



# INTERCULTURAL DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP IN THE COMMUNITY

**Toolkit on Media and Digital Literacy Skills  
for Migrant and Socially Marginalized  
Families**

**Practical tips  
and examples  
of good  
practice**

Digital Citizenship Support System

Developing a Local Network in Support  
of Parents and Children

Action Plan on How to Establish a  
'Medialiterate' School, Neighbourhood  
or Institution

# Foreword

Mira Media, ERVET, ActiveWatch and Migrants Resource Centre work in multicultural neighbourhoods in Utrecht, London, Bucharest, Modena and Bologna on media education and digital citizenship-related issues. During our work, we have observed that parents from a migrant and socially vulnerable background want their children to be safe on the internet and to attain the necessary digital competencies for better educational and job opportunities. However, there was no information available for them and they had nobody to talk to for relevant information and guidance.

Local professionals working in media, education and welfare see the digital gap between parents and their children and between families from different social groups, but they often lack the expertise, intercultural competencies and practical tools to initiate activities on their own.

In this 'Intercultural Digital Citizenship in the Community' toolkit, we address these challenges by coming up with tested pathways for introducing digital citizenship in your city and neighbourhood.

The toolkit is divided into two parts, a conceptual and a practical one. Part I details the concepts and lessons learned related to digital identity and intercultural awareness in the neighbourhood. It focuses on how children can learn digital citizenship skills and steps on how to establish a 'medialiterate' community.

In part II we share our experiences and products to encourage and support others to take similar steps and initiatives.

Make good use of our:

- Golden tips: information to draw your attention to the most important aspects to consider, possible solutions to your challenges;
- Stories: to inspire and give you insights into the way we develop activities;
- Good practice tools: materials and exercises that you can use.

We trust that this will lead to greater support and attention to the needs of migrant and low educated families concerning the internet use of their children.

**Ed Klute, Director Mira Media**



**DiGiTAL GENERATiON GAP iN MiGRANT  
AND LOW EDUCATED FAMiLiES**

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# Glossary

## **Digital media**

[Digital media refers to internet, mobile applications, smartphones, vlogs, videos, video games, social media, etc.]

## **Social media**

[Social media are online platforms and social networks such as weblogs, forums, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, etc. ]

## **Digital citizenship**

[Digital citizenship is the willingness and ability of citizens to participate actively and democratically in the digital society. It includes the norms of appropriate and responsible use of technology.]

## **Digital citizen**

[A digital citizen refers to an individual who develops the skills and knowledge to effectively use the internet and the digital technologies to engage responsibly in social and civic activities.]

## **21st-century skills**

[21st-century skills are 11 competencies and the knowledge which we need to participate successfully in the future society. These skills consist of: computational thinking, information skills, ICT skills, media literacy, communication, collaboration, social and cultural skills, self-regulation, critical thinking, creative thinking and problem-solving.]

## **Digital literacy/ ICT competence**

[Digital literacy/ ICT competence is the set of competencies required to use technological devices and navigate the internet for information and communication.]

## **Digital fluency**

[Digital fluency is the ability to use digital devices for different purposes to select and evaluate information, create meaning and manage one's online presence and relationships in an appropriate and responsible way.]

## **Digital native**

[A digital native is an individual who is born or brought up during the age of digital technology, very familiar with the use of technology from an early age and considers technology to be an integral and necessary part of their lives.]

## **Intercultural Media Coach**

[An intercultural media coach is a specialized trainer in the fields of intercultural awareness, media and digital literacy who facilitate discussions and workshops with parents and children from diverse social and cultural backgrounds.]

## **Cyberparent**

[A cyber-parent refers to an active and digitally competent member of the neighbourhood who can communicate with other parents for supporting them in developing media and digital skills.]

# PART I

## Intercultural Digital Citizenship: a Conceptual Framework



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# CHAPTER 1: DIGITAL GENERATION GAP IN MIGRANT AND LOW EDUCATED FAMILIES

## INTRODUCTION

Children growing up in a greatly digitized age is the reality of the 21st-century world. The internet has become more and more accessible and most families own and use more than one digital device. As a result, the relationships between members of families and communities, between students and teachers have changed and have become more digital.

Parents consider internet skills very important for their children, but many of them feel they are not always able to support their children in their use of the internet as they themselves do not have the appropriate skills and knowledge. Educational professionals in schools and neighbourhoods have issues in dealing with the social media use of their students and have little experience in discussing digital aspects with parents.

Although media, schools, organisations, and municipalities do pay increasingly more time and efforts to inform parents, professionals and children, in general, little attention is given to migrant and socially excluded families. Existing publications, leaflets and websites do not often reflect these groups in pictures and case studies. Educational and media literacy professionals indicate they have little knowledge about the educational situation and specific needs of these groups and they have difficulties in reaching out to them.

To address these challenges, we - Mira Media (The Netherlands), ERVET (Italy), ActiveWatch (Romania) and Migrants Resource Centre (United Kingdom) - launched in 2014 a European consortium which aims at bridging the digital generation gap in migrant and low educated families.

Our vision is to empower parents, educational professionals and migrant organisations to become active participants on digital and internet issues in their families, schools and neighbourhoods. To do that, we have put in place a series of elements and activities:

- National research in which we defined successful and less successful elements of our local context;
- Transnational academies where delegates from each country shared experiences and practical tips;
- Local networks of partners involved in facilitating digital activities;
- Intercultural media coaches who create and deliver suitable teaching materials and facilitate meetings with parents;
- Educational meetings and digital workshops with migrant and low educated parents;
- Encourage motivated parents to become cyber-parents;
- Digital support points in public spaces.

## DIGITAL EDUCATION IN FOUR EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

### The Netherlands

Until recently, there were no long-term initiatives and policies for a safe and responsible use of new media in Utrecht. Mira Media observed the growing attention for safer internet use and digital skills nationwide. The network of educational professionals 'Our education 2032' describes that to work in and to learn about the digital world and new technologies is the core of the future-oriented education, for example by developing '21st-century skills'.

But, Mira Media also noticed a lack of attention and information for migrants; who, in Utrecht, are mainly migrants of Turkish and Moroccan origin. It seemed that parents are very much aware of the dangers concerning cyberbullying, sex exploitation, etc. They have, however, difficulties in communicating about these issues with their children and in supporting them as they have insufficient skills, knowledge and experience about how children are using digital media.

Existing information materials, websites and media literacy programs for parents are either unknown to migrant and socially marginalized parents, or they are not appealing to them and are sometimes not understandable. However, most parents are very eager to learn more about internet/digital developments to support their children in a better way. In order to address this, Mira Media created in Utrecht a local network of dedicated organizations, institutions, school and professionals to develop an effective intercultural media education approach.

### Italy

Recently, safe internet and media education issues gained wider public recognition in Italy. For instance, in May 2017, the parliament passed the first law that defines and fights cyberbullying. The Ministry of Education is funding projects on these topics within the broader National Digital School Plan launched in 2015. The Emilia Romagna Region and local administrations in

Bologna and Modena anticipated these efforts, by promoting safe internet awareness initiatives (e.g. in Modena all 10-11 years old students must attend a course at school on these topics) and with the digital literacy and inclusion project called Pane e Internet. Both municipalities also promote migrant families integration, for instance through Intercultural Centre Zonarelli in Bologna and actions in multi-ethnic residential areas and meeting places (mosques and others) in Modena.

ERVET built on these efforts by collaborating with the regional and local administrations and introduced a novel attention to migrants' needs in the digital initiatives for parents and citizens and to media education and online services opportunities in the integration initiatives addressing migrant parents.

### United Kingdom



Migrants Resource Centre (MRC) has adopted a family-focused learning strategy by building partnerships with organisations that help families from migrants and refugee communities. At the local level, MRC has teamed-up with Cardinal Hume Centre to deliver a course of 16 sessions on internet safety for families that attend the centre.

The digital education sessions are run adjacent to an afterschool homework support club to reach out and support parents that have come to drop-in their children to the centre. Running the training sessions in such a location has provided MRC with captive parents and also has allowed parents to make use of their time, while waiting for children being taught, to learn IT skills that help them to become digitally more competent and better informed about online safety.

The workshops consist of informal discussions covering various topics on digital competency, followed by practice on digital skills via a 'Learn my way' portal developed for beginners. The sessions help parents to make the most of the online world in a safe way.

## Romania ActiveWatch

In Romania, computer literacy became, during the last 20 years, a common topic of the university curricula, aiming to prepare the future teachers for the use of IT in educational settings. Much less interest exists in the public institutions for the other dimensions defining the general digital competence: the safe use of the internet, digital empathy, critical thinking in processing information from the internet etc.

For such programs, that are targeting the general digital competences, the main actors are coming from the civil sector. One of these actors is the Save the Children Association, which is running a long-term program in this field. A number of other nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) – like The Centre for Independent Journalism, MediaWise Society and ActiveWatch – are running programs targeting media literacy development.

Their main partners, helping to reach access to the final beneficiaries of these programs – mainly teenagers, but also their parents – are schools and other NGOs. Lately, as part of this European consortium, ActiveWatch extended the topics for digital competence in the trainings organized for digital kids' parents and, also, included marginalized parents' communities in their target group.

With this opportunity, ActiveWatch has identified a strong partnership that may be developed in the future with the public libraries' network. Well equipped with technology and open to diversifying their role, present in urban as well as in rural communities, they are prepared to host and promote digital competence developing programs in the next future.

## SHARED GENERAL FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

- Migrant, low educated and socio-economical vulnerable parents are as concerned about their children's use of internet, as all other parents are;
- Most available publications and materials on these topics do not reflect this target group's specific situations, although they need guidance from experts, as is everybody else;
- In many cases, their access to relevant information is hindered by poor level of understanding the national language and lack of culturally suitable educational materials;
- Migrant and other socially excluded groups are more isolated and harder to reach without the help of key figures and facilitators from within the community;
- Intercultural facilitators and media coaches are essential to providing support to migrant and vulnerable communities;
- Public libraries have the potential and capacity to act as a medium for digital education and have a central role in communities/neighbourhoods.



# CHAPTER 2: DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP

## DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP, OFFLINE AND ONLINE

**Democratic citizenship encourages people to become aware about issues that affect them and to participate with others in determining how society will resolve those issues** (Portelli & Solomon, *The Erosion of Democracy in Education*).

Society and families have long been engaged in educating children and youth about the functioning and norms of the community. For this purpose, civic education programs and awareness campaigns have been put in place in schools and public spaces to familiarize students with acceptable behaviour in the 'real world'.

However, the world around us is digitizing very quickly, the online world is more and more integrated into the offline world. This has an impact on many aspects of our lives and the future of our children: how we interact with other people and spend our leisure time, how we obtain news and information and make payments. As online and offline become more and more intertwined, issues that take place in the real world manifest themselves in the virtual space, as well, such as: bullying and cyberbullying, sexuality and sexting, literacy and digital literacy.

For instance, would parents and teachers approve of children bullying other kids in the school or in the neighbourhood? We teach them to behave with kindness and respect towards others, according to the conducts of our environment. The same attention should be provided to shape the children's online behaviour by discouraging cyberbullying. Conflicts on the internet can be easily transferred to fights in the school playground and neighbourhood.

The ability of children and young people to act responsibly in social situations depends very much on adopting the following citizenship skills:

- Accepting and contributing to the values of the democratic society;
- Taking co-responsibility for the communities to which they belong;
- Managing conflicts;
- Embracing diversity and differences.

These competencies should be translated and applied to online situations, but democratic citizenship is insufficiently discussed and correlated to the online point of view. This demands a recognition of digital citizenship as 'citizenship in a digital world', mirroring the offline society and its defined values.

## WHAT IS DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP?

**Digital citizenship is the willingness and ability of citizens to participate actively and democratically in the digital society. It includes the norms of appropriate, responsible and respectful use of technology.**

Children and youngsters usually own mobile devices and computers with internet connection and spend most of their free time communicating online. Because of being brought up in the digital era and having reachable access to the internet, they are perceived to be 'digital natives' or 'native speakers' of the digital language of computers and the internet [1].

More than 90% of EU teenagers and young people aged 15-24 believe they are sufficiently skilled in the use of digital technologies in their everyday life [2].

However, our research has shown that many of them, regardless of their digital literacy level, lack knowledge and skills that are linked to participating actively and democratically in the digital world. This reality puts them at risk to the negative elements of the digitization of society, such as cyberbullying, radicalisation and polarisation, over-sharing personal information online, undesired contacts with strangers etc.

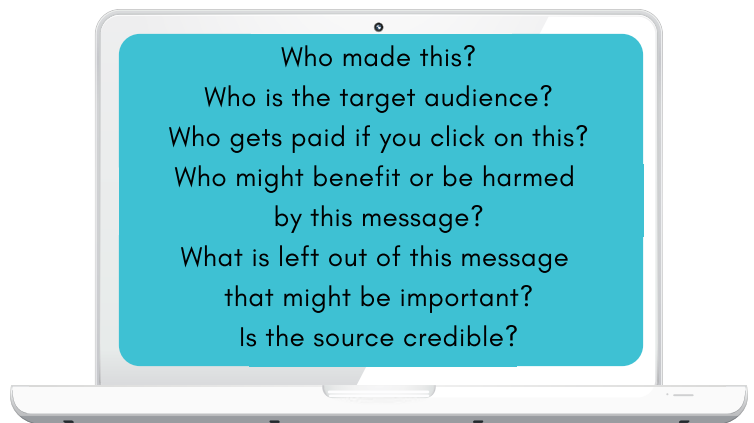
How can these 'digital natives' become responsible digital citizens? Values that are essential in formulating citizenship, such as democracy, participation and

identity, have a digital component as well that defines digital citizenship.

### Digital democratic awareness

It refers to the ability to apply critical thinking to online situations and considering various opinions and perspectives in processing information. We are witnessing a rise in fake news; the information on the digital and social media is sometimes biased or inaccurate. Digital citizens use a critical filter to assess and distribute information online, may adopt fact-checking tools and even take a stand against misinformation in social groups.

Educational professionals warn that they see fake news presented as facts in their pupils' homework [3]. It is crucial for parents and teachers to support their children in learning how to decode what they read online by introducing kids to the following questions [4]:



[1] 'Digital native' and 'digital immigrant' are concepts coined and popularised by education expert Mark Prensky in his article 'Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants', October 2001,

<http://www.marcprensky.com/writing/Prensky%20-%20Digital%20Natives,%20Digital%20Immigrants%20-%20Part1.pdf>

[2] Special Eurobarometer 460: Attitudes toward the Impact of Digitization and Automation on Daily Life, European Commission, May 2017

[3] 'Fake news is appearing in children's homework, teachers warn', The Telegraph, 13 April 2017,

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/04/12/fake-news-appearing-childrens-homework-teachers-warn/>

[4] Project Look Sharp via [www.commonsemmedia.org](http://www.commonsemmedia.org), 'How to Spot Fake News (And Teach Kids to Be Media-Savvy)', 20 March 2017,

<https://www.commonsemmedia.org/blog/how-to-spot-fake-news-and-teach-kids-to-be-media-savvy>

## Digital participation

It allows citizens to actively participate in social networks. Citizens can express their opinions freely online, discuss and debate ideas, and interact socially with various people. But can they do this in a positive and safe manner? As more and more children log online for homework and communicating online with friends, they come across various situations for which they need guidance. For instance, kids may be involved in live video streams from their smartphone and tablet by using apps that allow real-time interaction, encouraging viewers to participate in what's happening in the video. This situation can expose them to hate speech, cyberbullying or grooming.



In participating in digital media, it is important to show empathy and respect, resist and manage provocative messages and even interfere and defend peers when misconduct and harassment take place.

## Digital identity

It determines who you are online, how you profile yourself and how other people see you. Every time you post a comment, picture or video and you react to online content (share, use emoticons), you add information about your online presence. Furthermore, many youngsters wrongly believe that they are creating a virtual profile that is separated from the offline-self. On the contrary, this disconnection never materializes: their actions online leave 'traces' offline, they shape their identity as citizens and may produce consequence in the real world, for example in their

job profile in the labour market.

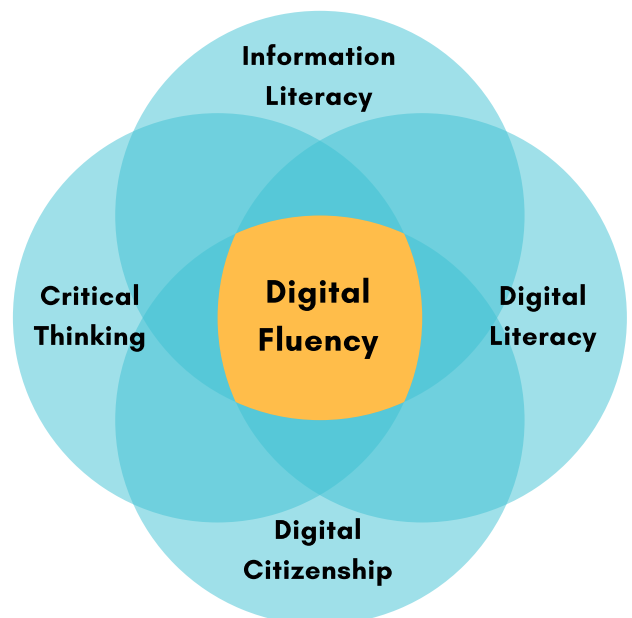
Others can also add something to your digital identity. An important role in forming the digital identity of young audiences is the relationship they have with online personalities, such as vloggers, who can influence the way children see themselves and behave online.

## DIGITAL FLUENCY

Teaching students the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the digital age is essential. Many children and youngsters can be digitally literate, but they are less skilled in manipulating the available technological and digital devices to their advantage, to pursue educational and professional goals and be creative.

Someone who is digitally fluent can use digital tools for different purposes, select and evaluate information, make judgments and solve problems online and can manage his online presence and relationships in an appropriate and responsible way.

Digital citizenship, critical thinking, information and ICT skills overlap and influence each other to provide people with the essential competencies for becoming digital citizens.





## Information Literacy

It is about knowing where to find information and selecting reliable data to create and communicate meaning.



## Digital Literacy

Refers to the ability to use technology and digital devices for different purposes: play a video, write a message online, use browser. It also includes the basic knowledge of computer functioning and systems.



## Digital Citizenship

The behavioural competencies that children and young people need to take into consideration while participating in the digital society. The skills are linked to digital democracy, participation and identity.



## Critical Thinking

Refers to assessing the value of information, making decisions, searching for reasons/causes and respect/reflect on other people's views and arguments.

## THE IMPACT OF DIGITIZATION ON MIGRANT AND LOW EDUCATED FAMILIES

### Education

The European Union, national and local governments are promoting 21st-century skills and competencies to prepare children and their parents for labour market (job accession or retraining) and citizenship in the digital era. However, despite this top-down agenda, around 40% of the EU population have an insufficient level of digital skills – of which 22% have none at all. These are often lower income and low educated families and migrants [5].

There is a danger of a further digital divide in society and further exclusion of vulnerable groups from participating or enjoying the benefits of the digital era. Many citizens, migrants and low educated families, in particular, are often not ready for present and future developments. The latest European studies show that the longer a citizen remains in education, the more likely they are to say that the impact of technology in each area of their lives is positive.

Only 28% of people who ended their education early consider themselves to be sufficiently skilled to use online public services, such as filing a tax declaration or accessing online health care services [6].

### Socio-economic divide

In combination with the issue of education, we have observed, in our research and activities with parents, that the socio-economic circumstances have the most impact on a family's digital skills. Migrant and socially excluded groups are more vulnerable because of their background, but families from the mainstream communities can be just as well affected.

[5] Digital Competence Framework for Citizens, European Commission

[6] Special Eurobarometer 460: Attitudes toward the Impact of Digitization and Automation on Daily Life, European Commission, May 2017

Although access to internet through mobiles has increased even in marginalized or low socio-economic neighbourhoods, the digital divide between different groups in society is still very much present due to the kind of digital access families are exposed to. Children and young people coming from vulnerable backgrounds may use their smartphones for playing games and using social media apps, but they are less familiar to empowering devices and skills than their peers from stable economical backgrounds: creating digital content and presentations, writing a cv online, video and website editing etc.

In the families where parents take active roles in educating their children at home, the different socio-economic circumstances may still influence how children are exposed to media and digital technology. A study from the UK found out that migrant parents tend to use technology to imitate school activities, while more educated and middle-class families provided more creative and alternative opportunities for their children to learn about and use media. The skills and

approaches can make a difference on the type of jobs they will get and how their digital identity can influence their future job profile.

### Access to information

Regardless of their cultural background, parents have the same questions and concerns about their children's use of technology and internet: privacy and over-sharing, cyberbullying, how the use of internet will affect school performance and emotional development, etc. Migrant, Roma and socially excluded families want to support their children for a better future, but for them, access to relevant information is more difficult. Many of the digital education programs available usually answer to the needs of mainstream society, giving little attention to migrant and other communities.

The assumption is that these groups are welcome to use the same services as the other parents, but many of them do not have the confidence and knowledge to participate. Or they are not aware that these types of courses exist because promotional flyers and activities are not advertised in their neighbourhood.



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**In the migrant families, the following aspects are given a more important role: discrimination on the internet, hate speech, feelings of shame and honor, fear of recruitment from possible radical groups, navigating platforms created in their home countries.**

[7] Social Class in 'The Class': Conservative, competitive and (dis)connected, Parenting for a Digital Future, The London School of Economics and Political Science Blog, 30 August 2017, <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/parenting4digitalfuture/2017/08/30/social-class-in-the-class/>

# CHAPTER 3: DEVELOPING A LOCAL NETWORK IN SUPPORT OF PARENTS AND CHILDREN



*Networks can play an important role in providing educational opportunities on digital citizenship issues because they enable different public and nonprofit actors working in the same field and locations to cooperate towards a shared goal by coordinating activities and combining expertise and resources. A regional or local network brings together people and organisations from within the community for improving the quality of services offered to their target groups and increasing the impact of their work.*

## DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP AND INTERCULTURAL AWARENESS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

The neighbourhood is the environment where most parents and children carry out their activities: at school, in the library, at their community centre, etc. Relationships between members of the community can be impacted by situations that take place online. For example, online discussion groups and forums have offline effects on civic and social participation (volunteering, support and emergency services, organising and promoting local events, etc; on the other hand, disagreements between children or young people on the internet often escalate quickly in the real world.



**As the online is more and more integrated in the offline, parents and children show their interest in the opportunities and vulnerabilities related to the digital society.**



They become aware that educational needs and the labour market are increasingly linked to digital competencies. Furthermore, due to media reports that start covering real cautionary stories, parents also begin to realize the possible risks regarding the internet use of their children. They need information and assistance because they feel they cannot help their children with the new digital requirements /developments and cannot keep up with what their kids are doing online. Many parents don't know where to turn for help, however, migrant and low educated parents are even more vulnerable due to poor access to information and specific materials and their own language needs.

Most of the times there is no strategic support system at the neighbourhood level on digital aspects. We have observed that organisations in the neighbourhood – welfare and community centres, libraries and schools, local authorities and police, intercultural NGOs and

language and computer courses providers – are dedicated to offering very specific services to families (information and educational), but they have not integrated elements of digital citizenship in their activities yet.

Local authorities programs discuss the safety of children in public spaces but do not address safety on the internet. Welfare organisations don't connect their target groups to online social services. Existing educational citizenship programs aim at teaching children basic civic skills, how to participate in the society, to accept opinion and cultural differences, to avoid conflict and polarization. But, very often, the online aspects linked to these issues are not considered.

Furthermore, conversations we had with professionals at the local level revealed very little experience in working with migrant and socially excluded families. Organisations have problems in reaching out and building cooperation with more closed groups. Intercultural experts and migrant NGOs can act as intermediaries in this situation.



## CHALLENGES ARISING

- Digital citizenship is not a socio-educational priority. Most organisations turn their attention to the basic needs and assistance of families, while digital education is very low on the list of priorities;
- Lack of sufficient attention and experience in working with migrant and socially excluded families;
- Fragmentation of services and policies. Many local authorities and organisations usually develop activities targeting one issue (digital literacy, cyberbullying, etc), realizing afterwards that their efforts are undermined by factors outside their expertise and control;
- Building consensus and trust between neighbourhood organisations. Many of the initiatives in the neighbourhood do not engage other actors because of lack of trust, shared objectives and work approaches. Competition between different entities for financing and providing services is also an obstacle;
- Coordinate initiative in the neighbourhood. Because digital citizenship is part of several areas such as education, healthcare, welfare and culture, it involves many organizations. However, only a few of them see it as one of their core activities and take the lead in the neighbourhood.

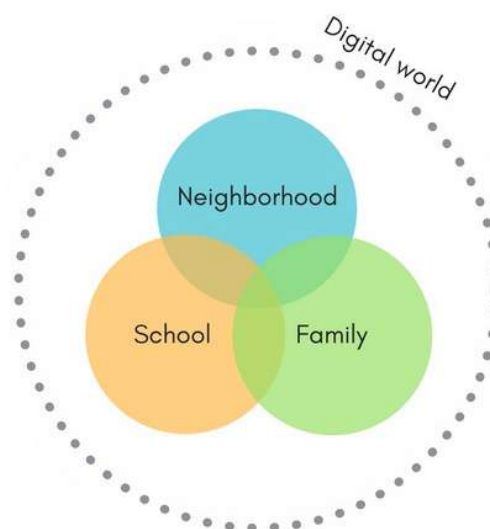
## BRINGING PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONS TOGETHER

As more and more parents and educators show concern about their children's or students' online opportunities and risks, they try out different rules and approaches in managing the kids' internet use at home, school or library. Children often receive mixed and even contradicting messages about when and how to go online, the benefits and dangers of navigating the internet and so on. This asks for cooperation between neighbourhood organisations.

In some situations, despite concerns, adults don't educate children or youngsters about the use of internet and do not talk about it. Parents and educators feel inhibited to act. They don't act or are reticent to talk about the digital developments and digital media because they themselves do not feel digitally skilled enough. Adults seem not to know what the digital world for children and youngsters means, are not aware of the recent digital trends and developments and fear unwanted consequences or to make 'mistakes'. Therefore, the dialogue about the problems and the opportunities digital media can cause is avoided by adults.

In the case of educators, this is mostly a consequence of the more and more cultural differences within the classroom. The digital developments cause issues that educators find difficult to discuss, for example, topics about political situations or radicalization. To talk about these subjects is even harder when educators experience polarisation within the classroom.

.....  
**Our vision of community cooperation takes these aspects into consideration and aims to strengthen a joint action between families, schools and other neighbourhood organisations on the issues that concern the digital education of children and students.**  
.....



However, without the engagement of parents and educators, children explore the digital world by themselves or with the help of friends and colleagues.

Every element at the local level should pick up their share of responsibility. The approach we developed refers to introducing new working and cooperation methods between these actors, in which each partner commits itself to prioritize attention to improving the digital citizenship skills of children in their own working programs.

To achieve this, we have contacted organisations from the community to discuss ways in which they can incorporate digital citizenship into their activities, but also to actively participate in our initiative as facilitators and partners to reach out and create meaningful digital courses for parents who needed information.

Libraries can become an obvious place for bringing together the expertise and capabilities of relevant local actors. Their changing role in modern society is an essential factor and opportunity for community development. Instead of only lending books and facilitating reading and literature services, these public institutions are getting more and more involved with local partners such as neighbourhood schools and community centres. In many cities, public libraries are often seen as 'trusted' environments by all generations and members of the society.

# CHAPTER 4: DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP SUPPORT SYSTEM



*In the absence of guidance, children discover the online world on their own, navigating the internet without the awareness and conscious goal for knowledge or personal development. As a result, they miss out on necessary digital skills and can engage in unsafe and inappropriate behaviour online.*

*A digital support system for children should act to prevent and de-escalate situations, provide assistance and encouragement for acquiring digital literacy and digital citizenship skills and emphasize the opportunities and positive aspects of media education. Our vision of a support system has in place confident and involved educational professionals, intercultural media coaches who can facilitate communication between educational institutions and migrant/socially diverse families and informed and active parents on media and digital aspects.*

## ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONALS

Among educational and library professionals there is a growing awareness that they themselves and their students are living in a digital world which bypasses their schools and libraries. Action is needed in their institutions, but school curricula and library services, especially in the areas where migrant and socially excluded families live, usually do not pay sufficient attention to elementary digital citizenship skills.

At the same time, teachers, youth workers and librarians often do not have the institutional support or the right competencies (intercultural and digital) to assist and train children and youngsters from vulnerable or culturally diverse backgrounds.

Many educational professionals face problems in introducing basic digital literacy and citizenship skills to

their students and report obstacles in contacting their parents. We found that this situation was caused by several reasons:

- Inadequate technical and digital infrastructure in schools and libraries;
- Little space in school curriculum and library service for basic digital literacy and citizenship courses;
- Insufficient digital competences, pedagogical and intercultural knowledge among teachers and librarians to deal with these issues;
- Little time and, sometimes, interest to contact and involve parents.

Despite these difficulties, digital citizenship skills need to be addressed in the classroom and other neighbourhood educational spaces.

As children and youngsters of all ages use various digital tools and spend most of their time in schools, after-school programs, libraries and other youth centres, educational professionals become essential in guiding their students through the necessary digital competencies of the 21st century. They also have an important role in preparing children to enter the workforce in a society where jobs are linked more and more to digital literacy.

In addition to a 'horizontal' approach concerning cooperation between neighbourhood organisations, a 'vertical' perspective on digital competence development is equally useful. Educators should be made aware of practices, problems faced and reasonable competence development goals that can be aimed at students, at the various stages of growing up. Ideally, they should also coordinate among themselves to optimize their educational role. Furthermore, teachers and librarians must assimilate knowledge on how to identify and manage the specific needs of migrant students and the cultural and educational issues of their parents.

## INTERCULTURAL MEDIA COACHES

**The Intercultural Media Coach is an expert in the fields of intercultural awareness, media and digital literacy who facilitates discussions and workshops with parents and their children from diverse social and cultural backgrounds. They are also skilled in providing support to schools, educational professionals and organisations on digital and intercultural aspects.**

Most schools and library services have no experience in communicating and creating suitable materials for migrant, Roma and other socially excluded groups in the society. Therefore, involving intercultural media coaches in activities with parents and children from diverse

backgrounds fills an important gap between educational institutions and migrant communities. They know the cultural background of the parents, are aware of the issues within the communities and they can speak their language, if necessary. Furthermore, it is easier for parents to relate to an issue, understand concepts and situations and accept advice if guidance comes from an expert within or close to their community.

### Main qualities of an intercultural media coach

- ◆ Can lead discussions/facilitator
- ◆ Communication with target group (sensitivity, language)
- ◆ Practical/theoretical (basic) media knowledge
- ◆ Trustworthy/able to create trust
- ◆ Didactically strong (different educational methods)
- ◆ Capable to empower parents
- ◆ Be able to give parents (unsolicited) advice
- ◆ Critical towards parents' own behaviour
- ◆ Collect online up-to-date discussion materials
- ◆ Problem solving capacity
- ◆ Can control the message
- ◆ Pedagogical basic knowledge
- ◆ Able to spot possible cyberparents
- ◆ Able to value the parents' own digital skills
- ◆ Free of judgment about the parents' educational choices



## THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS



Informed and active parents are an essential element of creating a positive experience of internet use for their children. This can take place through parental active and restrictive mediation and sharing knowledge with children regarding online situations.

However, we have noticed that, for various reasons, parents can feel helpless or inhibited to act. Society wrongly believes that parents are innately equipped with skills to address every situation regarding their children. This assumption prevents families from asking information and getting help. Encouraging and making it easy for parents to access information and services can be facilitated by neighbourhood organisations and educational professionals.

It is also the responsibility of parents to step in: become aware of their own digital skills and their children's internet use, connect to services that provide digital assistance, talk to educators and other parents about digital aspects etc. Furthermore, they should become mindful of their own internet use and behaviour and how their online actions influence their children's attitude towards the digital world. They should set an example at home, determine the rules for internet use and support their children in their development.

Parents who have more than average digital and educational competencies can also feel motivated to take a more important role in the community by raising awareness on digital aspects, involving other parents and children 'in need' in activities and courses, etc.

## DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

To empower educational professionals, parents and experts from within the communities, we have put in place a series of activities in the neighbourhood.

### **01 Meetings and trainings with educational professionals**

Our interaction with educational professionals – teachers, librarians, youth and social workers, etc. – has introduced us not only to their existing challenges of implementing digital activities in their environments but also to opportunities for advancing knowledge about digital education and bringing experts in the field together.

During meetings and trainings, we have provided information and shared ideas on how to integrate digital citizenship elements in their curriculum and projects and tips on how to connect to migrant parents and other suitable digital services and providers in the neighbourhood. Professionals from different organisations have sometimes participated in common sessions to strengthen the neighbourhood network. By partnering with educators and their institutions, activities with parents in their familiar environments have been facilitated. Some of them have also shown interest in becoming media coaches themselves and involve more in community activities.

### **02 Recruiting and training intercultural media coaches**

By selecting and training intercultural media coaches, we have involved expertise from within the community to provide to schools and education centres the needed intercultural support for developing suitable materials and courses to parents who come from migrant and socially excluded groups. Their direct involvement in activities with parents also offered communities easier access to information.

### 03 Information meetings and courses with migrant and low educated parents

Parents from migrant and socio-economically vulnerable background have a lower access to information about services and courses. They are unaware of channels to seek or obtain information. They are also less mobile and more connected to their living surroundings, oftentimes reluctant to attend meetings outside their neighbourhood. An important part of developing activities with parents has focused on identifying the best ways to reach out to them. We found out that strategies to attract migrant and low educated families to meetings and trainings should always be connected to the local networking process, involving migrant and social organisations and key figures in the community.



**Once contact with parents has been established, educational meetings are opportunities to introduce parents to digital education and citizenship issues. These concepts are advanced by intercultural media coaches in a simplified and culturally suitable manner, correlating the information with familiar situations and practical examples from the community.**



Culturally relevant and interactive resources, such as videos and materials in the language of the group, makes the experience even more valuable and engaging.

Parents also participate in courses that deal with their own digital limitations and knowledge, as intercultural media coaches support parents in improving their basic digital skills and accessing public online services. However, in conversations with parents, the focus is on their children's use of the internet. Meetings facilitated by intercultural media coaches encourage them to open up to discussions and to bring out their own stories, worries and tips.



#### INTERNET SAFETY CONCERNS

- School results (right balance, concentration, focus);
- Health (sleeping rhythm, screen eyes, physical movement);
- Social emotional development (self-presentation, self-image, age classification games, appropriate media content);
- Privacy (oversharing, protection online, passwords, privacy-configurations, antivirus);
- Communication (social media attractiveness, games, identity, sexting, bad language);
- Undesired contacts (grooming, lover boys, chatroulette, chatting in games);
- Cyberbullying involves already very young children and it happens very often online with direct consequences in the real world (in schools, on the playground, in the neighbourhood streets. Parents would like to know more about the difference between offline and online bullying, different ways of bullying, legislation, consequences, prevention, role of school and parents, etc);
- Radicalization and recruitment by extremists;
- Cybercrime (hacking, phishing, identity theft);
- Too much time spent on internet/social media.

## 04 Empower parents to become cyber-parents

Cyber-parent refers to an active and digitally competent member of the neighbourhood who can communicate with other parents for supporting them in developing media and digital skills.



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Motivated parents can take the role of contact persons for other parents regarding digital aspects and services and can assist the intercultural media coach during workshops and courses. We have initiated discussions with parents for engaging them in pro-active activities on:

- How to anticipate educational questions from fellow parents;
- How to identify internet related problems in their community;
- How to support schools in involving other migrant parents in activities.

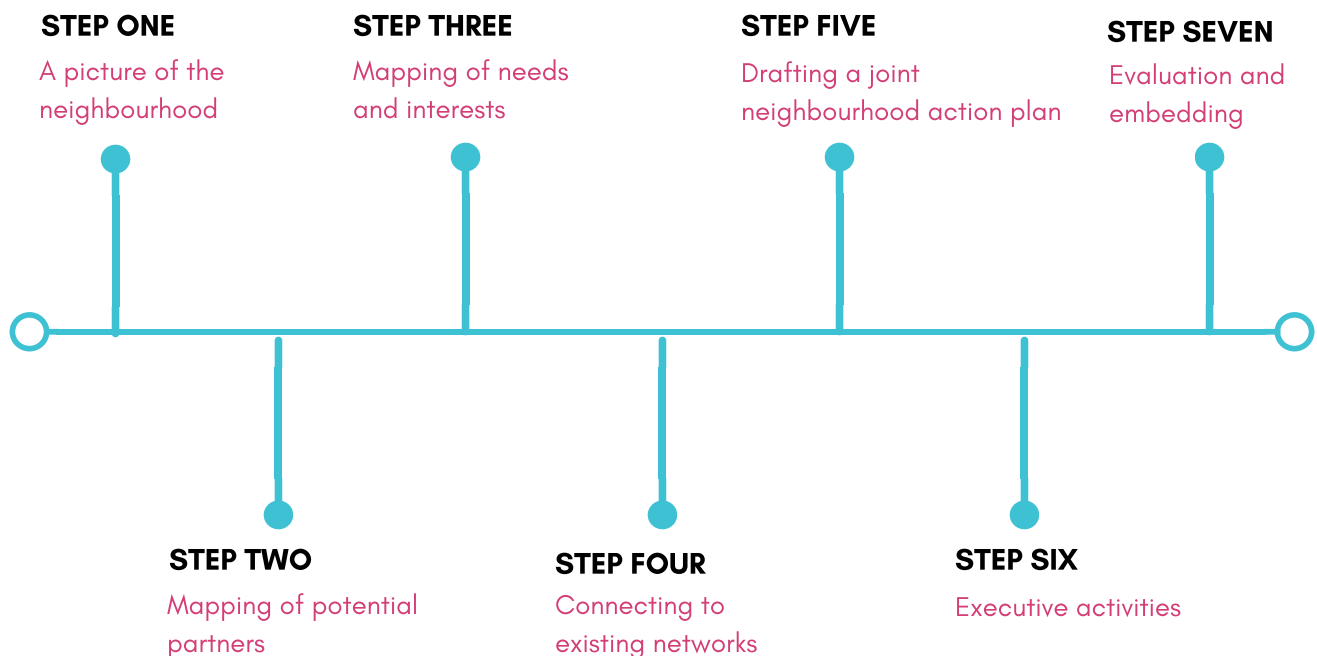
## 05 Establish digital support points in public spaces

After raising awareness on digital aspects and empowering both professionals and parents to take on the co-responsibility of educating others in their neighbourhood, we observed the need for a local helpdesk. These support points have been developed together with cyber-parents and our partners in libraries, community centres, schools and other suitable and accessible public spaces. Parents can get help with their questions, while cyber-parents and professionals who are in charge of the helpdesk can also organize activities based on urgent and relevant topics

# CHAPTER 5: ACTION PLAN ON HOW TO ESTABLISH A 'MEDIALITERATE' SCHOOL, NEIGHBOURHOOD OR INSTITUTION

Media education, media literacy and “media-upbringing” are very wide issues, which concern many different domains, each domain with its own perspective. At the neighbourhood level, there are therefore quite a few organizations that are involved in these subjects, sometimes in an indirect way. However, only a few of these organizations have these issues as a priority or take a leading role.

It seems that an external partner will have to take on this role, or that a municipality must delegate this mandate to specific organisation combined with financial resources. In any case, it is important that local organizations collectively discuss what they want to achieve in the neighbourhood concerning media education, media literacy and “media-upbringing” and decide which organization takes which role. This can be a challenging process.



## STEP ONE

### A picture of the neighbourhood

A first step is to make a picture/an inventory of the neighbourhood.

- What is the structure of the population?
- How many children/youngsters live in the neighbourhood?
- How diverse is the cultural background of the citizens? Which issues are rising or happening in the neighbourhood?
- What is the population's level of digital knowledge and skills?
- Are there existing digital citizenship courses/projects in the neighbourhood?

## STEP TWO

### Mapping of potential partners

The next step is to map the potential partners in the neighbourhood:

- Schools (primary, secondary and special education);
- Public library;
- Welfare organisations;
- Youth work organizations;
- Health organisations;
- Migrant organisations and intercultural NGOs;
- Churches, mosques and other religious institutions;
- Sports clubs;
- Language and computer courses providers;
- Parent care and upbringing support;
- Talent development/cultural organisations;
- Citizenship initiatives;
- Local municipality.

There may be other partners that could be of interest but are not mentioned here. It helps if you already have contact with some of the potential neighbourhood

partners. This is not a requirement, but it is an intensive and time-consuming process to build trust with new partners.

## STEP THREE

### Mapping of needs and interests

In this step, the first conversations are conducted with potential partners, identifying their commitments and resources. The educational courses, such as digital and/or language skills courses, are also mapped. In this way, parents and professionals can be referred to this offer directly from media education activities.

Try as much as possible to connect with the interests of the partners and respond to their help requests. For example, think of a youth organization that is already busy with the topic of digital citizenship, but they find it difficult to reach out parents. Or a welfare organization that regularly gets questions from parents about media education, but its staff is not sufficiently equipped to answer them.

A library that already has a digital citizenship offer in other locations, but in an area has difficulty in getting similar activities off the ground. This information is essential to make the right focus in step 5.

## STEP FOUR

### Connecting to existing networks

When it is clear which partners want to participate in the neighbourhood plan, it is possible to start mapping existing meetings in which the partners are already participating. For example, meetings about child rearing or citizenship. Consult how media education may or may not be connected. If this is not possible: set up a dedicated media education meeting with the neighbourhood partners.



## STEP FIVE

### Draft a joint neighbourhood action plan

With the involved neighbourhood partners, a joint neighbourhood action plan is drafted. The collaboration between the partners is described in the plan with tasks and intended results.

## STEP SIX

### Executive activities

The neighbourhood action plan will be put into practice by developing media and digital education activities with parents, children and everyone involved in the community.

- Neighbourhood-oriented trainings to local organisations and educational/ social professionals;
- Information sessions and training with parents facilitated by media coaches;
- Recruiting and preparing cyber-parents to take on media & digital education activities with other parents and children;

- A helpdesk or consultation hour organised for parents and children in need of information and support;
- A pilot project in (primary) schools where you bring together all aspects of digital citizenship.

## STEP SEVEN

### Evaluation and embedding

The joint action plan and the sub-activities are formulated. Based on this and following the nature of the plan or activity, feasible monitoring and evaluation methods are developed and tested to measure progress, results and effect. In addition to standard monitoring and evaluation methods, blogs, a timeline and various visual methods could also be used to make progress of activities visible in the neighbourhood. Based on the findings, new (information) material can be developed or a portal is created where local partners are visible and can answer questions from professionals.

# PART II

## Practical Tips and Examples of Good Practice



<b>Chapter 6. Guidelines for Neighbourhood Organisations</b>	<b>25</b>
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# CHAPTER 6: GUIDELINES FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD ORGANISATIONS



*Organisations in the neighbourhood aim to stay active and relevant to their target groups and increase their impact in the community. They observe that media and digital citizenship related-issues have become hot topics in the schools and youth clubs in their area. However, they find little room and few resources for addressing this situation on their own. To respond some of these needs, we provide tips and tested tools to encourage other organisations in their initiative to connect to potential partners in the neighbourhood, create a pool of intercultural media coaches and reach out to more vulnerable groups.*

## ... HOW TO ESTABLISH LOCAL NETWORKS WITH OTHER RELEVANT ACTORS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

**01** Networking should preferably be based on existing contacts or networks. It is more difficult and time-consuming to start from scratch;

**02** It is easier to bring together people with similar interests on specific activities from different organisations than to build institutional networking;

**03** Active listening and communication is very important: discuss and listen to your potential partners to identify their needs, questions and priorities and design win-win approaches;

**04** It is more challenging to make organisations innovate what they are doing (to propose 'policy change') than to add activities to an existing offer;

**05** To address strategic change, you have to act at all levels: both higher political level and operational level;

**06** Pilot a project at first to show its objectives and activities are attainable and lead to results;

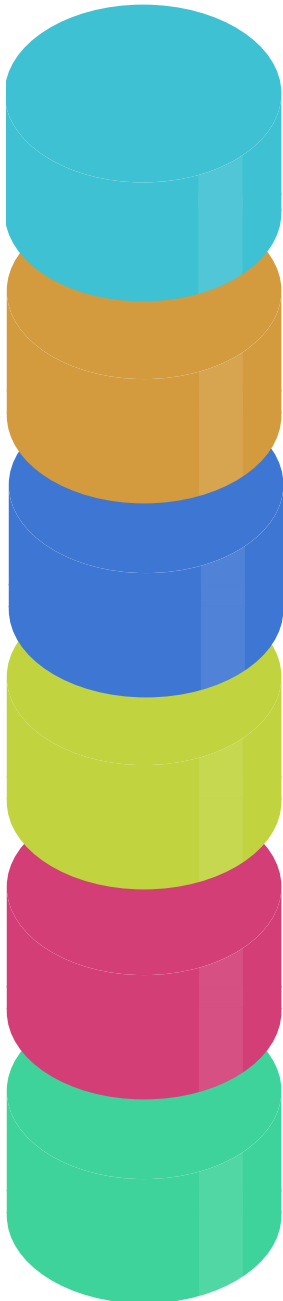
**07** Evaluate, monitor and report progress and results to your network.



To make neighbourhood organisations and educational institutions aware of the importance and range of media and digital education and to encourage them to adopt an integrated and sustainable approach, Mira Media developed the Six-Cylinder Model. In the same way, a car cannot run without its six cylinders of the engine running in alignment, the six cylinders of intercultural media education are all crucial for achieving an efficient and integrated approach.

**GOOD PRACTICE TOOL #1**

**The 6 Cylinder Model of Intercultural Media Education**



**VISION AND POLICY**

Think carefully about this issue: why is it important, what is our job, what do we want to achieve, what do the different definitions (media literacy, media education, digital citizenship, parent involvement, etc.) mean to us, which part do we give priority to?

**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

For many educational organisations, active cooperation with parents is still a complex issue: Parents may come to professionals with their questions. In communicating with parents, professionals should be aware of the parents' digital skills and identify for example those parents who are unable to read an email from school, who cannot log into the online pupil tracking system.

**PROFESSIONALS**

The extent to which a professional is dedicated to media education often depends on their own knowledge, skills and affinity with the topics. In order to carry out digital citizenship activities properly, staff should be convinced of the usefulness of the plan; have enough knowledge and skills to perform their new tasks and feel that their own input and vision is taken seriously.

**COOPERATION IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD**

It is very important to see where cooperation in the neighbourhood is possible. What is everyone's approach, expertise and interest and how can organisations cooperate in such a way that all elements of media education are covered and provided, without too much overlap. In this way, it can become clear for both parents and professionals to whom they can go with their questions or requests.

**MEDIA EDUCATION**

Enables children and young people to operate and participate consciously and critically in a complex and changing world. It also includes the production of media, understanding the use of media and how to involve media to make your voice heard.

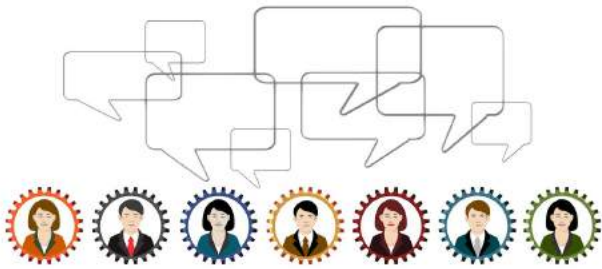
The aim of this cylinder is to integrate both media and digital citizenship competencies in school curricula or program of activities.

**DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP**

Digital citizenship mostly concerns the online interaction and the desired participation in the online society. Attention for "digital citizenship" is important as the threshold to use offensive and discriminatory language online is much lower than in the offline environment. How do we ensure that we create a positive social climate in the digital environment of young people?

## Platform Intercultural Media Education (PIM) in Utrecht

Because topics such as media education and digital citizenship have to do with different target groups and 'systems' and building up an integrated and sustainable approach is difficult to do on your own, Mira Media took initiative in developing the 'Platform Interculturele Mediaopvoeding' / 'Platform Intercultural Media Education' (PIM). The platform consists of like-minded social and educational organisations, such as Mira Media, Al Amal Foundation, Vreedzaam Foundation and the public library of Utrecht.



PIM focuses on making intercultural media literacy an integral part of formal and informal education policy in all Utrecht neighbourhoods. Every social partner brings to the partnership its own expertise and knowledge: media education, citizenship, access to migrant communities. PIM cooperates closely with primary and secondary schools, as well as with the municipality of Utrecht, migrant and welfare organisations.

Together, it develops various projects to:

- Promote media education;
- Reduce the digital generation gap in migrant and low educated families;
- Promote digital citizenship education in schools;
- Solve internet-related educational problems;
- Integrate intercultural media education in the regular neighbourhood activities.



### GOOD PRACTICE TOOL # 2

#### Case Study: Media Education in Primary School

*To help professionals from neighbourhood organisations respond to challenges and requests from teachers and parents, Mira Media created case studies for practising on situational examples.*

Nuri is a Roma boy, 10 years of age. He is being bullied at school. Not only because he is overweight but also because he is a Roma. His parents are poor and he is being bullied because his clothes aren't really modern.

The situation really got out of control when his classmates beat him up after school. One of his classmates filmed the situation and uploaded the video on YouTube. One girl went to tell the teacher and showed him the video. The teacher is speechless and doesn't know what to do. He emails you for advice.

1. What additional information would you like?
2. What is your advice?
3. And what is your approach?



## ... HOW TO RECRUIT AND TRAIN INTERCULTURAL MEDIACOACHES FOR MEETINGS WITH PARENTS

**01** Media coaches have very diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds; recruitment should consider different approaches;

**02** Use the existing pool of media and digital coaches available or media experts who already work with other partner organisations;

**03** Recruit media coaches with the help of organisations that recruit and mediate volunteers. These people are interested in doing volunteering work;

**04** Select and engage professionals with a potential to become media coaches: teachers, librarians, educational professionals, school counsellors, experts already working with vulnerable groups, etc.

**05** It is an advantage if the media coaches come from within the community and speak several languages.

**06** Organise a series of interactive and practical trainings on various topics concerning digital literacy, resources on internet safety, public speaking and communication skills, teaching skills, etc.;

**07** For the media coaches who already have the experience and skills of doing this type of work, prepare an induction session to introduce them to the project objectives, target groups and specific methods and materials;

**08** Bring together new and more experienced media coaches to share examples of good practice, know-how, approaches and skills;

**09** During the meetings with parents and children, provide support to the new media coaches by pairing them up at first with more skillful media coaches;

**10** Observe the activity of media coaches during the sessions with parents and provide feedback and guidance afterwards. Use also the feedback received from parents to improve the performance of media coaches.



## Media Coach Training in London

*Migrants Resource Centre (MRC) has provided to media coaches a series of practical and interactive activities in four workshops on:*



### Introductory Meeting

- About Migrant Resource Centre and its services to migrant and socially excluded families;
- European consortium and project;
- A digital Europe needs digital skills;
- Children's internet use in national context;
- Facilitating meetings with parents;
- Child internet safety resources.

hello!

### Effective Communication Skills

- Active listening, not waiting to speak;
- Reflecting and clarifying;
- Asking open questions;
- Speaking with confidence and body language;
- Facilitation skills;
- Workshop design;
- Establishing rapport and trust; Handling difficult situations;
- PowerPoint skills.



### Presentation and Public Speaking Skills

- Stand up and introduce ourselves;
- Types and components of speeches and presentations; Creative, relevant, technical, informative content;
- Engage an audience: questions, interaction, call to action; Building confidence, facing fear.



### Networking and Outreach Skills

- Striking up conversation;
- Building a trustworthy, active listener;
- Working the room and establishing rapport;
- Personality types;
- Taking an interest, asking questions;
- Serve and be served.

## ... PRACTICAL SUPPORT AFTER THE WORKSHOPS

**Information meetings with parents.** Media coaches will attend meetings and lead a discussion about internet safety. This first discussion is about asking questions to find out what parents are concerned about.

**Follow up meetings and workshops** with parents so they can learn the digital skills and internet safety information that is helpful for them. We are on the lookout for **Cyberparents** in the groups of parents.



# Practical Activities for Training Media Coaches

## GOOD PRACTICE TOOL # 4

### Open Discussion about Internet Safety

Activity for 5 minutes starting with the question:

#### what is internet safety?

[Internet safety is trying to be safe on the internet and is the knowledge of maximizing the user's personal safety and security risks to private information and property associated with using the internet.]

Brainstorm ideas in small groups and then in the large groups. Discuss solutions.

### Internet Safety Research Assignment

During workshops for media coaches, each participant was invited to research an existing online resource related to internet safety and to write a constructive description about it. They have received the following guidelines:

- What is the purpose of this site?
- Complete the sentence: Being safe on the internet means being safe from...
- Describe resources available for children and parents.
- If you were a parent, what do you think is helpful on this site?
- What is not helpful?
- How easy or difficult is this to use for migrant parents?

### Practice Efficient Communication Skills

In groups of three, take turn being the speaker, listener and observer.



**Speaker:** Talk about a challenge or a situation that you are having a difficulty with.



**Listener:** Practice your listening skills, focus on reflecting and open-ended questions, not offering solutions etc.



**Observer:** Write notes on the checklist about the person's listening skills.

Share your notes at the end and use the **'sandwich' technique for feedback:**

- A positive observation;
- A suggestion for improvement;
- A positive observation.

## ... HOW TO CONTACT MIGRANT AND MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES FOR MEDIA AND DIGITAL ACTIVITIES

### Language Leaflets in Modena

**01** Map out the essential places where members of the community gather and interact: mosques and other religious establishments, informal group meetings, alternative education or social service centres, community centres etc;

**02** Use all your network contacts to establish meetings with key figures from within the community: religious leader, community organiser, volunteers;

**03** Promote your activities through posters, flyers, presentations and provide relevant information to attract migrant parents to your meetings;

**04** Connect to other events and festivals in the neighbourhood dedicated to families, activities that attract children who come with their parents.

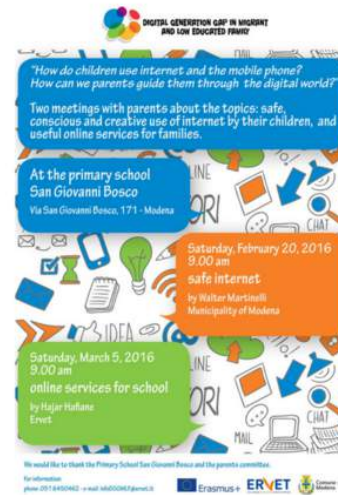


#### 01 ITALIAN VERSION

In occasione dell'iniziativa del Comitato genitori per il carnevale:  
**Sabato a scuola!**  
Tutti insieme per un laboratorio creativo e una buona colazione

il 6 febbraio alle 9:00  
presso la Scuola Primaria San Giovanni Bosco

Verranno presentati ai genitori gli incontri su internet sicuro e i servizi on-line per la scuola.



#### 02 ENGLISH VERSION

On the occasion of the parents committee's initiative for carnival:  
**Saturday at school!**  
All together for a creative workshop and a good breakfast

February 6 at 9:00 am  
at the Primary School San Giovanni Bosco

Meetings on safe Internet and on-line services for the school will be presented to parents.

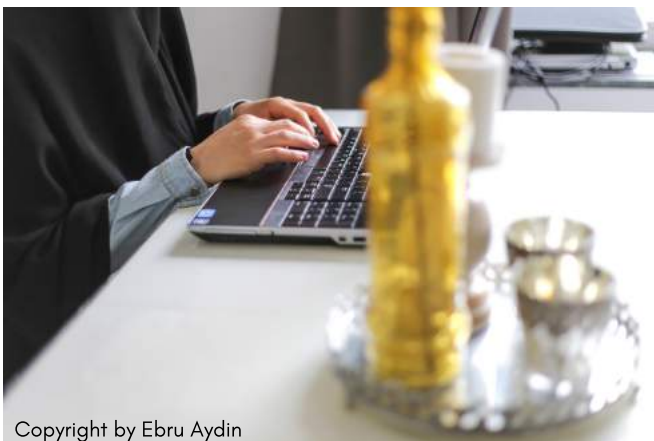


#### 03 TURKISH VERSION

Karnaval için Aileler Kurulunun girişimleri vesilesiyle:  
**Cumartesi okula!**  
Hep birlikte lezziz bir kahvaltısı ve yaratıcı bir çalışma için

6 Şubat saat 9:00'da  
San Giovanni Bosco İlkokulunda

Güvenli internet ve okul için on-line hizmetler konusunda ailelerle toplantı gerçekleştirilecektir.



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# CHAPTER 7: GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONALS AND MEDIA COACHES



*Parents are very much interested in discussing the digital aspects that influence their children's social life, future opportunities and present warnings. They look up to teachers and other educational experts for answers or they might prefer finding information from other parents' experiences. They also want to improve their own digital skills in connection to their daily needs: access to online public services, online shopping, etc. This chapter offers practical advice to educational professionals who guide parents through navigating the digital world by preparing and organising information and computer sessions.*

## ... HOW TO PREPARE AND DEVELOP AN INFORMATION MEETING FOR PARENTS

- 01** Draft the meeting's curriculum and agenda taking into consideration the (needs and questions of the) participating group;
- 02** Try to identify beforehand the possible risks:  
Are there language barriers? Are the parents participating in the sessions coming from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds? Come up with strategies and tricks to manage them well;
- 03** Prepare presentations and materials that are culturally relevant (illustrations and examples) and spark discussions with and between parents.
- 04** Try to get to know more about the target group:  
Where do the children go to school? How old are the parents? Where do the parents live? Did they have meetings like this before? What is the level of knowledge of the parents?
- 05** Meet with other professionals who've worked with the target group before, to get to know more about the target group.



## Effective Questions in Conversation with Parents

GOOD PRACTICE TOOL #1

### Icebreakers

- How many children do you have?
- How old is your child?
- Does your child have access to internet and digital devices?
- Which devices do they use: smartphone, tablet, laptop, PC?
- What are your children using the internet for?
- Do you know what are your children using their mobiles for? Talking to friends, sending messages, taking pictures, using the internet?
- How do you think the internet influences the life of your children? For better, for worse, no influence at all?
- Do you use internet and social media yourself? Do you enjoy using the internet? Do you think it is important? Why?
- What would you like to know?

### Education at school

- How are children using the internet at school?
- Is the school teaching children about safely using the internet?
- Are you talking with the school/other parents about the internet use of children?
- What are the differences between the internet use of children in elementary school and young people in high school?

### Education at home

- How often and how long do your children use the computer at home?
- Do you restrict your children's time concerning the use of internet?
- Have you ever forbidden their access to digital devices and the internet?
- Do you look at what your child is doing on the computer? And do you check the websites they use?
- Has it ever happened to you to find out that your child had accessed websites unsuitable for them (for their age, content-related, etc.)? What was your reaction?
- What is good for your child on the internet?
- Did you encounter any problems up until now?
- Do you talk with your children about their internet use and what they encounter?
- Does your child help you search and navigate on the internet, if you need any information?

### Closing questions

- What actions are you going to take after this information meeting?
- Would you like to learn to navigate the internet on your own?
- Would you like to take part in a course to help you better understand how to handle your child's internet use? And also, to improve your own digital skills?

## ... WHAT TO DO DURING EDUCATIONAL INFORMATION SESSIONS WITH MIGRANT AND LOW EDUCATED PARENTS

**01** Create a trusted environment by involving one of the parents in the activities;

**02** Start with an introduction round, asking about the family compositions of the participants and introduce yourself in an similar way;

**03** The media coach is a facilitator, not 'the expert' who gives all the answers and solutions. He/she adopts a door-opener philosophy;

**04** Find the common ground and topics for everybody in the room;

**05** Encourage the participants to share experiences and opinions and actively listen to the opinions of other participants;

**06** Give a short presentation to introduce the main topics of discussion;

**07** Use visual and interactive materials to get their attention: videos, images, graphics, presentations, quizzes, etc;

**08** Present cultural relevant resources: videos and materials in the language of the group;

**09** Share case studies and stories that lead to discussing the issues presented. Ask the parents: 'What would you do in that case?';

**10** Use the Socratic dialogue method by which a media coach facilitates dialogue between meeting participants based on asking and answering questions to stimulate critical thinking and to draw out ideas;

**11** Give examples of good practice;

**12** Draw up some conclusions and solutions at the end of the session. It is important for parents to feel that they have learned something practical.



## Knowledge Quiz for Parents

GOOD PRACTICE TOOL # 2

### Question 1

How many young people between 10 and 16 years old are active on social media at least three hours/day?

Between 30% - 50%

More than 50%

### Question 2

What kind of cyberbullying is the most common among young people?

Stalking

Defamation

### Question 3

What is sexting?

Removing clothes in front of a web camera.

Sending and receiving sexually explicit messages, photos and videos.

### Question 4

What does this picture have to do with social media?



The effect of participating in online challenges

Side effects of a product bought on Instagram.

### Question 5

What is the official minimum age required to create an account on YouTube or Instagram?

13 years old

11 years old

Answers

▼ 5 ▼ 4 ● 3 ● 2 ● 1

## ... HOW TO MAKE THE SESSION A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE FOR MIGRANT AND LOW EDUCATED PARENTS

- 01** Keep the meeting pleasant by offering drinks and bites;
- 02** Build a constructive relationship and trust between facilitator and group;
- 03** Offer 'psychological' coaching to parents on how to handle a difficult situation with the kids;
- 04** Make the session interactive;
- 05** Discuss tips and solutions to issues such as internet safety that can give parents a peace of mind at the end of the session;
- 06** Make the session interactive;

- 07** Parents can come from different backgrounds and have different values. Emphasize the aspects that they have in common, e.g. being a parent who wants the best for their children, being a woman and taking care of the family;
- 08** Speak their native language and make yourself understood by using simple communication;
- 09** Keep a positive approach and a good vibe within the group. For example: give examples of the positive sides and opportunities of social media;
- 10** Engage the parents who are less dominant and assertive.



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## ... HOW TO ORGANISE DIGITAL LITERACY WORKSHOPS

**01** Produce 'How to...' learning materials;

**02** Take into consideration that migrant parents may have basic knowledge of national language;

**03** Use simplified writing principles in learning materials shared with parents: short sentences, infinitive or present tense, commonly used words, unless you want to develop digital vocabulary;

**04** Use pictures to explain digital concepts, steps and text for parents who have language difficulties;

**05** Ask parents what they would like to use the internet/computer for and adapt your course curriculum to that;

**06** Create a glossary of commonly used English words about computers (including the national pronunciation of the English words);

**07** Create a practical experience for parents: organise digital courses in spaces that provides the use of computers, practise on existing online services, address useful topics relevant for their daily life.

**08** Parents may not be interested in the technical and professional aspects of using a digital device, but they are eager to learn how to shop online, access online services, use social media, online maps, search for recipes and magazines online, etc.



### Examples of Practical Topics Addressed During Digital Courses

#### GOOD PRACTICE TOOL # 3



- What can you do with a computer, the basic components and functioning of a computer, how to use the mouse and keyboard;
- Writing a text with Notepad and saving the file;
- Creating a personal Google account and using the email;
- Basics of Internet navigation;
- How to make searches on the Internet, including Google Maps;
- What are the social networks;
- Presentation of some online services (personal health folder, job searches, civil registry and online services of the municipality);
- Introduction to safe internet use and media education issues.



## Online Basics Program

Implemented by Migrants Resource Centre

GOOD PRACTICE TOOL # 4

### Session 1

Online Basics Introduction about Internet & Device Usage

### Session 2

Online Gaming



### Session 3

Assessment: Participants to complete assessments to check the level of confidence and competency with the internet, MS Office and device usage.

### Session 4

Online shopping

### Session 5

Online banking

### Session 6

Emails/SPAM



### Session 7

Privacy settings on apps

### Session 8

Gaming/Chatrooms

### Session 9

Apps for learning and enjoyment

### Session 10

Using a mouse and a keyboard, filling in online forms and using a search engine.

### Session 11

Problem-solving online

### Session 12

Online health information



## Guidelines for the Production of Learning Materials

Produced and used by ERVET

GOOD PRACTICE TOOL # 5

- Use large titles (for example Verdana 18);
- Number sequence of steps in the explanation and use same numbers in the arrows illustrating the sequence (use screenshots of Word, websites, etc.);
- Provide short explanatory text (using Verdana 14 black);
- Use quotation marks “...” to highlight commands or options to be selected;
- Use arrows to show where to write, click, etc. Add short explanation also inside the arrow;
- You can also use other shapes to highlight relevant elements in the image;
- Number the presentation’s pages, in case printouts get messed up;
- Save files in PDF (for easy circulation), but also in the original format (Word, PowerPoint, etc.) to facilitate later editing/revisions.



# CHAPTER 8: PARENT INVOLVEMENT



*Parents' involvement in their children's school and social activities is much more than participating in annually parent-teacher meetings. Parent involvement comes when an open and efficient partnership exists between parents and schools/educational organisations for establishing active guidance rules regarding the internet use and digital citizenship skills of students.*

## ... HOW CAN MOTIVATED PARENTS BE INVOLVED IN MEDIA AND DIGITAL ACTIVITIES

**01** As an ambassador and source of information on the topic of media education for other parents;

**02** Support and advice professionals in the neighbourhood on the development of activities around media education;

**03** As a bridge between parents and school, between parents themselves and between parents and local educational and welfare institutions;

**04** Give advice and assistance to schools and educational professionals

**05** Organize by themselves activities for other parents concerning media education;

**06** Co-trainer in ICT-courses: translate certain technical terms in your native language, show other parents how to use a computer, how to do online shopping;

**07** Offering weekly assistance to other migrant parents at school in handling school matters on the internet;

**08** Support to other parents with digital educational troubles, for example to access the digital school system

## ... HOW TO PROVIDE ACTIVE GUIDANCE TO CHILDREN

01

Make clear rules about your child's media use, for example: How long and when can my child go online? How much money can be spent on games or phone bills? Can they use their smartphone in their bedroom at night? Can they use their smartphone during dinner?;

02

Tell your child that good, respectful behaviour online is as important as in the real world;

03

Tell your child that everything they post online will always be visible online;

04

Watch your own media use, your children will copy everything! Be aware of your behaviour being an example for your children's behaviour;

05

Parental control functions are useful, but they are no replacement for a conversation with your child about your own and their media use;

06

Keep talking to your child about internet and social media. Show interest: ask what your child likes to watch online and why? Play for example an online game together or watch movies together from their favourite vlogger;

07

Also start talking with other parents and professionals. Sharing experiences and tips is helpful;

08

Ensure a good balance between the offline and online activities of your child. Make clear rules about this;

09

Know where you and your children can go for advice (useful websites, community centres, libraries etc);

10

Create awareness! Explain what are privacy, internet ads, cyberbullying, sexting. Good education and information is very useful;

11

Create a trustful relationship with your child. For example, by banning your child's access to digital devices, you can lose his trust.



# Advice for Parents on How to Accompany Their Children Online (by ERVET)

**Talking to the kids about what they do on the internet**

Maintain an open dialogue with your children and ask them questions such as: what social networks do you use? What are your favourite games and Youtube channels? Who are the people with whom you exchange messages, even in online games chats? Have you discovered funny or interesting things to show me?

Asking to be taught to use a software or an online service can be another good way to talk to your children, understand how much they are aware of how the internet works, stimulate them for creative use by doing things together.

Sometimes, just knowing a few words they use and the services they use can be enough to alert them and make them feel that their parents are present.

**Establishing rules**

Setting clear rules on when, for how long and where to use the internet and the smartphone, helps children understand how to behave and that internet is a good thing if used in the right way.

There are no rules valid for all: parents have to set them up by considering the age and needs of their children. Always explain the rationale behind those rules, and when needed and appropriate, negotiate and agree on them together.

Some of these rules are in fact good for the whole family, even for adults. For instance: no smartphone use when eating together or turning off the phone at night before going to bed.

For kids, it is very important not to be distracted by the smartphone while doing school assignments.

**Using filters and parental control software**

These are tools that block unwanted and / or unsuitable content given your child's age and maturity. For example, you can enable restrictions on Google Play and YouTube, on iPhone and iPad. Installing the Qustodio app (one of many) on your tablet / smartphone is useful not only to filter content, but also to monitor the activity of children and to set time limits for use.

Remember, however, that no filter is 100% accurate and that discussing with your children and helping them to think about how they use the smartphone and the consequences of what they do online, is the most effective way to educate young people about using the internet and prevent possible risks.

**Protecting privacy**

Encourage your children to "think before posting", that is, before publishing text or images on the internet. There may be unforeseen consequences, for example when privately published content is publicly shared by other users, may become viral (out of control as a virus) and stay on the internet forever.

Check with them the privacy settings of the services they use, such as those on the social networks Instagram or Facebook. It is recommended to set the profile as private / closed, so it is visible only to their contacts / friends / followers. Explain them that it would be better to accept as friends/ followers only people we know personally.

**Always make sure they can talk to you if they have problems online**

If your daughter / son tells you about an unpleasant thing that occurred to them online, first of all try to understand what happened and collect some evidence, for instance, by taking screenshots, which are photographs of what shows on the smartphone's or the computer's screen, which can be captured with the internal commands of the instrument. Then, depending on the severity of the problem, report the incident to the provider of telephone and internet services or to the postal police.



**Brief glossary**

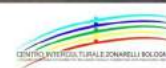
**Instagram:** the most used social network at the moment by young people to share photos and videos, which offers tools to improve and comment on the pictures.

**Sexting:** sending and receiving text messages, online conversations, or images of a sexual nature.

**Snapchat:** social network for sharing photos, where an image that is sent to another user self-destructs a few seconds after it has been displayed.

**Cyber-bullying:** it is a form of abuse committed by a person or group against a victim. It goes through digital technology and for this it has to be prolonged over time.

**Where get expert advice:**  
<http://www.generazioniconnesse.it/site/it/ti-serve-aiuto/>



## Developing the Cyberparent Role in Romania (by ActiveWatch)

In the poorest neighbourhoods and rural areas in Romania, parent involvement is a necessary element for children upbringing and online safety. However, many parents here have very low educational and digital skills.

The educational meetings held by ActiveWatch have increased the interest of parents not only for internet skills and 'digital parenting' but also for sharing information with their community. At the Mothers' Club in Bucharest, engaged parents got involved in spreading the word about the educational activities in the neighbourhood and even conducted meetings with parents with the help of intercultural media coaches.

Their involvement facilitated discussions about social media, how to use the search engine, apply for jobs, problem-solving, etc.

In Peretu, a rural community in Romania, three mothers and a teacher showed a lot of interest in organising digital sessions for children and parents almost on their own. They have requested assistance from ActiveWatch in organising the first sessions in the community. Intercultural media coaches provide the cyber-parents with information and educational materials to read and guided them in their first information session with parents.

### Lessons Learned Paper on How to Recruit Cyberparents

### GOOD PRACTICE TOOL # 2

#### WIDE RECRUITMENT

A media parenting meeting will be scheduled at a school, library or welfare location. During the meeting, the media coach will scout out which parents are interested in a follow-up program to become cyber-parents. Parents who want to participate can take part in a general program in which they get in-depth information about media education and how to shape their role as cyber-parents.

#### STARTING FROM A REQUEST OF A PARTNER ORGANISATION

An organisation indicates that they need the support of a group of cyber-parents to carry out their planned activities. A parental meeting on media education will be organised together with the organisation during which cyber-parents will be recruited. The recruitment will be followed up by a training for cyber-parents in which the partner plays an important role.

#### SELF-ORGANISATION OF PARENTS

There are several organisations in which migrant parents are involved. These parents often voluntarily engage in the community, have a large network among parents and know exactly what is going on. They are motivated to learn more about internet safety. A training is offered on the advisory and referring role of cyber-parents

#### JOIN AN EXISTING PARENT INVOLVEMENT PROJECT

Within other projects, there are groups of parents who are already trained and deployed. For example, a group of parents who are deployed within a school or welfare organisation is already coached to play an educational role in the neighbourhood. By cooperating with these programs, involved parents can also take this role in the field of media education

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