

Cyberbullying and Other Forms of Risky Behaviour on the Internet by Czech Children



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BACKGROUND: The paper focuses on the results of a research study looking into Czech children's risky behaviour on the Internet (Danger of Internet Communication 5). The research was conducted by the Centre for the Prevention of Risky Virtual Communication, Faculty of Education, Palacky University Olomouc in cooperation with the companies Seznam.cz and Google Inc. The research was focused on selected topics connected with online risky behaviour, such as cyberbullying, sexting, cybergrooming, the sharing of personal information, and the dangers of the use of webcams. **AIMS:** The research focused on the incidence of Czech children's risky behaviour linked to information and communication technology (especially the Internet). In descriptive terms, it was aimed at ascertaining the number of victims and attackers involved in the various forms of cyberbullying. The research further sought to establish whether children communicate with strangers on the Internet, whether they have been asked for a personal meeting, and whether they are willing to meet a virtual friend or friends in the real world, which is closely related to a phenomenon called cybergrooming. Another goal was to

determine the form of the public sharing of intimate material on the internet and identify what motivates teenagers and adolescents to this behaviour, i.e. sexting. We also wanted to find how many of the children under survey considered sexting risky. **DESIGN AND MEASUREMENTS:** The research was (with regard to the expected number of respondents) quantitatively oriented. The exploratory method was chosen as the basic research method, involving the questionnaire technique. **PARTICIPANTS:** The study population consisted of young users of the Internet and mobile phones – primary and secondary school students from the entire Czech Republic. The age of the respondents was limited to 11–17 years. A total of 28,232 respondents participated in the research. **RESULTS:** Cyberbullying, sexting, and risky online dating, especially on social media sites such as Facebook and ASK.fm, appear widespread among Czech primary and secondary school-children. **CONCLUSIONS:** The results of this research project can be used to eliminate (or reduce the prevalence of) risky online communication practices. Effective prevention seems to be the measure of the greatest importance.

KEY WORDS: CYBERBULLYING – SEXTING – CYBERGROOMING – CHILDREN – RESEARCH

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