in more deeply, below is a summary of the various positive and negative effects of using technology and the media, at both a personal (e.g. concerning the individual) and a social (i.e. concerning society) aspect (adapted from Jisc, 2019)

PERSONAL		SOCIAL	
positive +	negative -	positive +	negative -
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates a positive identity • Fosters entertainment • Provides insights to new ideas and inspirations • Provides tools for physical health (e.g. exercise) • Builds self-worth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addictive online behaviours (gambling, porn, etc.) • Allows easy access to illegal activities • Personal data can be easily breached • Might cause lack of sleep • Causes passive consumption (e.g. strolling Instagram stories without thinking about the act of doing so.) • Might cause negative comparisons with others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevents isolation and reduces loneliness • Relationships can be developed and maintain • Connects families, friends, and communities • Increases opportunities for inclusion (i.e. for people with disabilities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides an open space to develop cyberbullying • Provides opportunities for online grooming • Might foster exclusion and/or accessibility (e.g. concerning gender, age, poverty status).

Going back to what we have learned in Module 1, it is crucial for parents to become involved in their children's technology and media use, having in mind the various positive and negative effects. Let us once again remember the ten interrelated principles of parents' involvement:

1. Lead by example
2. Be involved in your child's life
3. Establish clear rules and set limits
4. Explain your rules and decisions regarding computer use and web access
5. Monitor children's computer use but do not micromanage their choices
6. Apply rules consistently
7. If media-access rules are broken, remain calm
8. Praise your children's positive technology and media use
9. Adapt your parenting to productively address increased technology and media use
10. Treat your children with respect

Parents should be reminded that the internet provides a wealth of opportunities for education and enrichment in order to maximize the benefits by using technology. Additionally, active involvement by using technology alongside with their children or showing interest on what they are doing is emboldened by the parents since that will make their children feel encouraged and supported and build healthier online habits.

Risks and Online Privacy

Teaching parents necessary facts

With around one in three internet users being children, who gain online access at very young ages and across a range of devices (European Commission, 2021), it is not peculiar to imagine the range of harmful content, behaviour, and risks they might be exposed to. Below is a classification of online risks children might encounter, as defined by Livingstone et al. (2011):

	CONTENT Child as receiver	CONTACT Child as participant	CONDUCT Child as actor
Aggressive	Violent, hateful content	Harassment, stalking, bullying	Bullying or harassing others
Sexual	Pornographic or harmful sexual content	Grooming, sexual abuse, meeting strangers	Creating or uploading pornographic material
Values	Racist/hateful or biased content	Self-harm, unwelcome persuasion	Providing harmful advice (e.g. suicide)
Commercial	Advertising, spam, sponsorship	Tracking, personal data exploitation and misuse	Gambling, hacking, illegal downloads

As dangerous and alarming as the above categories seem, a recent study conducted in New Zealand (LSE, 2020) showed that parents tend to underestimate their child's engagement in online activities. Therefore, there is an important gap that needs to be bridged, starting from parents' involvement and support in identifying *unwelcome experiences*. To help parents ensure the online safety of their children, advise them to:

- Become familiar with the risks and opportunities children might encountered while being online.
- Get to know websites, games, and other resources that are helpful for learning and entertaining children in a safe way.
- Team up with their children to set boundaries together; children need to be self-aware about their digital activity and how easy it is to be deceived online, therefore it is important to discuss with their parents which actions will *keep them safe*.

- Establish a parent-child agreement regarding the specific websites children are allowed to visit, or bookmark the websites for easy access and set time limits on computer use. Questions like “Which websites do you like spending most time on?”, “What are your favourite things to do while browsing these websites?” create an environment of trust between parents and children, so the latter will feel more confident and secure to share their online experiences.

On the other hand, parents and educators sometimes fail to distinguish supposed “online risks” than what could put children in real harm. Therefore, it is important to teach parents how to recognize the myths and the facts. The EU Kids Online 2011 report has debunked the top myths about internet safety, which, as stated, “tend to exaggerate or over simplify matters” (pg. 43).

TOP 10 MYTHS ABOUT CHILDREN'S ONLINE RISKS

(Livingstone et al., 2011, pg. 42-43):

1. Digital natives know it all

There is no hard evidence to suggest that statement. As the report shows, only 36% of 9-16 year olds believe that they know more about the internet than their parents do, while two out of three 9-10 year olds debunk that theory.

2. Everyone is creating their own content now

In fact, even if social networking makes it easier for a use to upload or content, most children use ready-made, mass-produced content found on the internet.

3. Under 13s can't use social networking sites so no worries

Registering with a false age, creating public profiles with personal information displayed, and contacting strangers are among the activities young children are engaged today. Privacy and safety settings cannot always monitor these activities.

4. Everyone is watching porn online

Estimates for exposure pornography online are lower than expected – the research report indicate under-reporting in the number of porn-related activities online, therefore this statement was either based on unrepresentative samples or mere assumptions.

5. Bullies are baddies

It is simply wrong to label bullies as the bad guys – a vast majority of children who bully online or offline have been bullied by others, while those who bully online have also been bullied online. These children tend to be more vulnerable than others, creating a vicious circle whereby victims and perpetrators both damage and are damaged themselves.

6. People you meet on the internet are strangers

The research has showed that most 11-16 year olds communicate with people that already know, while those who establish online contacts are at least connected with their own friends or relatives. Only a few of the children studied reported negative experiences – therefore, the challenge parents need to face is to keep them protected from any harmful occurrences without limited their networking opportunities.

7. Offline risks migrate online

To some extent, this is a well-evidenced fact - children reporting more offline risks are more likely to report more online risk encounters and harm caused from online experiences. However, not all offline risk correlates to all online risk encounters. There is not enough research exploring all factors accounted for online harm, therefore it should be assumed that children not yet identified as being in offline risk are not already at risk online.

8. Putting the PC in the living room will help

This advice is considered out of date. Children go online at a friend's house, in their bedroom, or use a mobile phone or another handheld device. Parents should rather be advised to discuss the use of the internet with their children, or even share an online activity with them.

9. Teaching digital skills will reduce online risk

In fact, more skills are linked risk. To put it simply: more use -> more skills -> more opportunities -> risk. To gain experience and learn, children inevitably explore online environments, which are not necessarily designed by having children in mind, and potentially encounter unexpected risk. The important remark to state to parent is that more skills might reduce the harm children experience from such risks (i.e. the psychological and mental impact caused).

10. Children can get around safety software

As data indicate, only a minority of children aged 11-16 change filter preferences, while only some children believe that their parents' actions limit their online activities. Even more, some children ignore their parents when it comes to safety software.



Netiquette: teaching parents the behavioural rules of the Internet


Netiquette is a set of guidelines for etiquette on the 'NET'. Educators should be aware of this set of rules when being online in order to teach parents – and, consequently, parents to teach their children – about the necessity of applying those behavioural rules of the Internet by being respectful of other people's views online and avoid judging other people. Educators should emphasize the importance of using respectful and appropriate language by reminding their children that there is a real human behind the screen and they should show the appropriate respect. Questions like “*Would I be okay with this if someone else had written it?*” before posting or submitting a message or comment, is a good advice to parents to use with their children. In addition, specific kind of language used while being online can often be misinterpreted so the children need to use it properly in the different online contexts.

Moreover, educators should emphasize to parents how important it is for their children to respect other cultures and traditions and their points of view and treat their online friends with tolerance and civility by responding appropriately. Children need to realise that using the Internet is a privilege; therefore, parents need to make it clear that this privilege can be restricted or revoked at any time, in any way, if the established rules are violated.

The Core Rules of Netiquette

To communicate “properly” within a virtual environment, internet users should be encouraged to follow a set of “behavioural rules”. Teach parents the following netiquette rules, taking each one in detail (adapted from Norton, 2021; Shea, 1994):

- 1 Remember the human:** when communicating online, it is sometimes easy to forget that a real person is on the other side of the screen. Regardless of the way you are facilitating interaction – either this is through email, instant message, post, text, video call, etc. – try to reflect on the words you are communicating; it is very easy to misread or misunderstood a context online, or even hurt someone.
- 2 Normal vs online standards?** Although it can be argued that not the same behavioural standards apply in the virtual words, these standards should certainly not be lower compared to the real world. Try to behave with the same ethical manners while being in the “cyberspace”. Rude or bad cyber behaviour can get you in trouble.
- 3 Know where you are:** the internet includes a myriad of forums, website, blogs, platforms, and channels, and each one comes with a different set of rules and community standards. Always become aware the context and audience of an online space. For example, you mistakenly join an online Prayers Group, and all of a sudden, you start posting about your atheistic and church-hating opinions; you may suddenly receive comments from offended group members.

- 
- 4 **Respect, respect, respect!** In the modern world, people usually lead busy lives, and thus do not always have the time to read a respond to emails and discussion posts. Keep your online communication meaningful and to the point, without adding extraneous text or complicated graphics that take forever to download.
 - 5 **Looking good online:** on the privilege of being online is the lack of judgement about your physical experience, clothing style, and sound of your voice. But, content is a key element here; make sure your quality of your writing is good. Always check for spelling and grammar mistakes, be polite in using your words, and state your messages clearly. Try to avoid negative comments, swearing, and unpleasant tones.
 - 6 **Share knowledge:** another great benefit of online communication is the opportunity provided to share and retrieve expert knowledge; if you have extensive knowledge, information, and news on a subject that can be communicated with other users online, this is an ideal way to do it.
 - 7 **Keep flaming under control:** “flaming” or trying to cause drama by expressing very strong opinions, might frustrate other people. Flaming is not necessarily forbidden in the virtual world, yet exchanging angry posts and passionate comments can be compromised. For example, Facebook © administrators might block users or take posts down, if they consider it offending or inappropriate.
 - 8 **Respect human privacy:** it is quite easy to be exposed to private or personal information while being online. Be very careful when sharing valuable information about yourself and your children. At the same time, think of what would happen if information about someone else “got in the wrong hands” – embarrassment, hurt feelings, disappointment? Just as you and your child expect others to respect your privacy rights, the same should be done by you as well.
 - 9 **Do not abuse your power:** having more “power” than others in cyberspace is possible; for example, some people are more expertise in technology or are more experienced in handling social media platform. Knowing more than others does not mean taking advantage of any user. Just remember Rule 1: Remember the Human.
 - 10 **Forgiveness:** mistakes are inevitable, even in the world of technology. Not everyone might be aware the rules of netiquette, or might have less experience that other users. At some point, you and your child might come across an offending image, encounter misspelled words, or read unnecessarily long responses. Try to practice kindness and forgiveness, rather than responding to that mistake publicly.

Screen Time

It is not as simple as it sounds.

As already explained, part of achieving Digital Wellbeing includes **considering screen time**, that is, how much screen time children should be allowed on a daily basis. *Is it ok if my children spend 1 hour of Facebook use per day? Is a half-hour show adequate to watch, but what about a 2-hours movie? How much time of video gaming is considered problematic?* These are difficult questions for any parent to answer.

In the past few years, big companies like Apple ©, Google ©, and Facebook ©, in response to people's concerns about the time devoted to technology use, developed several tools to help users limit their screen time. There are now hundreds of applications and browser extensions people can use as an effort to combat online distractions (Lukoff, 2019). Yet, as we examined, digital wellbeing is not and should not be strictly associated with only negative effects, but can also create some meaningful and positive impact to individuals. So why is reducing or managing screen time so strongly linked with the concept of digital wellbeing?



Let us go beyond the amount of children's daily screen time, and consider more concrete concepts:

Undoubtedly, there are valid reasons for parents to be alarmed about screen time. European survey results from 2019 shows that the time children spend online on a daily basis has almost doubled in many European countries compared to similar data from 2010, creating various parental anxieties (Smahel et al, 2020). There is conflicting evidence concerning the impact of technology on child development. While research indicates that excessive media use is linked to **childhood obesity, behavioural issues, delayed language development, and irregular sleep patterns**, other sources suggest that screen time is not as a simple phenomenon as it sounds. In fact, when digital devices and resources are used for a good cause (i.e. for reading, entertainment, etc.), they can turn out to be positive learning tools for children's cognitive and mental development (Rhodes, 2017).

For example, a study by Cheryl Olson (2010), who surveyed more than 1,200 middle school children, suggests that video games are associated with many psychological benefits, **if used wisely**. She recognized a number of social motivations that drives children to play video games, including fostering competition, hanging out with friends, and teaching peers how to play a game. Regarding boys who struggle with stress, fear, and anger-negative emotions that can have violent consequences, video games acted as a safe alternative for the release of strong feelings that are difficult to control.

Indeed, screen time can take many forms and there seems to be a fine line between what is considered “quality” screen time and what is not. Digital screens are not only used for mere entertainment purposes, but also for connecting with others, communicating, solving problems, and leading to identity development (Granic et al., 2020). For example, children and parents can use digital technologies to read e-books, watch documentaries, or video chat with Grandma and Grandpa who live abroad. Therefore, the deep challenge educators need to pose to parents is not how much time their children spend online, but rather the way children engage with digital media and for which purposes.

In this case, the parents need to come up with ways to manage proactively children's media and technology consumption. Instead of parents simply monitoring the time dedicated in front of the screen, you can encourage them to ask their children:

- *How do you find movies, apps, YouTube channels, and TV shows?*
- *Did you happen to come across a stressful thing online? How did you handle that experience?*
- *Have you ever used the Internet to do research for school?*
- *How do you know a website can be trustworthy?*

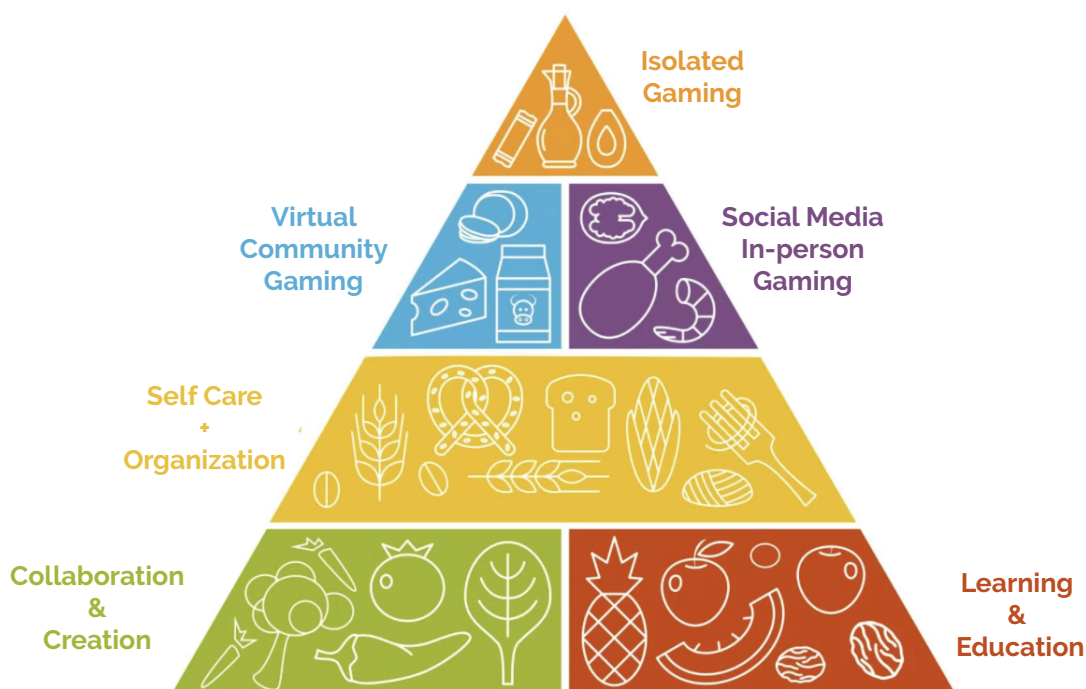
These questions can help parents think critically about digital media, the way they are used by children, and the possible risks that might accompany them.

One way for parents to foster the digital wellbeing of children is by developing a healthy **Digital Media Diet** – that is, **balancing online** (e.g. watching movies, YouTube videos, playing video games, and browsing) and **offline activities** (playing sports, going out with friends engaging in conversations), can help parents better control the quality time children spend in front of the screen. A healthy digital media diet empowers positive engagement with technology and implements cognitive skills in order to stay in control when being online. When digital media diets are effectively applied, children will be able to manage their own screen time in the long-term (Knorr, n.d.)

Here are some ways to help parents establish a healthy digital media diet:

- **Encourage them to keep a “digital media” diary for themselves and their children:** The goal here is to become more conscious and aware of how well parents are guiding their children to keep a balance between being online and engaging in offline activities (sports, reading books, etc.). By using a “digital media diary”, parents can track their children's online activity and screen time and therefore they can control them by setting limits. Media consumption has to be accompanied by clear guidelines towards children, as to the purpose, way, and duration they can be used.
- **Motivate parents to work at home with their children by creating a visual representation of themselves** as media citizens, which shows a summary of their current media diet and who they feel they are when online. Encourage parents to create together with their children a drawing of their digital footprint, in order to help them understand the different trails they can leave on the Internet and how this might affect them personally.
- **Educate parents about the digital media diet pyramid**, in order to realise the total amount of time spent by their children consuming media in a given day (starting from the base to the top - learning & education, collaboration & creating, self-care & organization, gaming within a virtual community and social media in-person and when isolated). It is similar to the Food Pyramid, which is a diagrammatic recommendation for a balanced diet for healthy living, showing the amount of food eating from each category. The same way the food pyramid helps children to visualise the importance of eating healthy food compared to the fats, oils and junk food, so does the Digital Media Diet Pyramid, which helps children visualise the importance of spending more time on learning, educating themselves and getting creative through online activities rather than mere isolated gaming.

THE DIGITAL MEDIA DIET



Did you Know?

Digital Literacy and Safety Skills

Under the **EU Kids Online 2011 report**, 25,000 European internet users aged 9-16 were studied to assess their digital skills, online activities, and self-efficacy. A correlation was found between children's range of digital skills and online activities. However, many young children (11-13 year old) lacked key critical and safety skills, while skills were unequally distributed according to different socio-economic status. Few students were able to block unwanted messages or find safety information, which leads to the conclusion that digital education skills are important to be taught to young children. The association between safety skills and critical literacy skills is interesting, as it implies that improving (or teaching) the former may also improve the latter.

Moreover, developing safety skills may encourage the acquisition of more skills, while more skills were associated with more online activities. Therefore, teaching children to be safer when being online should not be restricted, as it could also encourage more online opportunities.

Source:

Sonck, N., Livingstone, S., Kuiper, E. and de Haan, J. (2011) Digital literacy and safety skills. EU Kids Online, London School of Economics & Political Science, London, UK. Retrieved from: <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/33733/1/Digital%20literacy%20and%20safety%20skills%20%28lsero%29.pdf>

Through the Wild Web Woods

In 2009, the Council of Europe designed the online game **Through the Wild Web Woods** to help children mainly between 7 and 10 learn basic Internet safety rules. It is a maze of potential dangers while children need to go through and learn how to protect their identity and personal information as well as to protect their devices for spam and viruses. The game was developed in more than 20 languages.

Source:

Council of Europe (2021) Through the Wild Web Woods. Retrieved from: <http://www.coe.int/en/web/children/through-the-wild-web-woods>

Let's Practice

Digital Trails

Introduce to parents the term **digital footprint**, explaining the process of “leaving data behind” while being online. Make them think critically about the amount and type of information they and their children leave behind, and ask them to identify ways they are or they are not in control of their digital footprint. Ask them to analyse which information is appropriate to share on the internet, to help them visualize the importance of sharing and creating content about oneself.

I can try out this activity: with the parents

Source:

Common Sense Education (2018) Our Online Tracks: How does our online activity affect the digital footprint of ourselves and others? Retrieved from: <https://www.commonsense.org/education/digital-citizenship/lesson/our-online-tracks>

Online Risks – Scenarios

Present to parents the following three scenarios:

- 1. Your child accepts a friend request in Facebook from a peer in their school. He/she soon starts receiving hateful comments and threatening images in his/her inbox from that peer, saying “you are a loser, no one wants to be around you!”*
- 2. One day in school, your child accidentally drops his/her food on the ground, spilling in everywhere. Some of his/her classmates take a video of that incident and share it with everyone at school, making fun of your child and laughing at him/her.*
- 3. Lately, you notice that your child spends a lot of time chatting on social media, without engaging in other activities. When you ask him/her who he/she is constantly speaking to, he/she says to you that he/she has met a person online, without ever meeting in person. He/she also tells you that the stranger requested to meet your child at a café, to get to know each other better.*

For each of the above scenarios, ask parents to define the incident (e.g. online harassment, sexting, cyberbullying, etc.). Ask them to analyse each situation and the dangers associated with each one, as well as the actions would they take to eliminate the consequences of the problem.

I can try out this activity: with the parents

Digital Media Diet

Based on what you have learned in this module, and along with parents, create a family Digital Media Diet. Ask parents to set some ground “rules” that their children need to follow, for example:

- No use/limited use of devices at the dinner table
- No playing video games after 10pm
- Always check the age rating before downloading a game

Discuss with the parents the Digital Media Diet they created.

I can try out this activity: with the parents

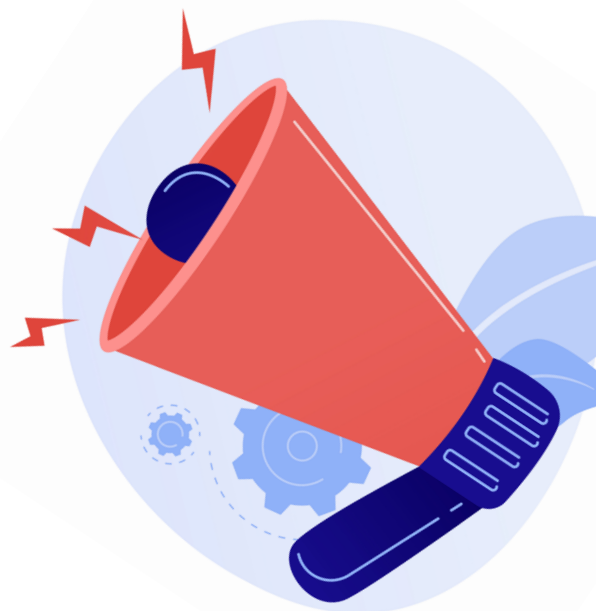


In this module, we have learned that...

- Parents need to be aware of the various strategies and tools to be used in order to help their children avoid potential online risks and therefore to be safe while being online.
- Netiquette is a set of specific behavioural rules that internet users need to follow. A proper internet netiquette has become crucial for maintaining a good image on the Internet.
- There are different ways that can help parents support children's mental and psychological status in relation to the use of digital media.
- Digital wellbeing goes beyond reducing screen time – it is rather a question of how and for which purposes media and technology devices are used.
- Crafting a healthy Digital Media Diet empowers positive engagement with technology and implements cognitive skills in order to stay in control when being online.
- Finding the right balance between online and offline activities can help parents and children avoid potential risks and secure online privacy.

Questions for reflection

- Why is “netiquette” important for the parents to know?
- How well do I know “Cyber Safety” in order to be able to transmit this knowledge to parents?
- Which are the digital safety guidelines I should teach parents?
- What are some major online threats and risks that parents need to be aware of?
- How can I teach the parents to apply critical and creative thinking skills to their children when being online?
- How can I help parents decide how digital media can be used by themselves and their children?





PART 2

Let's Get Practical

MODULE 4: Facilitating Digital Competence Learning

In a Nutshell

This module reflects on facilitation techniques when practising digital mediation with parents, leading them to the safe and responsible use of technologies. The approach explored in this module employs a more comprehensive view emphasizing the social context within which digital media is used and how family learning processes can influence the way children gain experiences.

In this module, educators will learn about:

- The key principles of facilitation
- Working perspectives for educators
- The three dimensions for Guided Participation
- Active learning techniques and ICT Tools for facilitation

Dive In

Key principles of Facilitation

Parents always want to be good parents, and love their children as they want them to be happy, safe and healthy. As such, to enhance facilitation with parents to approach digital education, educators should assume general statements that are crucial to ease digital learning of parents in favour of their children' education.

- **Being a parent is not something you already know.** Parents need information and support to recognize their strengths and develop strategies that will meet their needs.
- **Making parents understand their own needs** is fundamental, as it is a way to meet their children's needs.
- **Facilitation means** to understand the different situations around parents' digital education, and create answers that are positive, practical, and low-cost.

A good facilitation process aims to:

- Promote positive and aware parenting
- Help parents improve their skills and develop new ones
- Strengthen self-confidence and problem-solving abilities
- Connect parents with the wider community, services, and existing resources
- Prevent family violence and improve negotiation skills



Values.

What educators should know

As an educator, it is crucial to define your own values while teaching parents. These values are certainly not considered the “best ones”, but are tailor according to your characters and beliefs. Keep also in mind that should be respectful other people's values as well. Educators must remain neutral to the issues that occur during a training session and need to assist the different sides of a learning group to create common grounds for everyone, making all individual values respected.

The role of an educator is not to change one's values, but to acknowledge them and raise the awareness of learners regarding their own beliefs. In this way, the real focus is on examining the impact values have on the choices parents make every day.

Consider the following principles:

- **Educators should possess specific skills and experiences when training parents, namely:**
 - > Knowledge of adult education principles.
 - > Child growth and development knowledge.
 - > How to outreach activities with specific groups (e.g. ethnic minorities, LGBTQI+ parents, etc.) – ***read more about this topic in Module 5.***
 - > Needs assessment.
 - > Group work techniques.

- **Educators are listeners, not talkers.**

Educators have to help parents feel comfortable enough to speak, to listen to what they say, to learn from them, and to help them learn from each other. Adults learn best when they participate actively.

- **Educators are supporters, not leaders.**

As we will examine in the next pages, the core principle of facilitation lies in the concept of educators supporting parents as they become more confident and trusting in their ability to raise happy, healthy, and competent children. They help parents to gather and exchange friendly advice and support each other.

- **Educators support parents in finding strengths both for individuals and for families.**

Educators should motivate parents to feel more confident, empowering them rather than concentrating all the power and decision-making process in their own hands.

- **Educators are learners, not teachers.**

The educator's job is not to "teach" people how to be good parents – there is no right or wrong way to become one. Instead, educators should work with parents into sharing ideas and information and discover new approaches to respond to parents' needs and learn more from them.

Families as learning centres

As an educator, it is fundamental to consider any family as a "learning collective" (McClain 2018), in other words as a group with own "agenda, norms and beliefs" that regulates how learning is conducted. In fact, adult family members adopt the role of "learning mediators" for the children, as they shape the values, knowledge and experience a child can acquire over time, especially in terms of informal learning experiences.

An informal learning experience is referred to "any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs outside the curricula of educational institutions, or the courses or workshops offered by educational or social agencies." (Livingstone, 1999). For instance, an informal learning experience could be an activity held afterschool by a kids club.

As different literature states (Forman and Kuschner, 1983), children start learning since the beginning of their lives. This innate willingness to learn could be nourished or weakened by what children experience within their family environments and settings. Therefore, gaining the right experiences and encouraging parents to mediate on those is a crucial responsibility of an educator.

Working perspectives for educators

In order to provide a learning and reflective environment to parents, an educator must first become a “facilitator”.

The role of a facilitator is to expand the learning exploration and raise awareness on parents (or guardians, or any other adult family member) on the ways such a ‘diffuse’ learning experience can be shaped based on families’ daily experiences. Traditionally, digital education is seen as the acquisition of technical skills. Therefore, facilitators should “unbuild” this vision and somehow embed a new vision within family settings by the solid practice of **reflecting** and **experiential learning**.

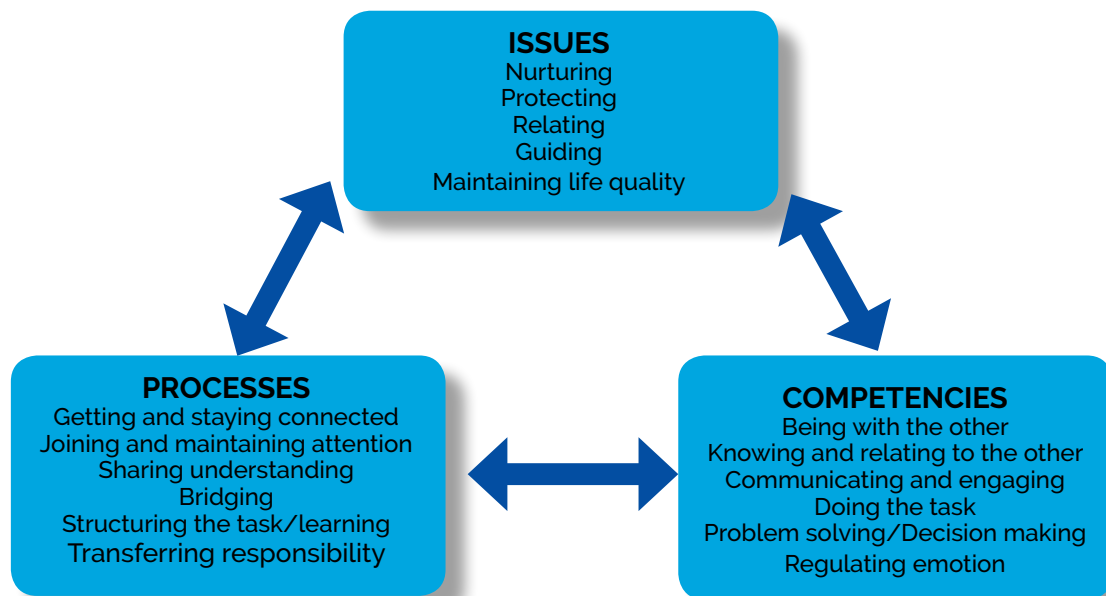
This specific way of learning has been defined as “**guided learning**” (Rogoff, 2003), based on the main conception of “proximal development”, which is the assumption that learners first learn with the support of experts before acting independently. In this sense, learning is a continuous and proximal outcome of collaborative problem solving, and is best facilitated using whole and authentic activities (Harland, 2003).



The perspective of guided learning is that the core of learning is the relationship, and that the development of competencies for carrying out activities and responsibilities are its main foundations. Compared to other learning experiences, guided learning is not protocol-driven with objectives laid out in advance, as its main motivation is defined along competencies for taking care of a child (Rogoff, 2003). That is, guided learning is aligned according to the experience and the specific family situation one can encounter.

Guided Participation

Guided participation is a type of teaching–learning practice distinguished by its setting in everyday social–cultural activity (Rogoff, 2003). To structure and assess guided participation-based learning activity, we have to consider 3 dimensions: ISSUES, COMPETENCES, and PROCESSES (Pridham, Scott, Limbo 2018).



Guided participation is based on a few main assumptions (Rogoff, 2003):

1. Parents and children mutually define meanings and accomplish activities together.
2. Structure participation makes children share their routines and activities with their parents.
3. Participation is nuanced and can be directed towards acquiring responsibilities, staying connected, sharing understanding, etc.
4. The outline of a limited number of issues that can be tackled.
5. The definition of competencies to be acquired through the emotional involvement and caring of the child. Motivation, meaning, and goals are intertwined.

Basically, interacting with a “family learning unit” can be the basis to enhance the role of the parents as facilitators for their children in life’s endeavours and challenges, making children active learning participants by diving into the world of parents through observation and assisting parents during everyday training activities (Paradise and Rogoff, 2009).

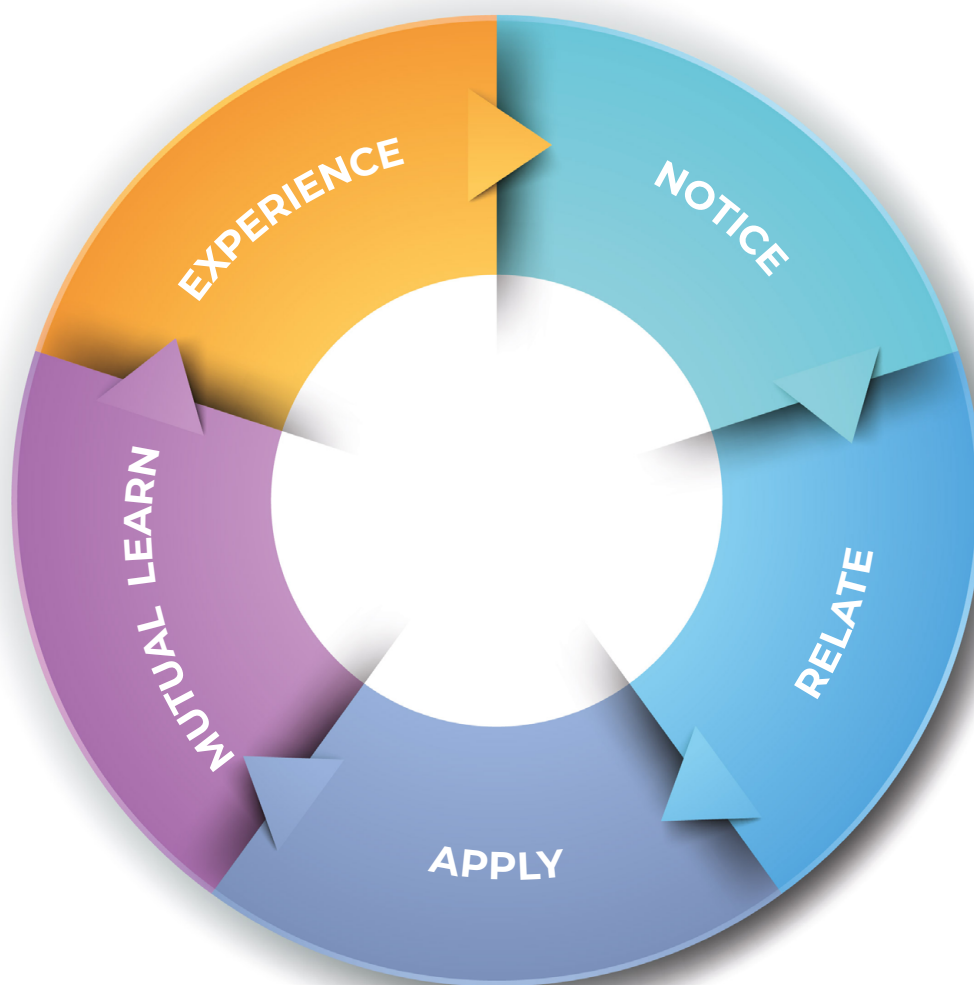
In practical terms, guided learning from a facilitator’s perspective is about making parents notice a specific issue and adjust accordingly, creating a fine line between the independent learning of children and how parents can improve their presence, their strategies, and their own competencies.

As stated, learning is mutual and progressive between parents and children, and the role of a facilitator is not to teach parents what they should or should not do in absolute terms, but to reason together to achieve common outcomes.

Facilitation in Practice

Adopting a methodology for a facilitator means to establish a working routine with parents and set a range of activities aimed at encouraging them, empowering them, learning from experience, and reflecting on their own habits. With guided learning, you can focus on the **experience as the core of a training activity**. The outcomes of the training are always gradual and related to the specific parental situations. In this perspective, each parent is supported to understand and apply experiences in response to their particular needs (**read more about this topic in Module 5**).

Since learning is a collaborative process between educators and parents, educators should not tell what parents should do, but rather help them realise what does not work among their daily parenting strategies



As a facilitator, it is important to start with inquisitive questions to define the area of work. Let us take the meaning of the above graph, term by term:

NOTICE

To NOTICE means to limit the issue, the concrete problem that parents may have with their children.

To identify the problem, ask parents:

- What happened?
- What was said? By you? By your child?
- What have you noticed?
- In what order did things happen?
- At what time of day did it happen?
- What else was happening at the time?
- Who was there/not there

RELATE

To RELATE means to create an opportunity for each person in the group to find their own experience and interact during the session.

To create an opportunity, ask parents:

- Have you become aware of anything new?
- Could you connect it to any specific topic?
- Can you see a new meaning?

APPLY

To APPLY means to give the opportunity to put into practice the experience and enable the reflection on future strategy each of us will do in the future.

To help put things in practice, ask parents:

- What new options are you aware of?
- What do you think you will do now?
- What did you notice and what does it mean to you?

MUTUAL LEARN

MUTUAL LEARN means to pull together what the group of parents has learned through experience and reflection.

To make them reflect on their learning experiences, ask parents:

- How will you (as a family unit) create new activities?
- Will you define new routines?
- Can you define the new skills that you have acquired?

EXPERIENCE

EXPERIENCE reflects to the actual training situation, whatever this is. An example could be a parent during a training session getting passionate or emotional to defend a position or telling the group about his/her parenting experience.



Active learning techniques and ICT Tools for Educators

Active learning occurs when technology is used actively, for instance when children use computers, devices, and apps to engage in meaningful learning or storytelling experiences. Sharing experiences by documenting them with photos and stories, recording or using video-chatting software can deeply engage children in a positive and constructive way, especially when an adult supports them.

By their side, adults need to recognize that what matters most is whether the child's mind is active and deeply engaged with the content, rather relying on the sole screen time management. As we explored in Module 3, by referring to Digital Wellbeing, adults should balance and moderate the use of technology with children, setting appropriate limits and meeting the needs of their children and family. Adults should model behaviour while using technology with kids as well before allowing children to use it independently.

More specifically, educators have to consider age and developmental levels of children when using technology. This is functional to define what is best for healthy child development and achievement of learning outcomes. Especially during the early learning settings, technology use should be integrated in the learning programme of a child and balanced with other learning tools (such as writing material, books, and play material). Specific analysis and consideration need to be performed when technology is included in the training process, mainly related to the features of devices to be used. In fact, devices should not displace the interaction between interaction with teachers, peers or parents, as some features could distract children from learning. Finally, educators and parents have to plan carefully whether technology is functional to the learning process of the children in both a structured and a non-formal context (Office of Educational Technology, n.d.)



Did you Know?

Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning

"Working with Parents to Support Children's Learning" is a guidance report issued by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), aimed at helping schools on how they can work with parents and carers to improve children's learning. When we refer to 'parental engagement', we refer to schools and educators working with parents to improve children's academic outcomes. It is as an accessible overview of existing research with clear, actionable guidance. The guidance also draws on a wider body of evidence and expert input.

Read the full report here: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/working-with-parents-to-support-childrens-learning/>

Visit the foundation's website to discover other guidance reports and practical tools: www.educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk

Let's Practice

Competency Profile of a Facilitator

Based on what we have examined in this Module about facilitation, prepare a list of the competencies a facilitator should possess. Then, assess your level of the competencies you listed using a scale from 1 to 10 - where 1 means a very low competency level and 10 means a very high competency level. After the self-assessment, write down conclusions for your own development in terms of leading facilitation processes.

I can try out this activity: on my own

Facilitation during my Training Sessions

Choose one training module from the training sessions for parents that you have already prepared or conducted. Analyse the aim and the content of that training module. Consider how the training module could be implemented, if tools and assumptions of facilitation were used. Prepare and write down a scenario of the facilitation session, including the stages of this process: Notice, Relate, Apply, Mutual Learn, Experience. Write down relevant questions for the selected module in the scenario.

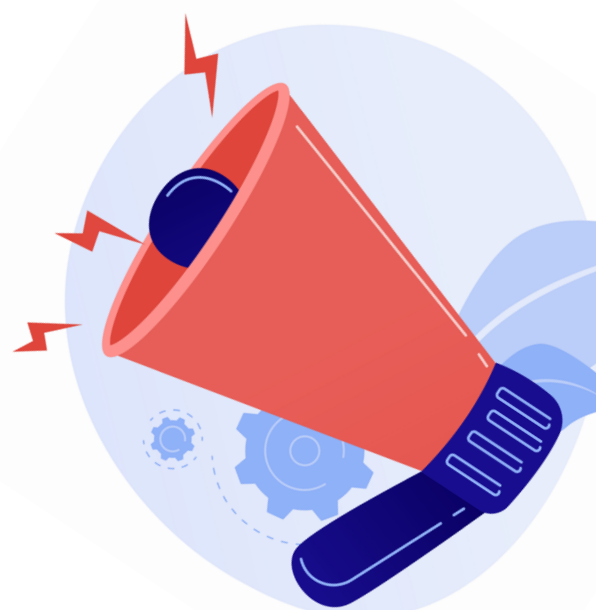
I can try out this activity: on my own

In this module, we have learned that...

- Experience a core element of learning.
- Families could be considered as a group with own “agenda, norms and beliefs” that regulates how learning is done.
- Learners first learn with the support of experts before acting independently. Learning is a continuous and proximal process and the outcome of collaborative problem-solving.
- Guided learning is not protocol-driven, as its main motivation is defined along competencies for taking care of a child.
- The role of a facilitator expanding that learning exploration and raise awareness on parents on the ways learning experience can be based on everyday experience families have.

Questions for reflection

- Do parents feel comfortable in sharing experiences of parenting?
- Which is the role of family in the training sessions I plan?
- Do parents feel comfortable to interact and react during my training sessions?
- Is there a peer exchange of point of view and open dialogue between me and parents who participate in my training session?
- How do I plan and embed technology/device usage in my session with parents?



MODULE 5: Empowering Parents

In a Nutshell

This module explores ways for the creation of accessible, empowering, and learning-friendly environments for parents. It introduces ways for educators to become proficient mediators in parents' learning process and insights on how to create appropriate conditions for all learners involved.

In this module, educators will learn about:

- Creating accessible spaces and ensuring access to digital environments for parents
- Fostering parents' creativeness and critical thinking
- The difference between passiveness, aggressiveness, and assertiveness
- The VAK learning system
- Ways to address parents with diverse learning needs, profiles, and backgrounds
- The principles of empathy

Dive In

Creating accessible spaces and ensuring access to digital environments

In order to create accessible and interactive spaces for parents, educators must ensure an active role of those involved. This will facilitate tailor-made sessions according to parents' skills, expectations and needs. Before welcoming parents, the facilities used for the session, the time plan as well as the preparation steps taken are all essential factors to obtain the goals that we could have set and results expected (Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, n.d; Voltage Control, 2019).

Time and Preparation

Time and preparation are key factors when planning a training session. As an educator, you must be sure that the programme set is suitable and will allow you to carry out all that you have planned. To achieve this:

- **Be realistic with the time allocated for a session.** Provide enough time for each activity. It is always better to deep in a topic or plan other activities in case you run out of time, rather than rushing to cover many topics that parents are not able to digest. Give the floor to parents to speak widely about the topics covered, although without being stuck in one single point.



- **When dealing with bilateral sessions** (i.e. having two people face-to-face), prefer implementing short meetings, as they are more intense and demand a constant attention of participants (60 to 80 minutes maximum).
- **If you deal with several parents or plan a long session**, set small breaks between the various session parts, so you and the parents can rest. Offer them something to drink or eat (e.g. coffee or tea, biscuits, etc.), so as to feel more welcome and be more easily open to share with you their worries. This way, you will be able to generate informal spaces of interaction on which confidence and connections with parents could be reinforced.
- **Show flexibility in terms of time.** You would need to adapt your sessions to the best time for parents out of their working times and family duties.
- **Create a small agenda or list of topics of discussion** to structure the session and stick to it (even though you can make variations on the fly). Sometimes, it is also useful to share the information in advance, so the parents attending the training session do not have the wrong expectations about the issues that you will deal with during the session.
- **Organize the elements or topics of the session in a logical order and duration.** Ensure that more relevant or urgent topics are discussed first. Invest less time in secondary or less important issues.
- **You could also face situations whereby sessions were not planned by you, but were required by parents.** In this scenario, besides taking care of all the above issues, ask parents to inform you about the content and reasons for covering up those topics. This will help you become better prepared and aware about their expectations).


Space Accessibility and Logistics

Physical space and its elements are also essential to create a suitable framework for discussions, reflections and learning processes. This means choosing the appropriate facilities and providing the necessary materials to properly implement your training session:

- **Choose a room or space according to your needs:** consider factors like the number of participants attending, type of equipment to use, size of the space, etc. You would need to generate privacy, so try locating a quiet space with no outside distractions or not used by others at the same time, in order to achieve good room acoustics and let everyone hear you while not being heard by others outside that space.



- **The location must be familiar.** If possible, give priority to spaces that parents already attend and are familiar with (e.g. a school office). This will also involve parents in children's life and make them aware about their everyday life or your work. If this is not possible, choose places close to parents (e.g. using a social centre of a neighbourhood) or with good infrastructure (e.g. well connected by public transport or with a good parking space).
- **Spaces should be accessible for people with reduced mobility** (e.g. with an elevator or no stairs). Think about possible additional needs for your training participants. For example, bring a service dog if the space allows it, have extra spaces for electric wheelchairs, and remove wires or other elements of the room.
- **Arrange the meeting room properly so you can sit directly in front of the parents and at the same level.** In this way, you will not be considered as a "superior". If you have several people attending your training session, try forming a circle; it is important that participants can see each other while talking and discussion, as



this will help them perceive body language and improve communication. This is especially helpful for parents with hearing problems, as they will be able to lip-read too.

- **Set the appropriate furniture and materials according to the activities you intend to implement.** For example, if parents will need to use writing, ensure that the learning space is equipped with tables, pens, and papers.
- **Hot or Cold? Ensure that the room temperature is not too low or too high**, as this could make parents feel comfortable and create additional problems.
- **Check the room lighting:** make sure that room lighting is suitable for the training activities you wish to implement. Try taking advantage of natural light, without causing distraction (e.g. choose a room with big windows but not at the street level, so participants will not see pedestrians passing; otherwise, they might feel like being observed).
- Have in mind that depending on parents' characteristics and diverse needs (as we've seen above), **you might need extra accessibility materials** that you should

The space is an ally to work with, so to take advantage of it towards your session success and the benefit of your parents, as it can help to facilitate the information exchange and learning process.

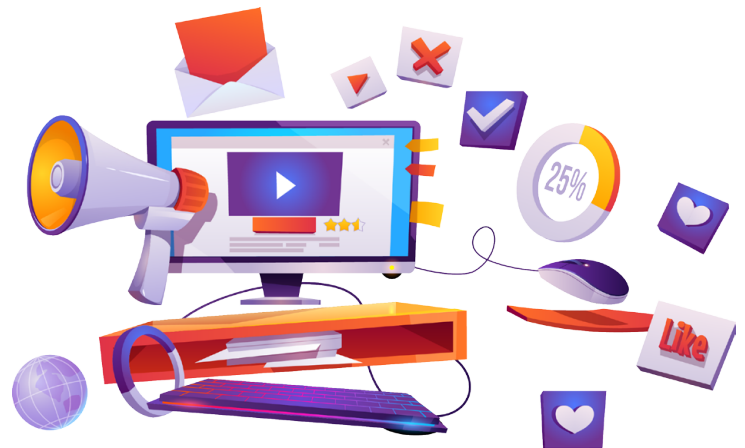
The Online Space

Technologies can also replace physical spaces, remove distances and overcome geographical barriers. They also help to deal with parents that, due to working hours or other time-related restrictions, cannot attend a face-to-face training activity. Despite these benefits, the fear of being unfamiliar with various devices may occur while implementing online sessions, so during preparation, you would need to take extra issues into consideration besides the previous ones mentioned:

- Remember that parents' practice on the use of ICTs will contribute to better engage them in the use of these tools with their children or everyday lives. ICTs can help create new opportunities to engage families—inside and outside traditional school settings. Avoid ICTs demonization and remind parents that screen time can also be a great opportunity to talk with their children and reinforce their relation with them. ICTs can also play active tool in children's education and do not always make them more passive or isolate them from other people or the family members, if they are properly used.

- Choose devices that parents already know how to use (e.g. smartphones, tablets, computers) as well as software they are familiar with (e.g. Whatsapp ©, Skype ©, Zoom ©, etc.). Invite them test them before starting the session, so they are ready to meet you properly. If possible, advise them to accept help by their children on this task. Be sure they feel comfortable with the device and software used, to avoid falling behind or getting frustrated.

- Once you are aware of parents' competency levels of using ICTs, ensure they also use digital means to be in contact with you according to their capacity (e.g. using email, Whatsapp ©, social networks, text messages, etc.). This can help to extend the learning beyond the session and give parents ideas about home activities with their children using ICTs.



- Have in mind that online sessions normally are not as dynamic as face to face ones, so you would need more time to implement them and may take longer than expected.
- Try to use the video camera as much as possible. Seeing others' faces allows parents to use body language, avoid misunderstandings and set a stronger and more confident discussion between the parts involved. This will help you detect reactions and better understand parents' feelings. In spite of this, respect parents' privacy if they do not want to keep their camera off.
- Notice that community is key in schools and important for parents, but online bilateral sessions can make them feel left out. This can be solved by using Whasapp © groups, Facebook © groups, email chains, newsletters, etc. that could allow several parents to stay informed and in contact with you while working with more than one person.
- Try to use different sites or tools to interact with parents even though you deal with them online. You can start using a simple one and change them afterwards according to your parents' current skillset. Be sure that you introduce these tools one by one, so that parents can become familiar with them and not feel overloaded. It is a good way to make them proactive while improving their use of technologies and making them aware about how useful they can be. Some of these tools could be Wooclap © Padlet © Mentimeter © Jamboard © Framapad © and Trello ©

Fostering Parents' Creativeness and Critical Thinking

As we have seen in Module 4, to be able to provide a learning and reflective environment, without imposing conclusions to parents by considering them empty recipients, the educator must first become a “Facilitator”. That is, parents need to become an active part of the learning experience, through partially leading the learning process by enriching it with their own contributions. The educator is thus responsible for creating an atmosphere and a feeling of security and confidence, where parents feel comfortable to participate and their opinions and contributions are useful and welcomed. To make this possible, it is important to pay attention to the two sides of the same coin: the **educator's attitude** and the **parents' participation** (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2019).

The Power of Assertiveness

Parents' profiles, skills and backgrounds can always change, so it is important to ensure an appropriate transfer of information and set your arguments in an effective way to guide parents and meet solutions together.

To achieve this, **assertiveness** is a key concept to adopt not only for you as an educator, but also for the parents you work with. It will help you guide your training sessions and support parents to deal with mediation issues and conflicts at home.

Being assertive means being able to defend yourself and your opinions in a calm and positive way, while respecting others' thoughts and feelings. Assertiveness does not only concern about the message and the way to communicate it; it also deals with the type of people and ways they behave within a conversation. You will find **passive** and **aggressive** people difficult to deal with. Your task will be to bring them into an assertive middle point (i.e. not too aggressive or too passive). This will allow them to share their goals and get what they demand, but at the same time, considering others' needs and not alienating their rights.



Here is how to identify individuals with assertive characteristics, in comparison to passive and aggressive ones:

PASSIVE	ASSERTIVE	AGGRESSIVE
Speaks softly or weakly or not expression	Speaks firm, honestly and directly	Speaks very noisy and loudly
Afraid to speak up	Delivers clear messages	Interrupts others
"Too nice"	Regular, conversational tone	Talks over others
Fallen shoulders	Relaxed	Invades others' personal space
Shrunk	Open stance	Stands rigidly, tense
Avoid eye contact	Good eye contact	Glares, stares at others
Powerless	Powerful	Threats
Passive	Acting	Attacking
Weak or no personal boundaries	Good boundaries	Rigid boundaries
Low self-esteem	Self-confident	Low consideration of others
Isolates self from groups	Participates in group	Controls groups
Nervous hands	Relaxed and simple hands	Close fist

Sources: Centre for Parenting Education (n.d.),

To achieve assertiveness, you can try out a simple process along with the parents:

1. Invite parents to describe the problem you are trying to examine through the training, using empiric facts and issues that are considered **objective** (e.g. actions, behaviours, etc.), and not based on **subjective opinions**. For example, if a parent tries to describe a situation by stating "He/She behaves bad", this is not a valid or concrete concept. *What do we mean by "bad"?* In order to go further into evident decisions, parents must understand how a certain issue began in the first place: What has happened? Who was involved? What did these people do? Where did it happen?
2. Invite them also to share their feelings and thoughts in an open and clear way in relation to the conflict: For example, ask them *"What did you feel at that moment? And now? Did you share it with the other people involved?"*
3. Encourage them to find creative solutions to improve that situation. Push them to find operative and concrete ways of action: *"I could...", "I will tell him/her that...", etc.*

4. Invite them to resume all the previous steps with their own words so they can use assertiveness with others such as their children. Tell them to repeat loud the final result as in a role-play: For example:

5. Remind parents to practice this process at home and apply it with their children (the more they try it, the better they will perform it).

*"George, this morning you took my computer without permission (1)
I thought I lost it and I felt overwhelmed (2)
Next time, please ask me first, so I know where it is and tell you when I will need it again and in the meantime you can use it freely (3)
So we can both use the same device, do our tasks freely and save money for the school equipment (4)*

Yet again, even if an educator can clearly distinguish assertive parents from aggressive and passive ones, what if parents having difficulties coming up with alternatives or solutions to their issues? **This is the moment for educators to become creative.**

Creativity and Critical Thinking

To find suitable alternatives and adopt an assertive approach, parents must be able to understand situations and set appropriate strategies. This will give an added value to the solutions detected and it is essential to generate a process of change or innovation in their everyday life (Aula Planeta, n.d.; Dewar, 2009-2012; Taneri, 2012).

What should an educator know to make this possible?


- **Sensitivity and Empathy.** Make questions and interview representatives of your target group to learn more about their needs, expectations and skills. Pay special attention to information from representatives of minority or ethnic groups different from you and analyse their characteristics.
- **Capacity to extract conclusions from actions, guide debriefing sessions and assess together with parents their learning.** Be patient and observe participants' reactions, take advantage of them.
- **Be open, familiar and, if possible, fun.** A certain amount of humour during a training session always makes everything run smoothly - however, do not exceed yourself and behave in a serious way upon sensitive conflicts and problems.
- **Clarify roles:** explain to parents that you expect from them to play an active role

during the training, as this is a vital factor for its successful implementation. Parents should take the opportunity to interact when needed.

- **Listen actively and speak in an effective way that matches your parents' register and language tone.**
- **Do not push parents to do things, but be sure that the conditions for their participation are suitable.** Invite them to propose choices so they can celebrate their autonomy and develop their self-determination.
- **Parents' freedom of expression and opinion, as well as sharing of feelings can cause real situations of conflict and confrontation over different points of view.** Try to behave respectfully and in an assertive way, showing your opinion and allowing parents to share theirs, without invading individual rights. You should allow space for comparing and contrasting opinions, without trying to convince others, come into personal clashes or impose your own ideas.
- **Use storytelling to guide your explanations or personal experiences to give examples,** but always think about parents' needs. If you are using ICTs during the training activity, a digital storytelling approach could be very useful.
- **Remind parents to recognise the achievement of small goals.** Any successful goal is an effort that should be celebrated!

As a final reminder, you should always be prepared to guide parents when they feel uncertain about a situation, by making them reflect upon that situation, explain them the available solutions and clarifying issues. Parents are your main source of knowledge, therefore allow them to learn from their own behaviours and reach to their own conclusions.





To achieve the above, it is important to use a variety of approaches and methodologies to help you identify which information and content is more useful to teach parents. Remember: irrelevant information will distract them by pushing them away from the most important issues.

Below are several tips to guide you on this creative process for problem solving (adapted from Dilip, n.d.):

- **LATERAL THINKING.** Challenge parents to think outside the box when trying to solve a problem, using approaches points of view of the problem that are not so obvious.
- **SIMPLIFICATION.** Present a problem to parents, and instruct them to imagine that they are explaining that problem to their children. Repeat the problem in a short paragraph, and ask parents to make it shorter once again, until arriving at the concrete point where they will be able to explain it to their children in a simple way.
- **ACHIEVED?** Make parents think they have already achieved their goal: Ask them *"How did you manage it? What were your previous steps?"* Going through this pathway backwards can help **you detect how to proceed.**
- **TELL ME WHY.** Make parents ask themselves **"Why?"** the problem is happening and keep asking the same question on every answer, until you arrive at the nucleus of the problem. Other direct questions that could contribute during this process would be **"Who?"** (is also involved), **"Which?"** (problem or challenge to overcome), **"When?"** (did it start and should I take every step of its solution), **"How?"** (Am I going to proceed and how many different ways exist to arrive at the same point).
- **BRAINSTORMING.** Invite parents to write down as many ideas and alternatives for a solution as possible. This will encourage them to discover new solutions and define the best way to proceed.
- **"IF I WERE..."** Put parents in other inspiring people's shoes who they respect or people they have known to have been in the same situation. Make them reflect: "What would X do or did?"

Finally, remind parents that sometimes innovation comes from repetition, and make them not being afraid to imitate behaviours. Invite them to explore other realities in which the same problem has appeared and verify what was done that they are not doing themselves.

Teach parents not to be afraid to try out new approaches!

Addressing parents with diverse learning needs, profiles, expectations, and abilities

A crucial factor that any educator, trainer, or facilitator should take into consideration is the fact that different individuals have different ways to learn and assimilate knowledge.

Indeed, addressing parents with diverse needs, profiles, expectations and abilities is always a challenging task. What works with a particular mother or father might not work with other individuals, and vice versa. People tend to understand things in a different way, so it is important to identify and distinguish between the different **learning styles**, and propose diverse methodologies of teaching and learning based on each style. To be able to categorize the parents you work with will help you choose the best way to teach them as well as promote their self-learning (Estilos de aprendizaje, n.d.).

Despite the many different types of learners classifications that exist, such as the one proposed by David Kolb, the model of Peter Honey and Alan Mumford or the approach set by Anthony Gregorc, we can simplify them thanks to the **VAK (visual-auditory-kinaesthetic)** sensorial model of learning created by **Walter Burke Barbe** and later developed by Neil Fleming (Gende, 2017; Literacy Planet, 2017; Ruiz Ahmed, 2010):

VISUAL LEARNERS	AUDITORY LEARNERS	KINAESTHETIC LEARNERS
They acquire information more efficiently when reading a text or another visual tool. They assimilate knowledge better by creating visual links with the information they see, establishing comparisons or links and retain it by reproducing it (e.g. through writing, painting, drawing, etc.)	They acquire information more efficiently through listening and speaking. Sounds and voice (oral explanations, voice instructions) help them incorporate concepts and understand abstract ideas. They like to read content loud or repeat it using their own words	They acquire information more efficiently through movements, actions, sensations, as well as by establishing contact. It is important to offer them concrete experiments or exercises to set links with abstract concepts. It is easier for them to relate new knowledge with knowledge they

1. TO ENGAGE VISUAL LEARNERS:

- Use diagrams, graphics, maps, images, letters, emails, and instant messages.
- Invite them to take notes and write on the margins of documents. Mind maps or drawings are also useful.
- Use colours to highlight parts of the text or documents provided to them.
- Support your arguments using categories, classification, and taxonomy.
- Invite them to read books, articles, websites, and other resources that contain text, regarding the issue you are addressing; this will bring an added value to "solitary" and autonomous learners.

2. TO ENGAGE AUDITORY LEARNERS:

- Chat, talk, discuss and narrate information. Impose questions and invite parents to answer them.
- Use audiovisual materials: videos, mobile phones recordings, radio podcasts, conferences, songs, etc.
- Invite them to read loud the handouts provided to them, to repeat the guidelines given or conclusions of the training session.
- Notice that some like to talk, some to listen, and some to have an oral interaction. Be sure that your sessions allow you to incorporate the desired approaches, and at the same time ensure **that parents can express their thoughts freely and exchange their ideas.**

3. TO ENGAGE KINAESTHETIC LEARNERS:

- Use manual handcrafts, modelling, puzzles, board games, construction blocks, etc. to represent an idea and solutions. Physical actions will also help (e.g. having a conversation while walking, having a drink, or doing a role-play).
- Allow them to move or use different elements of the space. Make sure the space is tidy so they do not distract themselves.
- Try to canalize their energy into doing concrete tasks.
- Give them something to grab onto to support the conversation (e.g. a ball or element to express and idea).

Despite this classification, parents tend to combine these approaches to acquire information, so try to experiment with different methods while training them. Little by little, you will be able to understand what works better with each person. **One approach does not exclude others**, so combine them if possible in order to motivate parents' interaction and achieve the best possible outcome.

Parents' Backgrounds

Not only is the way of absorbing information important; it is also essential to understand the different factors that influence parents' behaviour during a training session and way they are acting. Such factors include **culture, literacy or academic competencies, and social background**. For this reason, it is important to gather as much reliable information as possible from the parents you are going to meet before engaging in any training activity. This includes asking teachers of their children who could know the parents well, or discovering information from the parents themselves during the recruitment period.

During your time as an educator, you will come across different learning groups, categorized by factors such as age, cultural background, and skillset. Each group is defined by specific characteristics and should be approached through different methods. **Let us take four main examples of learning groups, one by one:**

1. YOUNGER PARENTS

They normally face a double process of growing up children while still learning “how to be adults”. They focus more “on the moment” so they work better through emotions and simulations linked to real experiences. Being a young parent puts them in difficult life situations that could derive from emotional conflicts and, therefore, putting effort to overcome them should be recognized.

When dealing with younger parents:

- Do not use too formal vocabulary and try using similar terms. Try using humour when possible, but always in a respectful way.
- Encourage them to speak and express themselves. Do not monopolise the conversation, but instead give them the floor.
- Engage them in interactive activities, like role-play, empathy exercises, and exploring emotional videos. Implementing active exercises will motivate their proactive participation.
- Demonstrate other people's behaviours as good examples to follow or analyse for their own personal development.
- Practice assertive communication processes and positive reinforcement.



2. PARENTS FROM DIVERSE CULTURES

Parents from different cultures will demand educators an extra source of knowledge or empathy (more on empathy in the next section). You should try to get to know the culture these parents belong to or at least, be open-minded, observe and understand it without reinforcing stereotypes. Different cultural values carry different types of family “rules” and ways to raise children, as well conceptions of values such as respect or obedience. Therefore, it is important to be aware about these cultural variations to guide parents accordingly.

Moreover, working with parents from other cultures can bring to the surface various sensitive topics such as racism, xenophobia or cultural clashes and shocks. Expect to deal with these issues too and be ready to tackle them.

When dealing with parents from different cultures:

- Become informed about the cultural background of the parents, including the values and parental roles they apply at home. Use reliable fonts, avoid prejudices and, if possible, try talking with a representative of the same community to extract further insights.
- Depending on their background (e.g. newly-arrived migrants), some parents might still not fully understand the local language. Therefore, be patient, use a clear and easy language, do not rush them and support your explanations with drawings, images, and body language.
- Ensure that they have understood what you communicate by using questions and repeat your arguments as many times as needed in different ways.
- Try to explore their role and level of inclusion in the local community, as this can be related to the issue or problem you are dealing with (but always respect their privacy).



3. PARENTS WITH LOW LITERACY SKILLS

Parents with low literacy skills indicates difficulties in reading and processing written information. This reduces their fonts of information, can limit their critical thinking and does not allow them to notice hints on the tone of a message that could influence its meaning. Despite these obstacles, they are able to learn in an efficient and normal way, so never underestimate them or their capacity to understand.

When dealing with parents with low literacy skills:

- Take advantage of their strengths and give value to their life experiences. Link them with the issues you want to deal with.
- Use images or graphics to make connections with ideas with parents with low reading or language skills.
- Try to empathise with them and indicate yourself as an equal. Make them feel respected and that their ideas are taken into consideration.
- Use practical exercises and invite them to repeat them at home as a self-improvement exercise.



4. PARENTS WITH LOW DIGITAL SKILLS

A final type of non-literacy that we are going to explore is related to parents with no or low digital skills. Schools, administrations and society in general tend to trust and use more and more ICTs for all their processes and interactions, so they might feel excluded from everyday actions or procedures to be made using digital devices (ex. a schoolteacher who communicates with parents only through emails).



Due to having low-level competencies in this area, digital learning and mediation is especially difficult for these parents, and might be the result of causing additional clashes with their children. Their lack of proficiency makes them more reluctant to use ICTs, so they tend to be more restrictive on their use or avoid co-using them with their children. As a result, these parents are often unable to properly control children's ICTs consumption or deal with the consequences it would bring to their families. Eventually, this group of parents do not only face problems in relation to ICTs, but will issues using technologies themselves.

When dealing with parents with low digital skills:

- Address not only the issues related to ICTs, but also explore the benefits technologies can bring to them and their children.
- Do not use technologies at the very beginning of your interventions, but instead introduce parents to several technological devices so they can become familiar with them. Start with the more simple ones that might already use by themselves (e.g. a smartphone) and steadily more towards more advanced ones, always according to their skills, needs, and predisposition.
- Make them see that they can also learn from their children. Using devices together can improve parents' skills while creating moments of cooperation (and fun!).
- Help them identify how and when ICTs can contribute to their everyday tasks and invite them to start using them. Stress out the role and importance of ICTs in their children's lives and the modern society.

Despite their various characteristics and groups you might come across, as an educator you must always offer a warm and polite welcome the first time you meet the parents. Give to your conversation a non-judgmental approach so they do not feel like being under assessment, and provide them the opportunity to "open" and talk about themselves.

Cultivating Empathy

As a final note to mention in this Module, an educator should also practice **empathy** when interacting with the parents. Empathy is a concept that enjoys wide attention by scientists, educators and other experts, as it has proved to form better interpersonal and social relationships (Riess, 2017).

In simple terms, being empathetic means to be able to put yourself in other people's shoes, understand your parents' position and emotions, why they feel the way they do, and provide them an external point of view but really understanding how the situation affects them. This would be especially important when dealing with parents with different and diverse backgrounds.

To indicate empathy during a training activity (Brown, 2018):

- **Connect** with parents and to the emotion they are experiencing, without necessary going through the same situation as they do.
- **Listen** to parents and try to **understand** how they feel –the goal is not to provide a solution, but rather to show that you are by their side.
- Let parents know you are **grateful** to share with you their situation.
- **Invest** in small gestures – a hug, a tap on the shoulder, or a simple nod will show parents that you are actively listening and understanding what they are trying to communicate.

Did you Know?

Apricot for parents

As seen in this module, critical thinking is essential when training parents, but it is also an added skill for their media literacy as well as for improving their relationship with their children. To promote parents' competences regarding media use and management, the Erasmus+ project "**Apricot for parents**" is currently developing a variety of educational materials that can be used to promote critical thinking and media literacy for parents and grandparents within their families.

As stated in the project's website, "Media literacy is an essential skill in today's world – it enables us to be mindful of what we see in the media and to interact critically with the information we are presented with. Media literacy is also a tool for empowering citizens, raising their awareness and helping to counter the effects of disinformation campaigns and fake news spreading across digital media. Children must be taught to use all media – including digital media – in a safe and meaningful way, developing and applying critical thinking skills [...] Parents and Grandparents can be very powerful mediators between their children and the media, and yet many fail to communicate regularly and effectively with their children about media content. They need to be supported to do so."

Source: www.apricot4parents.org

Six Thinking Hats

Sometimes, it is difficult to solve a problem as we can only relate to one concrete point of view. To allow your trainees-parents to think alternatively and outside the box, you can try the **Six Thinking Hats** technique. The technique was developed by Edward De Bono as a way to explore six different perspectives of a complex issue or scenario.

Instructions: Provide parents six different coloured hats, each representing a different activity. You can print, draw or create your hats to make the activity more dynamic. Ask a parent to "wear a hat" and discuss only the issues related to the colour of that specific hat, while the other trainees try analysing the situation. The trainee can continue wearing the rest of the hats in the following order, to tackle each different perspective:

1. **WHITE HAT:** FACTS (What is the problem? What are the empiric data or information? Which facts happened or are we are of?)
2. **RED HAT:** EMOTIONS (Which feelings the issue arises on you? Which are your emotional and immediate reactions?)
3. **BLACK HAT:** JUDGEMENT (What are the risks? What are the obstacles? What can go wrong?)
4. **YELLOW HAT:** POSITIVENESS (Which opportunities the issue brings? Which direct benefits can we get if...? What indirect benefits can it brings?)
5. **GREEN HAT:** CREATIVITY (What else we could do? What if we try to...? Are there other alternatives to proceed? What have we not try to do?)
6. **BLUE HAT:** (optative): THINKING PROCESS (Are we using the hats properly? Shall we go back to other hats? What are the results we noticed or wrote down along the activity? What are the next steps?)

Another suitable order to follow could be: **white**, **green**, **yellow**, **black**, **red** and **blue**



I can try out this activity: with the parents.

Source: URBACT (n.d.) De Bono Thinking Hats. Retrieved from: <https://urbact.eu/de-bono-thinking-hats>

Learning Styles - A Self-Assessment Questionnaire

Below is a practical questionnaire that you can use with parents to help you identify the kind of learner to which each parent mostly relates. This identification will allow you to apply the tips of the module and choose the most appropriate delivery methods to conduct a training activity with a given learning group. It will also help parents identify how they acquire information more efficiently.

1. If I buy new equipment, I normally:

- a) Read the instruction booklet first
- b) Listen to an explanation from someone who has used it before
- c) Have a go at it - I can figure it out as I use it

2. If I must choose a book to read, I would most probably choose:

- a) A book containing pictures and graphics
- b) A book containing words
- c) A book containing word searches or crossword puzzles

3. When shopping for clothes, I tend to:

- a) Imagine how they would look like on me
- b) Speak with the shop staff
- c) Try them on

4. While waiting in the line of the supermarket, I:

- a) Look around at other products
- b) Talk to the person next to me in line
- a) Move restlessly from one place to another

5. If I have to choose furniture for my house, I select it because:

- b) It looks nice and I like the colours
- c) I trust the description the staff of the shop is giving me
- d) The feeling of touching them

6. If I am in a new city and I need directions, I normally:

- a) Examine the map
- b) Ask someone for spoken directions
- c) Follow my instinct

7. During my holidays, I mostly enjoy:

- a) Going to museums and art galleries
- b) Going to concerts
- c) Exploring the city by my own

8. When choosing food from a menu, I tend to:

- a) Imagine what the meal will be like
- b) Talk about the choices in my head or with my colleague
- c) Imagine the taste of the food

9. When I meet new people, I usually remember them by:

- a) Their faces
- b) Their names
- c) The conversation we had

10. The best way of remembering a friend's phone number is by:

- a) Imagining the number on the phone as I dial it
- b) Saying it out loud over and over and over again
- c) Writing it down or saving it in my phone contact list

11. I usually connect with a person because:

- a) I like his/her look
- b) I like what she/he told me
- c) I like the way he/she made me feel

12. If I am not sure how to spell a word, what I most likely to do?

- a) Write it down to see if it looks right
- b) Spell it out loud to see if it sounds right
- c) Trace the letters in the air (finger spelling)

13. When I am learning a new skill with a trainer, I feel most comfortable:

- a) Observing what the trainer is doing
- b) Talking to the trainer about what I'm supposed to do
- c) Trying it by myself and figuring it out on the fly

14. When I am teaching something to someone, I tend to:

- a) Write it down the steps to follow
- b) Explain the steps verbally
- c) Demonstrate how to do it and let the person try it

15. The best way to study for an exam or test is by:

- a) Reading the book or my notes and reviewing pictures or graphs
- b) Requesting for someone to ask me questions that you I answer out loud
- c) Creating flash cards to help with my review process

16. When I am concentrated, I usually:

- a) Focus on the words or the images
- b) Discuss the problem and the possible solutions in my head
- c) Move around a lot, play with pens, and touch things

17. While studying, I am mostly distracted by:

- a) People and family walking around
- b) Surrounding noises
- c) The uncomfortable space

18. My first ever memory is of:

- a) Looking at something
- b) Being spoken to
- c) Doing something

19. When I am angry:

- a) I have a bad/angry face
- b) I shout
- c) I leave the room feeling angry

20. I feel mostly relaxed when:

- a) I read a book
- b) I listen to music
- c) I walk or play an sport

Count the Answers:

Answers with an A: ...

Answers with a B: ...

Answers with a C: ...

Results:

If you chose mostly A's - you have a VISUAL learning style.

If you chose mostly B's - you have an AUDITORY learning style.

If you chose mostly C's - you have a KINAESTHETIC learning style.

In this module, we have learned that...

- Accessibility and participation are vital parts of creating effective learning spaces and processes.
- A good planning and time management will facilitate the success of your work.
- Assertiveness is a key concept that facilitates educators and parents' critical thinking towards creative solutions.
- Not everyone learns the same way; different people use different learning styles that differ in the process assimilating information.
- Understanding parents' backgrounds and being empathic while training parents is essential.

Questions for reflection

- How do I arrange the logistics of my training sessions with the parents?
- Do I plan my training sessions in the appropriate way?
- Do I generate the space and atmosphere for an appropriate interaction with the parents?
- Do I use the most suitable techniques considering parents' learning styles?
- How could I contribute to my parents' self-capacitation and independence of conflicts management in a creative way?
- Do I know my parents well enough, considering their cultural background and current skillset?
- When dealing with parents during a training session, do I practice empathy?



MODULE 6: GLAD to Teach!

How to Set Up a Training Activity

In a Nutshell

This module aims to guide educators in setting up a learning activity for adults and parents regarding children's digital development. It contains practical steps to prepare and implement a training activity and outlines the differences between various methodologies and techniques educators can apply.

In this module, educators will learn about:

- How to set up the aims, objectives, and learning outcomes of a training activity
- The difference between formal, informal, and non-formal methodologies
- Bloom's Taxonomy and the S.M.A.R.T model
- Steps towards the preparation of a training activity
- Materials needed to implement a training activity

Dive In

Setting the aims, objectives, and learning outcomes of a training activity

In order to set up an effective training activity, you should think in advance about the AIMS, OBJECTIVES and LEARNING OUTCOMES. As we have seen in the previous Module, when setting up an activity or session, the educator should always take into consideration practical factors, such as the profile and background of the learners, their level of digital competencies, as well as more external factors like the facilities and accessibility of the learning space. These elements will help you identify the suitable aims, objectives, and learning outcomes of any training activity.

Although the above terms are often used interchangeably, they have distinct meanings when it comes to designing a training activity. Let us have a look at each definition, and examine examples that can help you formulate them (adapted from International Council of Archives, 2005).

1. AIMS

Learning aims are short and comprehensive descriptions of the general purpose of the training activity, may that be a 2-hour workshop, a 5day long training, and so on. They are, in a way, “mission statements”.



To set the aim or aims of a training activity, reflect on the following questions:

- From the educator’s view, what is the purpose of this training activity?
- How will the learners benefit from this activity?
- What is the intended goal of this activity?

Some practical examples:

- This training aims to improve the digital literacy of parents in order to help them foster healthier relationships with their children regarding the use of ICT technologies.
- This training aims to provide parents an understanding of the benefits of using ICT technologies by children, as well as the possible dangers to which they might be exposed.

2. OBJECTIVES

Learning objectives are short descriptions that explain how the learning aims will be achieved. They are more detailed-oriented compared to the learning aims; that is, they explain in which way teaching and learning should ideally take place. They are written from the perspective of the educator and they should not be confused with the learning outcomes, which are more learner-centred.

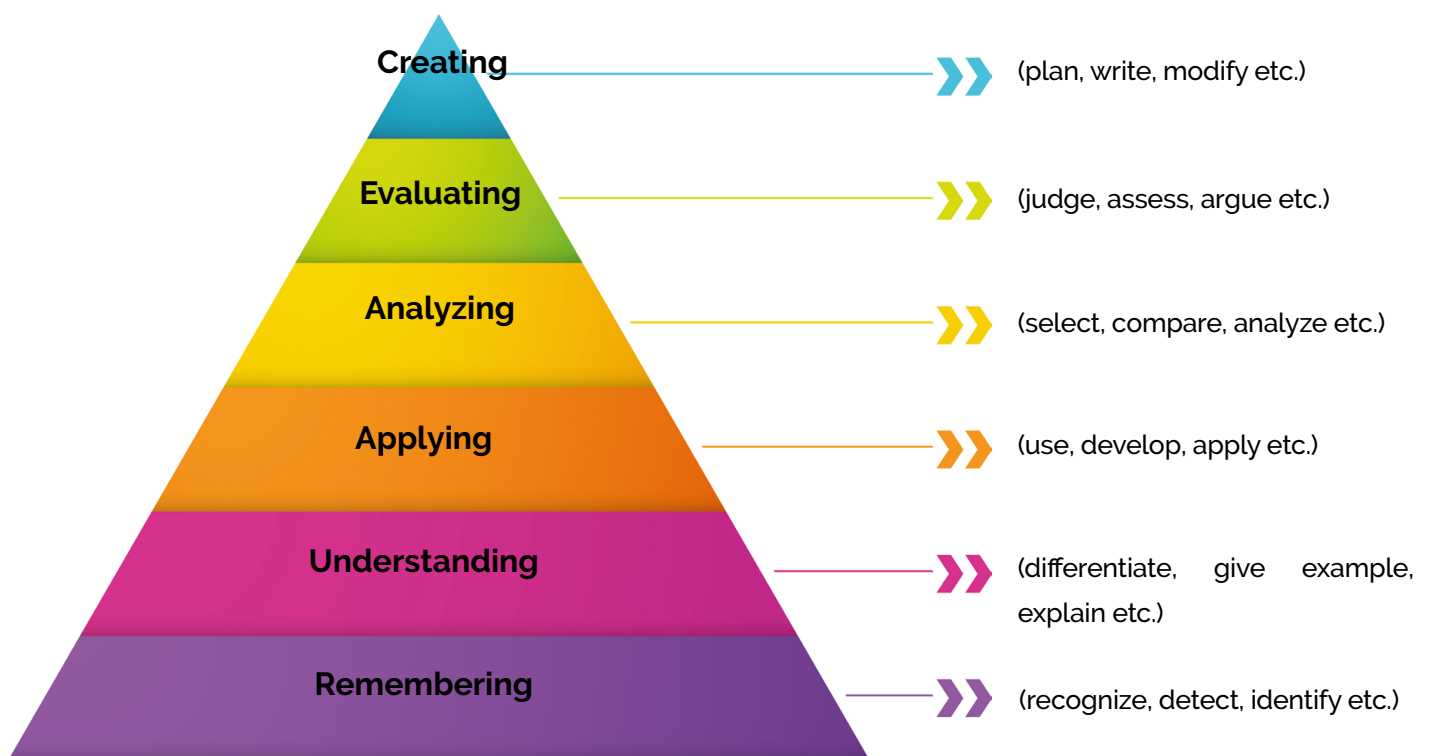
To set the objectives of a training activity, reflect on the following questions:

- Which methods will be used?
- How will the learners be engaged? What kinds of activities will be included?
- What new knowledge will the learners acquire and which skills will they develop or improve?

Using the right verbs – Bloom's taxonomy

Using the right terms and words when outlining learning objectives is important, as it guides learners as to what exactly they are expected to do during a training activity.

Bloom's taxonomy is a widely used method by educators and teachers for effectively categorizing their educational goals. The taxonomy uses "action words" to describe cognitive processes by which thinkers encounter and work with knowledge. It is quite important for educators to consider Bloom's taxonomy in order to define the most appropriate learning objectives, and thus establish a common understanding between educators and learners regarding the purpose of a training activity, deliver appropriate instructions, and design assessment tasks and stegies, and ensuring that the techniques and activities applied are aligned with the defined objectives (Anderson et al., 2001)



Bloom's taxonomy, revised version (Source: Imperial College London, 2021)

A practical example:

The objectives of this module are:

- To highlight the importance of digital education in children
- To develop knowledge and skills in guiding children in using ICT technology more efficiently.

3. LEARNING OUTCOMES:

While learning aims and objectives are seen from the educator's perspective, learning outcomes are learner-centred and focus on what the training participants will be working upon.

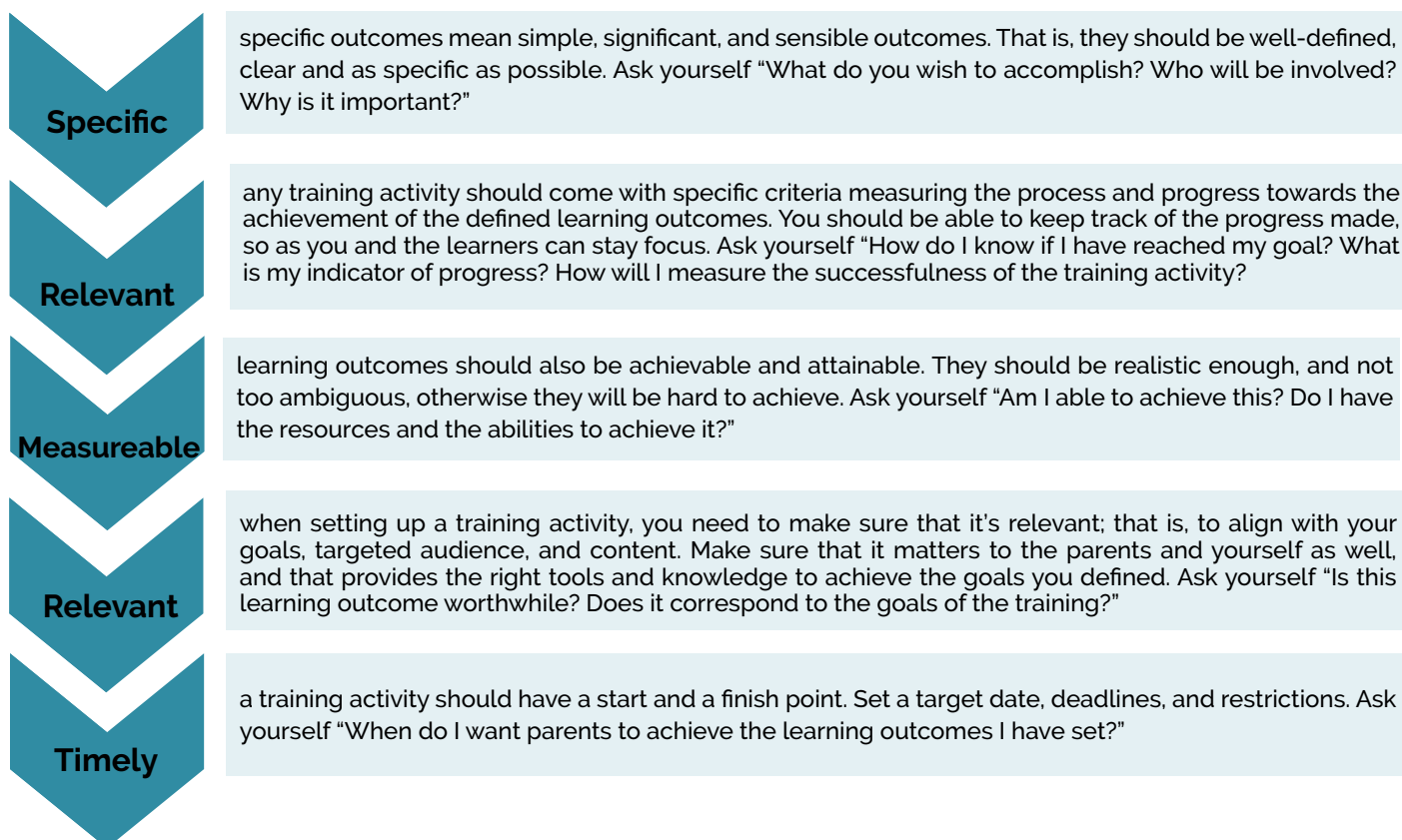
In other words, learning outcomes are brief statements of what the trainees should be able to do and at which level, upon successful completion of the training activity.

To set the learning outcomes of a training activity, reflect on the following:

- They should be written in future tense
- They should state the context of the training activity (e.g. "Upon successful completion of this session/workshop/module, learners will be able to...")
- They may refer to knowledge (e.g. "to know the benefits of the use of ICT for primary education"), skills (e.g. "to be able to handle a specific software") and attitudes (e.g. "to hold a positive regard towards the use of ICT in school").

The S.M.A.R.T Model

A rule of thumb when it comes to setting the learning outcomes (as well as objectives) is that they should be SMART - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timely. Setting up SMART learning outcomes increases the possibility of developing a successful training activity. Let us see the definition of each term (from CFI, 2021; MindTools, 2021):



A practical example

Upon successful completion of this session, the learners should be able to:

- Assess whether a source of digital information is trustworthy.
- Explain to children how to distinguish trustworthy and misleading sources of information online.

An important note: The terms **learning objectives** and **learning outcomes** are closely linked and therefore, in instructional design literature, there is often confusion and overlap regarding their use

Defining the right methodology

Training activities take different forms depending on the methodology chosen by the educator. A common distinction is between **formal**, **non-formal** and **informal learning**, which are associated with the corresponding categorization of educational modalities.

Formal education	Non-formal education	Informal education
"The structured education and training system that runs from pre-primary and primary through secondary school and on to university. As a rule, it takes place at general or vocational educational institutions and leads to certification."	"Any planned programme of education outside the formal educational setting that is designed to improve a range of skills and competences, for example youth work. Non-formal education is also referred to as non-formal learning."	"The lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from daily experience and the educational influences and resources in his or her own environment (family, peer-group, neighbours, market place, library, mass media, work, play etc.)."
Formal learning is usually associated with a rather strict structures and traditional means of delivery (like using presentations, conducting lectures and readings)	Non-formal learning can be implemented through structured activities that are usually more experiential (like games, simulations and group discussions).	Informal learning is largely unplanned and happens naturally during everyday activities or in the context of other training activities with different objectives.
Definitions taken from "Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with Young people" (Brander, 2021, pg. 478)		

Each methodology has its advantages and disadvantages, as seen below:

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Formal education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideal for presenting new materials and theoretical information • Follows a particular structure of delivery (step-by-step systematic manner) • Provides basic knowledge that is to be acquired by every individual • Highly planned and deliberate • Chronological and systematic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not very interactive • Demands high-qualified experts to carry out the training • Subject-oriented and time-bound • Costly and rigid education
Non-formal education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open-ended educational system, available in the public and private domains • Involves practical application of the theoretical knowledge obtained • Highly flexible and adjustable • Invites participants to explore their own learning paths • Includes both theoretical and practical learning approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doesn't always involve professionals or skilled trainers • Unsteady attendance by the learners • High possibility of providing fake certifications or diplomas • Learners do not build the same confidence like formal education learners
Informal education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows for reflecting on unintentional learning • A natural and lifelong learning process that can be learned at any time and space • No definite syllabus • Uses a variety of techniques • Unstructured and unplanned – no specific time span required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Might involve misinformation due to its unstructured nature • No proper schedule or timespan • Absence of discipline and good attitude amongst learners • Highly unpredictable results • Utilized techniques might not be appropriate or relevant

Though all educational methodologies have valuable modalities, some are more appropriate than others depending on the occasion. In order to decide which methodology best suits the parents, as well as the context of the training activity, consider the following questions:

- Who are the parents? What is their background? Do they indicate in-between relations?
- What is learners' digital literacy level? Which ICT devices are they familiar with and which ones are their children using?

- What resources are available to you? (e.g. space, internet connection, projector, office supplies, craft materials, etc.)
- What is the nature of the information you want to pass on? Are you providing theoretical input (e.g., definitions, legislations etc.) or are you interested in helping the parents build specific skills (e.g., use of a software, communication skills etc.)
- How much time will you dedicate to the learning process? Will the training activity be concluded in a single or a sequence of sessions? How often the session or sessions take place?

Some more tips to help you decide...

- Although it is helpful to think of these methodologies as distinct, in reality there are no clear-cut boundaries between them, as they are part of a continuum that stretches from formal to informal learning (Rogers, 2004). Therefore, it is very likely that an activity has elements from multiple methodologies. For example, a presentation of theoretical information (formal) can include a more interactive activity or it can be done more experientially.
- Some learners might prefer certain methodologies than others, depending on their learning preferences and personal traits. It might be a good idea to include diverse activities, in order to appeal to as many learners as possible.
- During the course of the training activity, you might need to adapt your methodology depending on the feedback and response of the group.



Preparing the training: A step-by-step plan

An effective training activity that causes a strong impact on the learners requires thorough planning and preparation. A model that can guide the preparation process of the training is the **ADDIE model**, which stands for “**A**nalysis **D**esign **D**evelopment **I**mplementation and **E**valuation”. The steps defined by the ADDIE model are not always linear, as they often overlap and should be regularly revised based on an ongoing evaluation. In addition, this process should guide the planning of a training on a micro and a macro level that is when planning a single session and a sequence of sessions (ELearning Infographics, 2017).

STEP 1 : ANALYSIS

Instructional goals:

- What is the knowledge and/or skills that are lacking and that this training aims to provide? (e.g. “parents lack awareness of the potential dangers in social media use”)
- What will be the outcomes upon successful completion of the course? (e.g. “improved digital literacy”, “parental guidance skills regarding digital education”, etc.)

Target audience characteristics:

A training addressed to parents should be prepared considering the following assumptions about the adult learners, as stipulated by Malcom Knowles, a prominent adult education theorist.

As individuals mature, they become more self-directed

They accumulate experience, which can be a learning resource

Their readiness to learn is related to their developmental tasks of their social role

Their learning is more problem oriented than subject oriented (Knowles, 1980)

As we have already seen in module 5, in the process of identifying the target audience, the following questions should be considered:

- Who are the participants, what do they already know about the topic, what is their experience with it?
- What is the learners' educational, socioeconomic and cultural background?
- Why are they participating? What is their motivation? Did they request this training? Is participation voluntary or obligatory?

Required resources:

- What resources are available in terms of content, facilities, personnel and other materials?
- Based on the chosen methodology and the available resources, which methods of delivery can be used? (e.g. presentation, experiential activities, games, simulations, images)

STEP 2

DESIGN

Instructional strategies:

- Which specific and measurable actions will enable the learners achieve the instructional goals? (e.g. “watching a 15' long informational video, compare different sources of digital information”, etc.)

Learning objectives:

- How do the learning objectives link to the content of the training activity?
- The different training activities should be sequenced in a way that allows the learners build new knowledge and gain new skills (e.g. “For cases in which the parents are not sufficiently familiar with the ICT technologies, the first activities should be dedicated to covering that gap in knowledge and skills”)

Testing strategies:

- How will feedback be provided to the learners about their progress made in achieving the learning objectives? (e.g. graded test, reflection groups, peer-feedback)

STEP 3

DEVELOPMENT

Learning objectives:

- The materials and activities that will be employed in the learning module are developed having in mind the content, the chosen strategies and the available media (e.g. presentations; informative documents; game materials, etc.)

Validation and testing of the materials:

- Materials and activities are revised and finalized.

STEP 4

IMPLEMENTATION

Preparation factors:

- Are the resources ready and available to be used? (e.g. ICT classroom with internet access; other ICT devices; whiteboard; speakers; software, etc.)
- Is the environment appropriately adapted to the needs of the training activity? (e.g. proper lighting; arrangement of the space, etc.)

Implementation

- The training should be implemented following the plan, but also taking into consideration the necessary adaptations depending on the response and feedback from the learners.

STEP 5 EVALUATION

Evaluation is a process that takes place throughout the training planning and implementation procedure. It can be either implemented **before**, **during**, and/or **after** the training takes place.

There are different ways and methods to conduct an evaluation, aiming to assess:

1. Learners' satisfaction. Examples: group discussion, evaluation forms.
2. Learners' acquisition of knowledge and skills. Examples: formal examination, self-assessment questionnaire.
3. Learners' application of new knowledge and skills in real-life contexts. Examples: practical exercise and observations, simulation activity.

Proceed to the next and final module of this Handbook to learn more about assessment tools and methods.

Did you know?

#Digital parents: Intergenerational learning through a digital literacy workshop

Often, children outperform their parents in digital skills and parents are not qualified enough to offer them the necessary guidance in order for them to use the available ICT tools safely.

A case study by Hébert et al. (2020) aimed to improve the digital skills of a small group of parents belonging to racial minorities in order to engage in the digitally mediated classroom practices of their children through a 10-week digital production workshop on digital literacy. The study found that the parents improved their skills and were more confident regarding the use of apps their children use in class. Moreover, the collaborative creation of a digital story promoted intergenerational learning, the creation of "*shared narratives that reflect the lives and interests of families, and time together in a school environment, bridging the gap between school and home*".

Source

Hébert, C., Thumlert, K. and Jenson, J. (2020) '#Digital parents: Intergenerational learning through a digital literacy workshop', *Journal of Research on Technology in Education*, pp. 1-58.

Let's Practice

A Checklist for your Training Activity

The following activity reflects on the knowledge provided in modules 5 and 6.

Preparation is key to success. The following template provides a list of basic elements that you must take into consideration to organise the training. Be sure that you have considered all of them and arrange them depending on the person you are going to meet, your objectives, facilities, and capacities.

- **Information about Learners:** name, contact details, and reason for participating. Did you know the attendees in advance? What type of learners are they? Do they indicate any specific characteristics or attributes which should be taken into consideration?
- **Aim:** define your mission statement - what is the general purpose of implementing this training activity?
- **Learning Objectives:** how will the aim of your training activity be achieved? Which methods and activities be used?
- **Learning Outcomes:** what will the learners be able to achieve through the knowledge or skills provided to them? What are the tangible or intangible of this training?
- **Time:** when is the ideal day and time to meet with the learners? How much time should you need to implement the training activity?
- **Training room:** will you need an accessible space or a space with particular facilities? Which equipment or materials are you going to need? Is the room located in a quiet area, with enough light and ventilation? Will you offer food or drinks?

I can try out this activity: on my own or with a fellow educator

In this module, we have learned that...

- Organizing a training activity with parents involves a number of steps to be taken into consideration.
- There are specific tasks that should be carried out at each of the planning phases of the training.
- There are three main educational methodologies: formal, informal, and non-formal. Each methodology carries its own techniques and is used to achieve different goals.
- When conducting a training, educators should be able to decide on the most appropriate methodology, according to the overall goals of the training, as well as learners' characteristics and current skillset.

Questions for reflection

- What are the main differences between formal, informal, and non-formal methodologies?
- Which arrangements could I make in case a learning group demonstrates different levels of digital literacy or other related skills?
- How would I try to maintain the motivation and interest of the learners before and during the training activity?



MODULE 7: Assessment

In a Nutshell

The final module of this Handbook explores the different training assessment and evaluation procedures that educators can apply before, during, and after a training session. It provides techniques for a well-conducted evaluation, to allow educators assess the effectiveness of a training programme, adjust their working methods and improve their strategies.

In this module, educators will learn about:

- The meaning and importance of assessment
- Tools and methods for training evaluation
- Kirkpatrick's 4 levels of training evaluation
- ICT Tools and feedback collection method

Dive In

Now that we've seen, step-by-step, how to effectively organize a training activity, a final factor to consider is **evaluation and assessment**, and how to successfully apply monitoring methods before, during and after a learning process.

But what does evaluation really mean?

In brief, assessing the quality of a training means determining how a training is **perceived by its participants**, what could be **changed or improved**. It provides information about the level of satisfaction with various aspects of a training, including the working methods, trainers, organization and fulfilling the needs of participants (Łaguna, 2004). In our case, monitoring the training sessions with parents will help you:

- Create more efficient learning pathways and discussion spaces
- Increase parents' participation
- Detect potential weaknesses that they could have and that could affect the digital mediation with their children.

That is, evaluation assesses of the extent to which:

1. a training has achieved its objectives, and
2. its participants have increased the level of their competences.

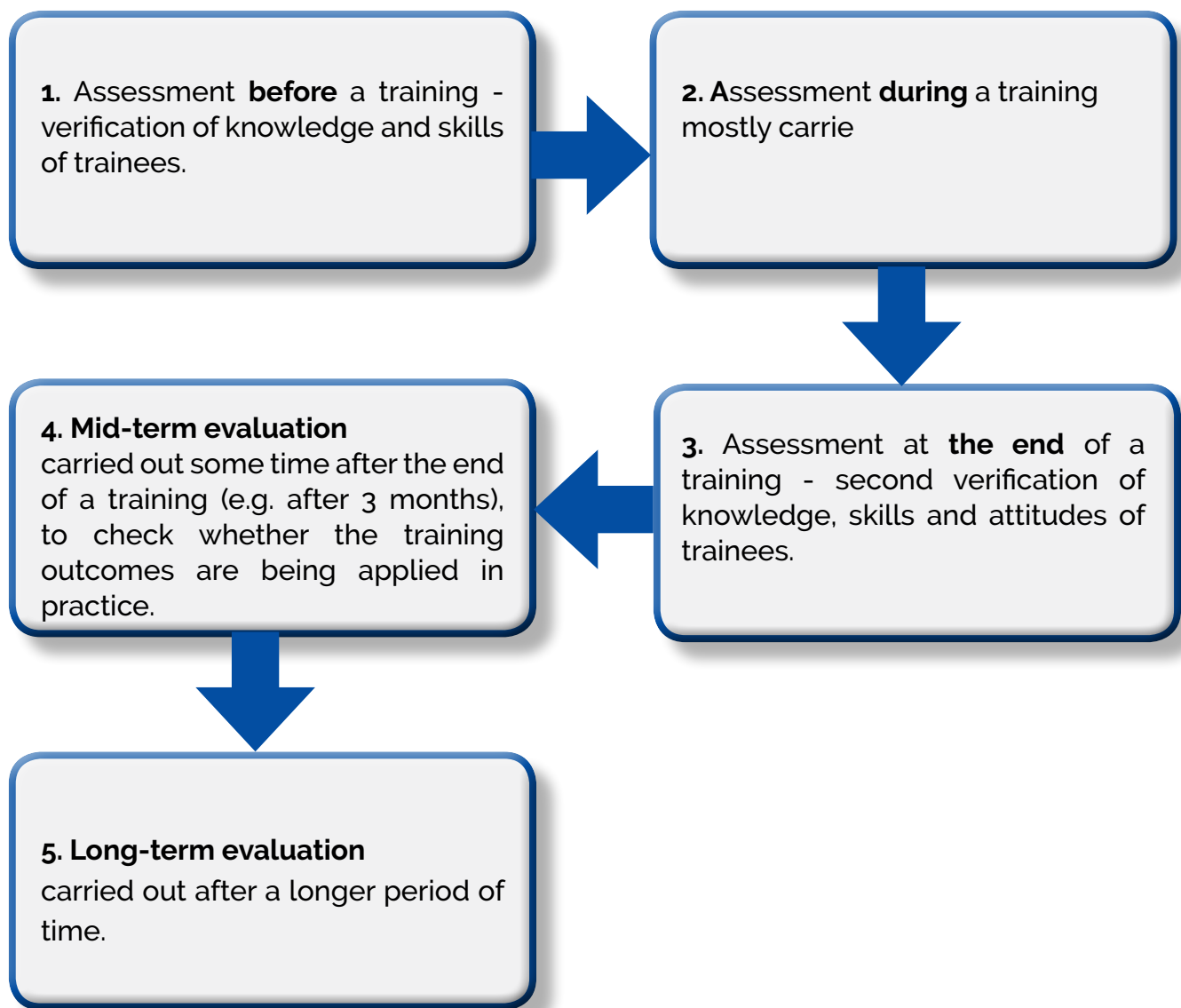
The assessment can be made before a training begins. Knowledge tests are commonly used - they include questions about the key information provided during a training. This test can be repeated after a training has been finished to assess the level of knowledge and skills acquired during the training (Łaguna, 2004).

Assessment can be conducted by trainees (to assess the trainers), as well as trainers and co-trainers (to assess the trainees). There are many tools to use in order to carry out an evaluation process. **The most popular tools for training evaluation include:**

- Surveys
- Tests
- Questionnaires
- Observation (during a training, after a training)
- Individual summary of learning outcomes
- Interview

Evaluation can occur at all stages of a training – BEFORE, DURING and AFTER. For example, questionnaires/surveys can be distributed after the training has finished or in the form of an everyday summary and assessment of trainees' satisfaction (collecting their statements and developing graphics to report the evaluation results).





The first three stages can be carried out for a training that has either been completed or is ongoing, while the last two stages are only applicable for a training that has been completed. However, evaluation at the last two stages is also possible if a trainer wishes to implement post-training activities and/or establish ongoing contact with parents – trainees concerning the use of electronic devices by their children (by means of, for example, a short questionnaire, interview, a conversation about the level of implementation of the skills acquired during a training and their effectiveness).

Evaluating your performance - Learning from your own mistakes and experiences

The fact that a training is finished should not mean that the training process is also finished. In addition to the evaluation and analysis of collected data, trainers should analyse their methods and techniques. This means being open to receive feedback from training participants and a co-trainer or supervisor, and be able to self-reflect and look at oneself objectively.

Remember: Only the awareness of your limitations allows you to work on them. Learning from your own experience and mistakes is one of the most important competences of a trainer.

It is important that the training summary made by a trainer be based, for example, on trainer's competency profile or a previously developed self-observation sheet. Training participants - parents can be asked about the approachability of the trainer's **working style, training methods applied**, content shared, friendliness, etc. A trainer should make sure that the questionnaire includes not only **closed questions** (e.g. with an evaluation scale), but also **open questions**, allowing parents to freely express their opinion about the trainer's work.

CLOSED VS OPEN QUESTIONS - EXAMPLES	
Open Questions	Closed Questions
What did you like more about this training?	Overall, are you satisfied with this training? (yes/no)
What did you like less about this training?	Has this training met your expectations? (yes/no)
How do you think this training could be improved?	How satisfied are you with this process? (likert-scale question with available choices)
Is there something you wish the trainer/supervisor should be aware of?	Would you recommend this training to someone else? (yes/no)

What about less experienced trainers?

Less experienced trainers are advised to use supervision - supervision is an important element of a trainer's development. It is an opportunity to improve coaching competencies, and broadens the scope of understanding a situation that occurs in a training room. It also gives the opportunity to release emotions about difficult situations and take care of your own mental hygiene. A trainer can use (Matras and Žak, 2018):

1. Participative supervision - a supervisor observes the work of a trainer
2. Indirect supervision (a supervisor does not participate in the training, a trainer describes what happened during the training)
3. Group, peer supervision (a meeting of several trainers discussing the difficulties of their colleagues).

Training Evaluation Methods

Careful observation of training participants - their reactions to the proposed training methods, involvement in the implementation of training objectives, etc. is an extremely important competence of a trainer. A trainer should analyse the level of exhaustion and activity of training participants on an ongoing basis and the emotional atmosphere in a group (emotional reactions of participants, resistance to change, and their pace of work). This kind of quality allows for introducing changes and taking appropriate actions by a trainer, which interfere with the group process or refer to the methodology of conducting the training.

It should also encourage a trainer to adopt flexible approaches to the planned training scenario and its modifications, in order to achieve the planned training objectives and adjust the training methods to the needs and feelings of trainees.

At the end of a training, a trainer may ask all participants to summarize the session and answer one question about the content of the training and another one about the way the training was conducted, e.g.:

- What thoughts, reflections do you have after today's training?
- What is the most important thing you have learned?
- What is the most important question that you may have after today's training?
- What knowledge and skills that you have acquired today will you use when raising my own children?
- What helped you to learn?
- What do you need from the trainer during the next days of training/during the next classes?
- How do you assess the training facilities (e.g. room, catering)?

This evaluation can be also carried out in a **graphic form**. For example, trainees mark the level of their satisfaction with a given part of a training on sheets, using a picture of a thermometer and painting the scale on the thermometer from 0 to 100°C (the more degrees, the greater the satisfaction) and provide a short justification. Each participant can hang their sheet on the wall and compare their assessment with that of other participants.



The New World Kirkpatrick Model

4 levels of Training Evaluation

In 1950, Donald Kirkpatrick proposed a 4-level model of assessment on the effectiveness of training (Kirkpatrick, 1994), which was further developed by his son Jim Kirkpatrick and defined as “The New World Kirkpatrick Model” (Kirkpatrick Partners, 2021). The model clarified and updated the original four levels of training evaluation:



LEVEL 1: REACTION

At the first level, we assess to what extent participants have reacted positively to a training. In the evaluation process, we ask about their satisfaction with and involvement to a training activity, as well as conformity (to what extent will they apply what they have learned). This stage of the evaluation can be carried out with the use of a questionnaire that trainees anonymously fill in at the end of a training.

LEVEL 2: LEARNING

At the second level, we evaluate the extent to which participants have acquired knowledge, skills, attitudes, and self-confidence thanks to their participation in a training. Evaluation at this level can be carried out using knowledge tests or role-plays done by training participants themselves, e.g. simulation of a conversation with a child about limiting the use of electronic devices.



LEVEL 3: BEHAVIOR

The third level concerns the collection of information about the extent to which participants apply the knowledge/skills they have acquired during a training, after a long period of time. This way, level 3 assess what the participants have learned during the training. Evaluation at this level can be made by conducting an interview or sending a questionnaire to parents after, for example, 3 months after the training has ended, asking questions about the use of tools and techniques learned and their effectiveness in educating children to use electronic devices responsibly.

LEVEL 4: RESULTS

The fourth and final level assess the extent to which the expected results of the training have been achieved. This level involves the assessment of changes in parents' behaviour and the way they use digital devices. This level of evaluation is considered to be the last one, implemented after the end of a training (Kurt, 2016).

It should be emphasized that while the evaluation at the first and second level is relatively easy to carry out (it occurs most often during the last minutes of a training), the evaluation at the third and fourth level requires constant contact with the parents, and their willingness to discuss the measures they have undertaken and their observations in children's behaviour and actions.

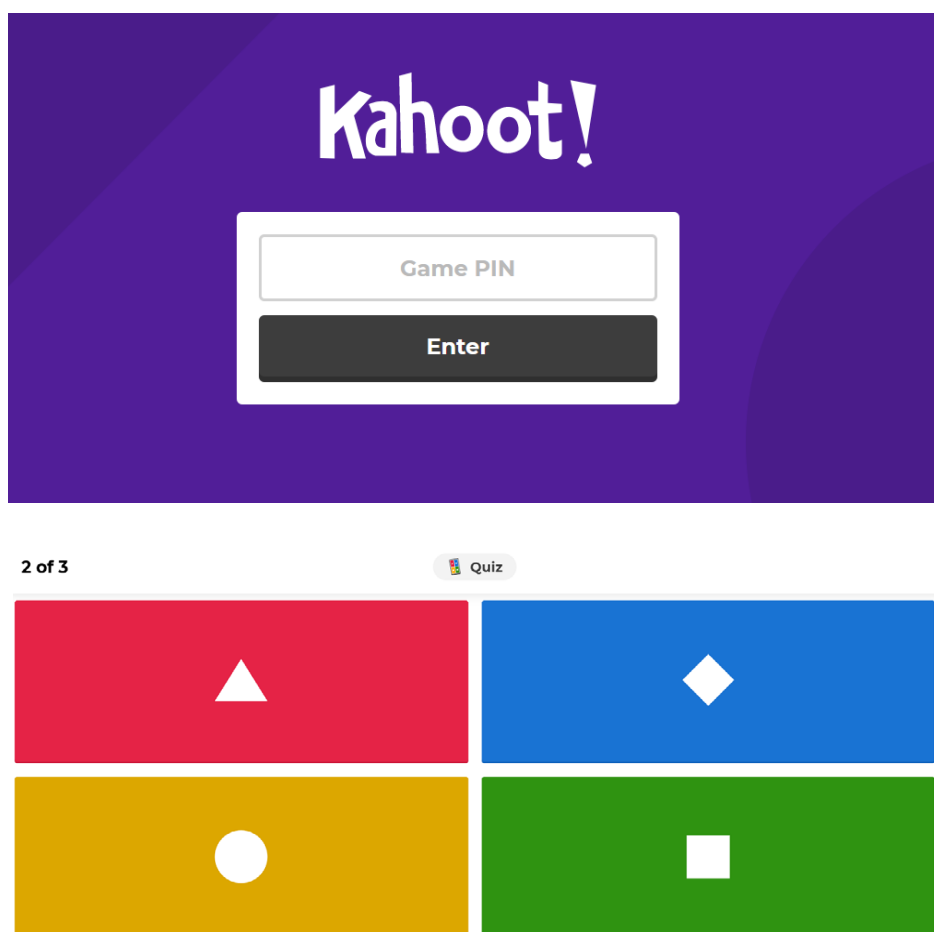
ICT Tools and Feedback Collection

Training evaluation can be performed with a variety of methods and ICT tools, the latter which are now used more and more often. Below are four free ICT tools that can be used during a training with parents to evaluate the training process and gather their feedback. These are very flexible tools, as they can be easily used either face-to-face, or through the telephone and the internet.

Let us examine these tools one by one:

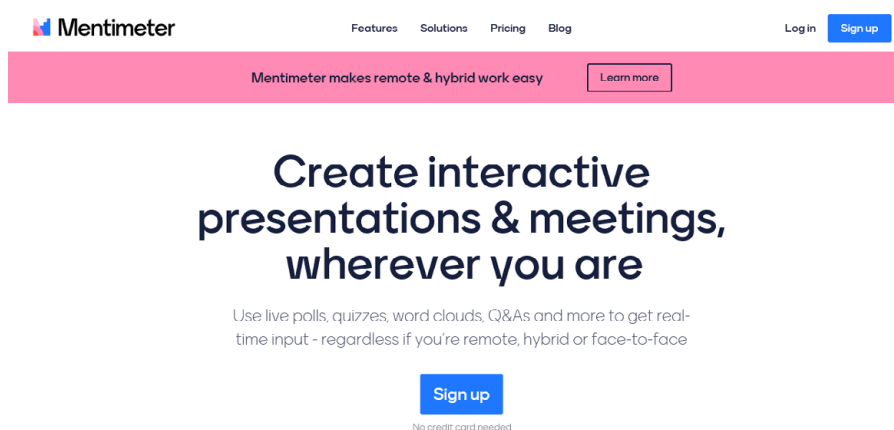
1. Kahoot! (www.kahoot.it and www.kahoot.com)

It is an online platform used for creating **quizzes** and **surveys**. After logging in to the platform, a trainer can prepare an evaluation questionnaire. During the training, participants access the website www.kahoot.it and enter the PIN code given by the trainer (assigned automatically to a given survey). When the quiz or survey begins, participants need to answer the questions by clicking on the icons with colours and shapes. The faster the participants answer, the more points they get! The answers assigned to the icons are visible on a trainer's panel and should be displayed on a projector.



2. Mentimeter (www.mentimeter.com)

An online platform that offers several types of presentations and allows you to collect feedback from training participants. After entering a code on the website, participants can answer questions prepared by the trainer on their smartphone. The platform allows you to enter text in many forms - open questions, multiple-choice questions, prioritize answers, assess on a scale, etc. The system summarizes participants' answers, which can be displayed to participants by the trainer.



3. AnswerGarden (www.answergarden.ch)

It is a simple tool used to collect responses from participants that does not require the creation of an account. Simply go to the website and enter a question, set the length of the answer (20 or 40 character) and click the "Create" button at the bottom of the page. A unique window page will be created where participants can enter their answers anonymously.

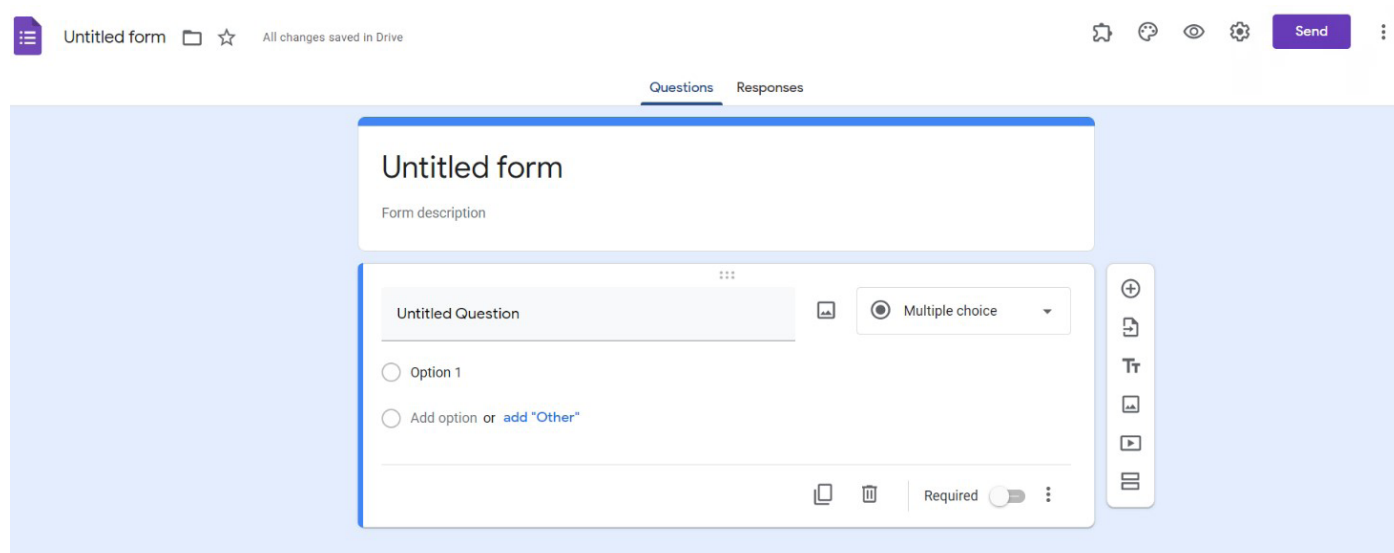
Their responses participants will appear in the shape of a cloud. Identical answers are counted - the more identical the answers they are, the bigger their font becomes.

The image shows the AnswerGarden website interface. At the top, there is a dark blue header with the AnswerGarden logo on the left and four icons (a plus sign, a magnifying glass, a heart, and a question mark) on the right. Below the header is a light gray box containing the text "Training was:". Underneath this text is a text input field with the placeholder text "Type your answer here...". To the right of the input field is a gray "Submit" button. Below the input field, there is a small text label that says "20 characters remaining".

4. Google Forms (<https://www.google.com/forms/about/>)

Almost everyone knows Google! It is a simple survey system linked to your Gmail account. It allows you to create online surveys with multiple answer formats (e.g. open or questions, likert-scale questions, multiple-choice questions, etc.). Respondents' answers are saved on the administrator account (survey creator), in a graphic form and in a data sheet.

Simply go to the website and create a new form; Google allows you to either create a **Blank form**, where you can develop questions from scratch, or choose from **various templates** with ready-made questions, depending on the occasion and purpose (e.g. Assessment, Event Feedback, etc.). Once you create the form, you can share it with the trainees by copying the non-editing URL (click the "Preview" icon to generate it). *Be careful not to share the editing URL, otherwise trainees will be able to edit the form and see everyone else's answers!*



The screenshot displays the Google Forms editor interface. At the top, there's a header bar with the text 'Untitled form' and a star icon, followed by 'All changes saved in Drive'. On the right, there are icons for sharing, a 'Send' button, and a vertical ellipsis. Below the header, there are two tabs: 'Questions' (active) and 'Responses'. The main area shows a form titled 'Untitled form' with a 'Form description' field. Below this, there's a question titled 'Untitled Question' with a 'Multiple choice' dropdown menu. The question has two options: 'Option 1' and 'Add option or add "Other"'. At the bottom right of the question, there's a 'Required' toggle switch and a vertical ellipsis. On the far right, there's a vertical toolbar with icons for adding questions, sections, and other elements.

Did you know?

The CIPP model

The CIPP model developed by Daniel Stufflebeam presents evaluation on 4 dimensions: **Context** (goals) - **Input** (a plan to achieve goals) - **Process** (results obtained thanks to the achievement of plans) - **Product** (Stufflebeam, 2003). Matthews and Hudson (2001) described the rules and examples of evaluating training involving parents, based on the CIPP model. Evaluation should be conducted **before**, **during**, and **after** the training with parents. In the case of training parents, the program content of workshops and effective training methods are important, and the evaluation should be based on the behavioural indicators of parents and children. For more information on how to adapt the CIPP model to training for parents, see the Matthews and Hudson's article.

Goals

- Beneficiaries
- Needs
- Resources
- Problems
- Background
- Environment

Context Evaluation

Plans

- Stakeholders
- Strategies
- Budget
- Coverage
- Research

Input Evaluation

Product Evaluation

Outcomes

- Impact
- Effectiveness
- Transportability
- Sustainability
- Adjustment

Process Evaluation

Actions

- Develop
- Implement
- Monitor
- Feedback

Source:

Matthews, J. M., & Hudson, A. M. (2001). Guidelines for Evaluating Parent Training Programs. *Family Relations*, 50(1), 77–86.

Image source:

Stufflebeam, D. L. (2003) 'The CIPP Model for Evaluation', in Kellaghan, T. and Stufflebeam, D. L. (eds.) *Springer international handbooks of education: International handbook of educational evaluation*. Dordrecht, Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Let's Practice

I learn from my mistakes

Try recalling and writing down some coaching mistakes you made in the past. Describe these situations without expressing emotions, as if from a bird's eye view - write down exactly what happened, what preceded the situation, how you behaved and how this situation finished. Analyse these situations together with your supervisor or an experienced trainer/friend and think about how you could have behaved differently in these situations and what conclusions can be drawn from these experiences for your coaching workshop.

I can try out this activity: on my own

The ongoing evaluation of my trainings

Think about what questions parents can be asked during the summary of a given training module in order to collect information about the usefulness of the training program and the adequacy of the training methods you have applied (think of questions other than those proposed above). Consider also the graphic method of the ongoing evaluation. Share your ideas with your supervisor or another trainer. Discuss together how the forms of evaluation will prove useful during a training with parents.

I can try out this activity: on my own

Implementing the New World Kirkpatrick Model

Read about the model to get more information about it and prepare an evaluation plan of a training for parents in the use of electronic devices by children for each of the 4 levels of the Model. In accordance with the premises of the Model, prepare evaluation questionnaires from level 1 and 2 and a tool for assessing the knowledge and skills from level 2. Prepare evaluation tools from level 3 and 4 relevant to the developed plan (questionnaires, interview templates, observation sheets, etc.).

I can try out this activity: on my own

Sources:

Kirkpatric Partners (2021) The Kirkpatrick Methodology - A Brief History. Retrieved from: www.kirkpatrickpartners.com/Our-Philosophy

MindTools (2021) Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Training Evaluation Model. Retrieved from: www.mindtools.com/pages/article/kirkpatrick.htm

ICT tools used for the evaluation of my trainings

Become familiar with the following ICT tools:

- Kahoot
- Mentimeter
- AnswerGarden
- Google Forms

Check out how these ICT tools can be used. Choose one of them and prepare an evaluation questionnaire for the participants of your next training.

I can try out this activity: on my own

Sources:

Kahoot: www.kahoot.it

Mentimeter: www.mentimeter.com

AnswerGarden: www.answergarden.ch

Google Forms: www.google.com/forms/about

Useful tutorials (available in the English language)

5 Minute Guide to Kahoot: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pAfnia7-rMk>

Mentimeter Tutorial: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rT90-aklzPQ>

Answer Garden Tutorial: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=12XKqbMngKc>

How to use Google Forms - Tutorial for Beginners: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BtoOHhA3aPQ>

In this module, we have learned that...

- Training evaluation can be carried out at many levels with the use of various tools.
- There are many different training evaluation models, one of the most widely used is The New World Kirkpatrick Model.
- The training outcome for parents with regard to the use of electronic devices by their children should be a visible change in the style of parenting and a child's approach to electronic devices - it should be evaluated.
- The conclusions from an evaluation are helpful in the development of a trainer's workshop - it is important to self-evaluate your work, learn from your own experience and draw conclusions from your own mistakes.
- During a training session involving parents dealing with the use of electronic devices by their children, an evaluation with the use of ICT tools could be carried out.

Questions for reflection

1. What has the evaluation of my training for parents looked like so far?
2. Which of the described models, tools, and solutions can I apply for the evaluation of my training activities?
3. Which of the described models, tools and solutions can I apply in training activities involving parents with regard to the use of digital devices by their children?



Treasury of Additional Resources

TITLE	TYPE	SHORT DESCRIPTION	LINK
MODULE 1			
Digital Parenting: Raising and Protecting Children in Media World	Chapter	The chapter introduces the concept of “digital parenting”, making references to the various parenting styles and parental mediation strategies to and behaviours for parents to adopt in order to regulate children’s engagement with digital media and the Internet.	https://www.intechopen.com/chapters/72249
Family Engagement Resources	Online resources	Free resources, templates, and tools for educators and families to promote family engagement using technology.	https://www.common sense.org/education/toolkit/family-engagement-resources
Parenting In the Digital Age: Positive parenting strategies for different scenarios	Guidebook	Online guidebook providing a sustainable digital parenting model to be applied in different scenarios and settings. The guidebook aims to foster communication and trust between children and parents	https://rm.coe.int/publication-parenting-in-the-digital-age-2020-eng/1680a0855a
Promoting Family Engagement: Communicating with Families	Online Course	Online mini-course on how to create strong family partnerships and good communication systems, as well as opportunities to share information in a caring, easy-to-understand way	https://www.virtuallabschool.org/preschool/family-engagement/lesson-3

TITLE	TYPE	SHORT DESCRIPTION	LINK
MODULE 2			
Certificate Resources (CC BY)	Online course	An in depth course to become familiar with creative common resources and handle online resources (research and reuse) respecting the copyright/licenses	https://certificates.creativecommons.org/about/certificate-resources-cc-by/
Google for Education	Online course	A full course dedicated to educators in the field of online teaching, with a focus on tools offered by Google Classroom	https://skillshop.exceedlms.com/student/catalog/list?category_ids=2559-google-for-education
How To Google Like A Pro! Top 10 Google Search Tips & Tricks 2020	Video	Video to help readers to make their online search more efficient, through must-have Google Search Techniques	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RoDQfwc72PM
Online news reading behavior: From habitual reading to stumbling upon news	Research paper	Research study exploring people's perception of news and online news reading behaviour. The study indicates that online news ready is conducted on a habitual basis, without conscious decisions from internet users	https://www.researchgate.net/publication/227828002_Online_news_reading_behavior_From_habitual_reading_to_stumbling_upon_news
Reading News Online: What are the important parts of an online news article?	Online course	Short online free course by Common Sense Education, aimed to raise awareness on reading news online and finding reliable information	https://www.common sense.org/education/digital-citizenship/lesson/reading-news-online
Safe Internet Use	Article	Tips and insights on how to effectively risks connected to browsing online information, as well as how to become familiar with online search terminology	https://www.getsafeonline.org/personal/articles/safe-internet-use/
Scrolling news: The changing face of online news consumption	Research Report	Research conducted by Ofcom in the UK, showing the rapid pace of change in online news consumptions, as well as the often inaccurate perceptions of online readers regarding how they themselves consume news online	https://www.ofcom.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0022/115915/Scrolling-News.pdf

TITLE	TYPE	SHORT DESCRIPTION	LINK
MODULE 3			
23 Great Lesson Plans for Internet Safety	Website	Activities for each year group focused on Online Safety to be used from educators in class or when working with parents	https://www.commonsense.org/education/articles/23-great-lesson-plans-for-internet-safety
Digital wellbeing for you, your colleagues and students	Briefing Paper	Briefing paper for practitioners regarding Digital Wellbeing and its different aspects, guidance on positive actions individuals can take, and good practices to support the wellbeing of others	https://www.digitalcapability.jisc.ac.uk/what-is-digital-capability/digital-wellbeing/
Educating Parents about their Kid's Media and Technology Use	Video	Video with an instructional technology coach showing guiding parents to children's media and technology use	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQf5v45lfxw&t=40s
Enhancing parents' knowledge and practice of online safety	Report	A research report showing how young people understand online risks and useful action steps that parents can implement to ensure their safety	https://researchdirect.westernsydney.edu.au/islandora/object/uws%3A27352/datastream/PDF/view
eSafety Commissioner	Website	Website with useful material, activities, games, and other educational resources for educators and parents regarding online safety	https://www.esafety.gov.au/watch?v=nQf5v45lfxw&t=40s
Families and screen time: Current advice and emerging research	Policy Brief	Media policy brief regarding families and screen time that includes current research, sources, and recommendations for parents, the government, NGOs, and the industry	http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/66927/1/Policy%20Brief%2017-%20Families%20%20Screen%20Time.pdf
Guidelines for parents and educators on Child Online Protection	Publication	Guidelines addressing parents and educators in terms of children's online and digital protection	https://8a8e-3fff-ace4-4a3a-a495-4ea-51c5b4a3c.filesusr.com/ugd/24bbaa_f8a17ad2a-3b94490add9a586ce4b6db8.pdf

TITLE	TYPE	SHORT DESCRIPTION	LINK
MODULE 3			
Online safety leaflets & Resources	Website	E-leaflets and online guides about screen time and online safety, and digital wellbeing	https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/esafety-leaflets-resources/
Online sexual harassment – Peer led Workshop	Toolkit	A set of interactive drama activities focusing on online sexual harassment	https://www.childnet.com/ufiles/Peer_Led_Workshop_Step_Up_Speak_Up.pdf
Through the Wild Web Woods – Teachers Guide	Guidebook	Teachers guide to the online internet safety game for children “Through the Wild Web Woods”. It contains information about the game and its various features (e.g. online identity, addiction, privacy, security, etc.)	https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168046cc09MPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168046cc09
MODULE 4			
20 Digital Tools for Classroom for Innovative Teachers & Students	Article	This article lists 20 innovative digital tools for classroom which foster responsibility, relationships, and respect, and can be used by educators and students	https://graphicmama.com/blog/digital-tools-for-classroom/
Chasing rainbows: children's well-being in a digital world	Webinar	Webinar concerning the wellbeing of children in the digital world	https://core-evidence.eu/chasing-rainbows-childrens-well-being-in-a-digital-world/
Digital Citizenship Education Handbook	Publication	An online guidebook providing the principles of online activity, online well-being and “rights online”	https://rm.coe.int/digital-citizenship-education-handbook/168093586f

TITLE	TYPE	SHORT DESCRIPTION	LINK
MODULE 4			
GOOGLE CLASSROOM TIP #17: HOW TO BOOST PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT	Article	Google Classroom is a free service for educators to facilitate and enrich teaching & learning. Tip #17 lists eighteen ways to boost parental involvement using Google Classroom	https://www.thetechedvocate.org/google-classroom-tip-17-how-to-boost-parental-involvement/
Keep Learners At The Center Of The Design Process	Publication Publication	This Article guides you through the definition of guided learning and active learning, how guided learning can be applied, and why it is efficient	https://www.smartsparrow.com/what-is-active-learning/
MODULE 5			
Brené Brown on Empathy	Video	Brené Brown explaining the difference between Empathy and Sympathy	https://youtu.be/1Ewgu-369Jw
Digital Learning Sector	Tools and Activities	The NAW department of Education developed an online platform containing a variety of Learning Tools and Activities for educators to "support purposeful ICT integration" in educators' practices. The platform contains free templates and other resources, available for download, editing, and sharing	https://app.education.nsw.gov.au/digital-learning-selector/?cache_id=f39d4
Family and Parenting Support: Policy and Provision in a Global Context	Report	"Families, parents and caregivers play a central role in child well-being and development. [...] In keeping with the spirit of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, family and parenting support is increasingly recognized as an important part of national social policies and social investment packages aimed at reducing poverty, decreasing inequality and promoting positive parental and child well-being. This publication seeks to develop a research agenda on family support and parenting support globally	https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/770-family-and-parenting-support-policy-and-provision-in-a-global-context.html

TITLE	TYPE	SHORT DESCRIPTION	LINK
MODULE 5			
Involving Parents In Digital Citizenship	Video	The video shows the many ways one school engages parents in digital citizenship education	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DS2mKnqKVHo&t=68s watch?v=DS2mKnqKVHo&t=68s
The Six Thinking Hats	Website	Slide-show presentation about the Six Thinking Hats technique	https://www.slideshare.net/ericw01/six-thinking-hats
MODULE 6			
Instructional Design Using the Dick and Carey Systems Approach	Online article	An alternative to the ADDIE model of instructional design	https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/WC/WC29400.pdf
Learning Outcome vs. Learning Objective	Course Planning Tip Sheet	Further Information and examples to help distinguish the two terms	https://www.uclahealth.org/nursing/workfiles/Education%20Courses/ContinuingEducation/ce-LearningOutcome-v-LearningObjective-052016.pdf
How to Design a Training Workshop	Article	A step-by- step guide on how to design a training workshop	https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/how-to/how-to-design-a-training-workshop
The ADDIE Model Infographic	Website	A detailed analysis of the ADDIE Model	https://elearninginfographics.com/the-addie-model-infographic/
Tips For Parents On Using Digital Technology With Kids	Video	The video shows some tips about how parents can effectively use digital technology with their kids	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bFHL4rdn1XU&t=54s
Using Bloom's Taxonomy to Write Effective Learning Objectives*	Online publication	More details on Bloom's taxonomy for the stipulation of learning outcomes. *In this source, the term learning objectives is used to refer to what here has been defined as learning outcomes	https://tips.uark.edu/using-blooms-taxonomy/
Writing SMART learning objectives*	Guide	More details and examples on how to write SMART learning outcomes. *In this source, the term learning objectives is used to refer to what here has been defined as learning outcomes	https://uncw.edu/career/documents/writingSMART-learningobjectives.pdf

TITLE	TYPE	SHORT DESCRIPTION	LINK
MODULE 7			
5 Ways To Turn Your Mistake Into A Valuable Life Lesson	Website	Information about learning from your own mistakes	https://www.forbes.com/sites/amymorin/2017/07/17/5-ways-to-turn-your-mistake-into-a-valuable-life-lesson/?sh=772923761c01
An Introduction to the New World Kirkpatrick® Model	Article	Detailed description of the New World Kirkpatrick® Model	https://www.kirkpatrickpartners.com/Portals/0/Resources/White%20Papers/Introduction%20to%20the%20Kirkpatrick%20New%20World%20Model.pdf
How to evaluate a training program: The definitive guide to techniques & tools	Website	Information about different models of training evaluation	https://www.talentlms.com/blog/evaluate-employee-training-program/
Kirkpatrick Partners	Website	Detailed description of the New World Kirkpatrick® Model	https://www.kirkpatrickpartners.com/
Products of the AAA-StepUp2-ICT project	Website	List of ICT tools for a trainer with descriptions	http://www.stepup2ict.eu/tools/
The Phillips ROI Methodology	Website	Description of the training evaluation method related to the profitability of a project	https://roiinstituteCanada.com/roi-methodology/



Glossary

- **DIGITAL CITIZEN:** a person who is able to efficiently use the internet and other digital technologies to participate responsibly in social and civic life.
- **DIGITAL EDUCATION:** the use of digital tools and communication technologies for education and learning purposes.
- **DIGITAL FOOTPRINT:** a set of traceable data actively or inactively created by a user when using the internet, including the websites visited, information submitted, emails sent, etc.
- **DIGITAL LITERACY:** the ability to use technology in order to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information.
- **DIGITAL MEDIA DIET:** the time a person devotes in front of "screens", including using computers and mobile devices, playing video game systems, watching television, etc.
- **DIGITAL WELLBEING:** the impact of technologies and digital services on a person's mental, physical, social and emotional health.
- **FACILITATOR:** a person who helps, supports, and encourages learners to develop their own skills and potential, through a safe and collaborative environment.
- **INTERNET OF THINGS:** a system of interrelated devices, sensors, digital machines, and other objects connected via IT networks, collecting and sharing data.
- **LATERAL THINKING:** the process of solving a problem using more indirect and creative approaches rather than traditional methods.
- **NETIQUETTE:** the behavioural rules that a user applies when communicating online.
- **SMART SEARCHING:** the tools and strategies used to effectively and efficiently search for online databases.
- **TRAINER:** a person who sets up and implements learning activities and programmes for a group of participants.

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