



Cyber Safe Generation: Digital education by design

Participatory Design Model: Conceptual Description



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CyGen's participatory design model is based on the methodology of participatory design. Put simply, this means that those who are the users of information technologies – in this case the CyGen digital education package – should have a central place in their development (Simonsen & Robertson, 2013). Participatory design literature incorporates a set of theories, practices and studies which engage end users fully in the design of technologies (Yarosh & Schueller, 2017).



CyGen was designed around a series of Design Cycles: a series of development activities completed in each partner country. The first design cycle was completed in the United Kingdom, the second in Denmark, the third in Belgium, and finally the fourth in Greece. This design enabled us to fully embrace the principles of participatory design, developing our digital education package alongside data collection and digital education package development in each partner country.

The principles of participatory design align to the values regularly used by the international CyGen team in their work (Lomax, 2012; Pyer & Tucker, 2017) across all our partner countries. The planning that underpinned the project developed from a single key focus; that children's voices should be central to the research and its outputs. Within the project, we worked with children to position them as co-designers. We also worked with parents and teachers. They – along with children - were our key stakeholders; their voices and opinions underpin both our findings and the outputs of the collaboration.



Child-centred methods were combined with flexibility of delivery within the project's Design Cycle. Involving them in this way was key to ensuring that the educational outputs reflected their needs. The process of involvement in and of itself was also



designed to support their development (Biggeri et al., 2019). Children in Denmark supported the initial design and testing of the Design Cycle and the associated toolkit. This process of engagement and feedback was continued throughout each of the four design cycles with key messages about ‘what works’ fed-forward to the other partners. In these ways, the project sought to “investigate, understand, reflect upon, establish, develop, and support mutual learning between multiple participants...” (Simonsen & Robertson, 2013 p. 2).

References

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