

2019



Cyber Safe Generation: Digital education by design

Co-designed digital education programme

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (IO4)



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of the European Union








Project Overview

CyGen is a co-funded Erasmus+ Key Action 2 strategic Partnership. The project engaged directly with children (aged 8-13), teachers and parents in four European countries (United Kingdom, Belgium, Denmark and Greece) to:

1. Explore the digital opportunities and challenges as these are experienced by these groups;
2. Develop a novel participatory design methodology and methods in order to work collaboratively with children and young people;
3. Co-design a culturally, linguistically and age appropriate open-access multimedia education programme, a 'web app' with children in the four member states. Designed by children, for children, the web app recognises and builds on children and young people's knowledge and experience to support their safe, informed use of the Internet;
4. Produce online open-access guidance encompassing lesson plans and pedagogical resources to support teachers and educators in primary and secondary schools in diverse European education settings to support children's online safety

The CyGen project was created to understand the opportunities and challenges faced by children when they go online. The project worked with children, young people, teachers, parents and academics to map these opportunities and challenges and, with children, to design educational resources to support children's safety online. The project was unique in that children helped the project team to develop and evaluate an evidence-based digital educational programme to promote young peoples' online citizenship and safety across the four participating European countries (UK, Denmark, Belgium and Greece).

The outputs created for this project are:

-  IO1: Scoping and needs analysis
-  IO2: Participatory Design Model
-  IO3: Design workshops
-  IO4: Co-designed digital education programme
-  IO5: Evaluation

Further information regarding the evidence-based digital educational programme can be viewed via our website <http://cygen.eu/resources/>



Executive summary:

IO4 Co-designed digital education programme

The digital education package (Webapp and wrap around text) developed during the CyGen project was co-designed with children, teachers and parents across the four partner countries: Belgium, Denmark, Greece and the UK. The Webapp enables pupils to engage in a virtual learning environment, offering them 'real-life' scenarios in which to enact and explore the possibilities of the digital environment. These real-life scenarios are 'played' by several characters. The characters and activities were developed initially by the pupils in the UK and modified by children in the partner countries in response to the needs articulated by them during the design cycle. Each of the character activities is focused on developing children's digital skills in order to support their safe, informed digital engagement. More particularly, the Webapp, has been designed to encourage both 'online' engagement and 'offline' discussion between children, teachers and parents. In so doing, it responds to a need articulated in the academic literature (Livingstone et al, 2011) and by children, teachers and parents in our project about the need for greater dialogue and shared understandings about the challenges children experience online.

The Webapp was developed cyclically with pupils, teachers and parents and included pupils from each country talking directly with the Belgian developers via Skype. This was supported by the development of a design template setting out the key features, activities and functions requested by children in each partner country ensuring the translation of the empirical data into a Webapp by and for children.

There are four versions of the Webapp which follow two broad designs, reflecting the children's design choices and preferences and in the languages of each partner country as determined by them. The pupils in Denmark were older and the Webapp reflects their needs as an older cohort of young people. Each Webapp also includes resources for teachers and parents to enable them to support children's participation and learning. These are embedded in each Webapp in a section entitled 'Information for grown-ups' and in the wrap-around text on the project website <http://cygen.eu/>.



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The wrap-around text supports teachers and parents to adapt the Webapp to a classroom and/ or home setting. So, while the Webapp can be used as a stand-alone tool, it may also be used together with the wrap-around text in order to stimulate dialogue between children and children and teachers/parents about the challenges they experience online.



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The Partnership



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