Media literacy methodology and material for parents (grandparents)

"Play with your children" Guide for parents (grandparents)

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THE MODERN DIDACTICS CENTER

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3   "Play with your children" Guide for parents and grandparents

3.1   Introduction

Information and communication technologies are an open window to the outside world. They are a very powerful tool that allows us to access all kinds of information and knowledge, both real and fake, and to communicate quickly and effectively with people all over the world, known or unknown.

When our children and grandchildren learn to walk on their own, as educators we start a teaching process in which, in stages, we teach them different strategies that allow them to move more and more autonomously: walking on the pavement, looking before crossing, understanding traffic lights and signs, learning the way home, not talking to strangers, returning home on time.

In the same way, when it comes to learning to use technology, as educators we have the responsibility to teach our children strategies that will allow them to develop in a safe manner. However, unlike the example of learning to walk, when it comes to technology, we lack our own childhood experience as learners. In addition, the technological world is in continuous development and progress, which means that new challenges constantly present themselves for which our children and grandchildren need the sensible advice of an adult.

For this reason, establishing communication routines that our children can follow is fundamental in order to know, prevent and solve possible problems or difficulties that they may have to face while learning to walk autonomously through the virtual world.

3.2   What we'll learn by playing

This guide aims to provide some practical activities to do as a family to help detect the problems faced by our children and grandchildren and to enable us to establish a channel of communication with them so that they trust us.

All the activities have been designed to be entertaining and playful for young people, so that they can learn at home in a relaxed, family atmosphere. They are practical and short so that they do not tire the children and can be adapted to the interests, age and level of knowledge of each one of them. The activities do not require physical resources beyond the use of a computer, paper, pen and some objects that can be easily found in a home.

We have classified the activities into four main themes:

Moral Dilemmas in the Contemporary World

Nowadays, when someone needs to know something or has a problem, often the first thing they do is search for information on the Internet.

When it comes to moral dilemmas, we mainly make decisions based on our own values and our code of ethics, which is shaped over the course of our lives.

If we add complete and reliable information and deep reflection to our own values, we can better prepare ourselves to make decisions or to change those judgements that are not entirely appropriate. This makes us grow and improve as moral individuals.

As parents and grandparents, the moral education of our children is one of the most important pillars. That is why teaching them to seek reliable information to help them make ethical decisions is becoming increasingly important.

Informed decisions

In a changing and hyperconnected world, it is critical to be well informed when making decisions. However, whilst we live in a society where access to knowledge is very simple, it is increasingly difficult to distinguish reliable information sources and relevant data from those that are not.

That is why it is important to provide our children with some critical thinking skills that will help them to navigate the ocean of knowledge on the internet without getting lost or shipwrecked. These activities are designed for that purpose.

Misinformation and disinformation

While the digital world offers a range of information and opportunities for young people, it is also becoming harder to separate fact from fiction. As children are spending more time online constantly making decisions on what to trust, it's now more important than ever for them to know how influence, persuasion and manipulation can impact their decisions, opinions and what they share online.

How does fake news and misinformation impact children?

Exposure to misinformation can reduce trust in the media more broadly, making it tougher to know what is fact or fiction. When we start to believe that there is the possibility that anything can be fake, it's easier to discount what is actually true.

In order to help both children and Parents/Grandparents improve both their understanding of 'Fake News', Misinformation and Disinformation and their digital literacy skills, we are suggesting a shared learning experience, facilitated through **quiz-based learning** (gamification). The aim is that, through the quiz game, parents and children can learn at the same time in an enjoyable and relaxed manner.

Safety and privacy

Misuse of personal data, inappropriate content, dangerous viruses, annoying spam, expensive phone numbers and rip-off attempts - how can we protect children and young people from these risks? Precautions can be taken with technical measures. But they do not offer absolute protection.

Toddlers play with smartphones even before they learn to read and write. Teenagers spend a lot of time on social networks, such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter. It is very important that adolescents learn to move about in the digital world carefully and responsibly – with parental support.

What is your child's knowledge of security and privacy in the digital world?

How can children of different ages be taught this knowledge and be made aware of its tremendous importance?

How can parents support this learning process?

We have put together activities for different age groups that you can carry out with your children to teach them in a playful way how to deal critically with the various Internet offerings and how to make the right decisions when sharing private data.

3.3   Playful learning

Children are learning all the time, consciously or unconsciously, formally or informally. The home is one of the main axes of learning, along with school and play with other children.

At home children are in a relaxed and comfortable environment where they are generally less afraid of making mistakes than in other settings, so it is an ideal place to try different ways of learning.

Young children learn a great deal through play, and this also continues throughout life.

We can take advantage of this natural tendency to play and learn by playing to use relaxed activities where time flies by and where, with little effort, we can reach deep and stimulating reflections.

3.4   Why this guide?

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that parents of young children and teens (5 to 18 years old) place consistent limits on the use of **any** media. This includes entertainment media (like watching TV and movies), as well as educational media (like creating flash cards on a smartphone app).

Not all screen time is created equal. It's up to parents to decide how (and how often) their teens use screens and whether screen time is positive or negative. For instance, time spent on homework or other educational activities might not need to be as restricted as time spent playing video games.

But online access also comes with risks, like inappropriate content, cyberbullying and online predators. Using apps and websites where children interact, predators may pose as a child or teen looking to make a new friend. They might convince the child to exchange personal information, such as address and phone number, or encourage children to call them, seeing their phone number via caller ID.

Most teens use some form of social media and have a profile on a social networking site. Many visit these sites every day.

There are plenty of good things about social media — but also many risks and things kids and teens should avoid. They don't always make good choices when they post something to a site, and this can lead to problems.

3.5   Tips on self-paced learning and learning in family

The aim of this section is to give some basic tips to enable the successful implementation of the activities presented in this document. These tips are a guideline for parents and grandparents. The effectiveness of the tips will vary depending on the family context and previous experience in carrying out activities involving the members of the family group.

Although the following tips are oriented to the structure of the activities in this document, they are applicable to any self-paced learning activity or family learning activity.

1- It is important that parents and grandparents read about the activities before starting

In order to carry out any activity, it is important that the adult assumes responsibility for the learning and prepares the activity. Reading about the activities beforehand and trying to resolve any doubts that may arise will improve the fluidity and quality of the activity when it is put into practice.

2-Make sure you have all the necessary materials to carry out the activity.

Another important aspect of preparing the activities after pre-reading is to make sure you have all the necessary materials.

3-Provide an environment that is conducive to learning and minimises distractions.

A supportive environment will be critical to both the motivation for and the success of an activity.

4-Explain clearly to the rest of the family members what the activity is, what its objectives are and the estimated time needed to complete it.

It is important that everyone who participates in the activity understands the activity, and if necessary, take time to clarify any doubts that may arise before the activity.

5- Don't teach, help them understand.

6- Once the activity has been carried out, evaluate its implementation.

An important part of the implementation of activities is their subsequent evaluation. This is still valid when it comes to family learning and will help to improve future implementations of activities.

To get feedback from the other people who have done the activity you can use simple questions such as: did they like it, what would they change, what parts surprised them?

Once the feedback has been obtained, spend some time reflecting on how the activity was carried out and what you would like to improve for future activities.