

UNESCO Digital Kids Asia-Pacific Report Launch

10 May 2019

2:00-4:30 PM

UNESCO Bangkok 5th Floor Meeting Room, Thailand

Background

ICT has become an integral part of how children participate in society, access information, exchange ideas, and learn. Youth aged between 15 and 24 years old are the most connected age group in the world¹ and research suggests that children are accessing the internet at increasingly younger ages.² Meanwhile, the future of work continues to change with technology. It is estimated that one-third of jobs that will exist in 2020, do not currently exist today. Employers predict that these jobs will demand skills that include technology but also creativity, originality, critical thinking, and complex problem solving.

Although digital technologies present significant opportunities, the use of such technology and interactions arising from it also pose a variety of risks to children. Persistent challenges include cyberbullying, pornography, child grooming, child sexual exploitation, online harassment, fraud and management of children's technological habits. More recently, issues highlighted in the media include the proliferation of misinformation, data privacy concerns and increasing cybersecurity risks.

Given the rapidly changing state of technology, it is important for children to develop a range of digital citizenship competencies that are relevant in the present as well as for the foreseeable future. Fostering such digital citizenship competencies will ensure they have the capacity to maximize the opportunities that technology can offer while minimizing the concomitant risks that may arise from such experiences.

Almost 1.1 billion of the world's children live in the Asia-Pacific³, a region with vast diversity in terms of social, economic, and technological contexts.⁴ Yet, there is a lack of comparative data on how they are actually using ICT as most existing research covers industrialized Western nations in North America and the European Union. While some research organizations such as Global Kids Online and UNICEF have expanded the knowledge base in the Asia-Pacific, a cross-national research study that is contextualized to the region is still lacking. As such, there is a need to create a comparative research framework and concrete research tools specifically to guide the development of education sector policies and programmes that equip children with digital competencies while being inclusive of their diverse contexts.

In response to this need, UNESCO initiated the Digital Kids Asia-Pacific Project (DKAP), supported by the Korean Funds-in-Trust, to assist Member States' development of evidence-based policies that foster children's digital citizenship and to promote the safe, effective and responsible use of ICT.

¹ UNICEF (2017). The State of the World's Children 2017: Children in a Digital World.

² World Economic Forum (2018). The Future of Jobs 2018.

³ UNICEF (2017). The State of the World's Children 2017: Children in a Digital World Statistical Tables.

⁴ UNESCO (2016). A Policy Review: Building Digital Citizenship in Asia-Pacific through Safe, Effective, and Responsible Use of ICT.

DKAP Regional Report

The regional report titled “Digital Kids Asia-Pacific: Insights into Children’s Digital Citizenship” reveals the research findings and policy recommendations related to data gathered from over 5,000 children in 4 Asia-Pacific countries – Bangladesh, Fiji, Republic of Korea and Viet Nam – about how they use technology, what are their attitudes and behaviours, and what digital skills they have. A set of ready-to-use research tools, including the UNESCO DKAP Framework for Education and statistically validated survey, will be released as well. These tools will enable stakeholders to gather data that allow them to understand the context of children’s interactions with technology and develop more relevant, evidence-based policies and interventions.

Call to Action for Digital Citizenship Champions

The DKAP Champions Initiative to expand the use of the DKAP Framework and survey will also be announced at the launch. DKAP Champions will be key constituents in their countries who will lead collaboration efforts to continue the research in digital citizenship by applying or adapting the DKAP Framework and survey. Champions can be a team or driven individuals or organizations.

Objectives

The launch aims to:

- i. Publicize the DKAP research tools for use in Member States by all education stakeholders.
- ii. Promote the practice by Member States of developing evidence-based educational policies and interventions relating to children’s digital citizenship.
- iii. Raise awareness of issues surrounding children’s digital citizenship competencies and its relevance to the changing world of work and education.
- iv. Seek expressions of interest to become DKAP Champions.

Proposed participants

UN agencies, local and regional non-government organizations, researchers, youth, private sector companies and media will be invited to attend the launch.

For access to the livestream, please register at: <http://bit.ly/dkapreportlaunch>

Programme

| 10 May 2019 2:00 – 4:30 PM | | |
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| 1:30-2:00 | Registration | |
| 2:00-3:00 | Launch of the DKAP Regional Report <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming Remark • Opening Remarks • Overview and Launch of the Report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shigeru Aoyagi, Director, UNESCO Bangkok • Ioane Koroivuki, Regional Director, ITU • Kanittha Hanirattisai, Deputy Secretary-General, Thailand National Commission for UNESCO • Jonghwi Park, UNESCO Bangkok |
| 3:00-4:00 | DKAP Panel Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring the relevance and implications of the DKAP findings and research tools • Q&A | Moderator: Jian Xi Teng, UNESCO Bangkok Panel Members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ashish Narayan, ITU • Emma Day, UNICEF • Thanchanok Koshpasharin, U-Report Thailand • Rachaya Kulnapongse, dtac |
| 4:00-4:30 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcement of the DKAP Champions Initiative | Moderator: Libing Wang, UNESCO Bangkok <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kanittha Hanirattisai, Deputy Secretary-General, Thailand National Commission for UNESCO • Dr Ethel Agnes Pascua-Valenzuela, Director, SEAMEO Secretariat • Karma Yeshey, Secretary, Bhutan Ministry of Education (video message) |
| | Refreshments | |
| End of programme | | |

About the Project

UNESCO Bangkok's "Digital Kids Asia-Pacific" Project (DKAP), supported by Korean Funds-In-Trust, aims to promote policy dialogue in the region and in Member States on using ICT safely, effectively and responsibly, and to build the education sector's capacity to foster digital citizenship among children and youths through the following:

- Providing Member States with the research evidence and tools to guide policy and practice; and
- Sustaining Member States' policy dialogue on current digital citizenship issues through meetings, guidelines and campaigns.

As part of the project, a Digital Kids Asia-Pacific Framework for Education was developed, in partnership with ITU, UNICEF and Google. It consists of five domains (i.e. 1) Digital Literacy, 2) Digital Safety and Resilience, 3) Digital Participation and Agency, 4) Digital Emotional Intelligence and 5) Digital Creativity and Innovation) and was translated into a 104-item survey instrument. The survey was pilot-tested for validity and reliability with 5,129 children aged 15-years old in four countries, namely Bangladesh, Fiji, Korea and Viet Nam.

Key findings are first, a common trend across all four countries is that the highest competency by domain is Digital Safety and Resilience while the lowest is Digital Creativity and Innovation. This suggests that current interventions may have overly focused on safety concerns while more attention should be given to developing creativity and innovation. Second, clear digital divides exist between and within countries, which affects children's digital citizenship competencies. Girls had higher scores than boys in all four countries. Third, children in Korea and Viet Nam spend extensive amounts of time on digital devices as nearly 10% of them use devices for more than 7 hours a day. This suggests a need for programmes that promote self-regulation and self-awareness. Statistical validation indicates that the survey is statistically valid and reliable for the framework's constructs. The report and the survey tool will be released on 10 May 2019.