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## Children between 9 and 13 years old as internet users

### Dzieci w wieku między 9 a 13 rokiem życia jako użytkownicy internetu

#### ABSTRACT

The paper presents the new new media as a contemporary and dominant space in children's lives. Most children begin to use the Internet when they are a few years old, for example, while watching cartoons. The online world can be both an opportunity and a threat to young users. The aim of the research was to determine whether children's growing interest in the Internet has a limiting impact on traditional ways of communication with peers and whether the increasing use of social networking sites by children is determined by the fear of exclusion from their circle of peers. The study was conducted with the use of an online survey distributed among children from the third, fifth, and seventh years of two Polish primary schools. The results include several conclusions regarding children's contact with the new media and their peers. The study showed that the majority of primary school pupils are regular users of the new new media, and their interest in new technologies increases with age.

**KEYWORDS: MEDIA EDUCATION AMONG CHILDREN, NEW MEDIA, INTERNET, WEB**

#### STRESZCZENIE

Artykuł przedstawia zjawisko internetu jako współczesnej i dominującej przestrzeni w życiu dzieci. Większość z nich spędza pierwsze minuty w internecie w wieku kilku lat, na przykład oglądając bajki. Świat wirtualny to zarówno szansa, jak i zagrożenie dla młodych użytkowników. Celem badań była próba ustalenia, czy rosnące zainteresowanie dzieci internetem ogranicza tradycyjną komunikację z rówieśnikami oraz czy korzystanie przez dzieci z serwisów społecznościowych jest w coraz większym stopniu determinowane obawą przed wykluczeniem z grona rówieśników. Badanie przeprowadzono metodą ankiety internetowej wśród dzieci z klas III, V i VII dwóch szkół podstawowych w Polsce. Wynikiem badań są wnioski dotyczące kontaktu dzieci z nowymi mediami oraz z ich rówieśnikami. Badanie wykazało, że większość uczniów szkół podstawowych to regularni użytkownicy internetu, a ich zainteresowanie tym medium wzrasta wraz z wiekiem.

**SŁOWA KLUCZOWE: EDUKACJA MEDIALNA WŚRÓD DZIECI, NOWE MEDIA, INTERNET, SIĘĆ**

## INTRODUCTION

Usually, during the developmental period of 6–12 year of age, physical changes are less noticeable than in preschool and growth is slow, so children gain control over their motor skills and perfect those abilities they did not previously master. The consequence of this phenomenon is the increase in overall coordination and balance, and the improvement of various forms of physical activity (Turner & FHelms 1999, p.280). The period of childhood, also known as school age, is a kind of bridge between childhood and adolescence for the child and their family. A significant role among child development is played by the media message, in which information about the „ideal self” is sought, which means that children look for inspiration on the internet in order to be able to resemble and imitate popular people they find there. Ever more children are starting to benefit from access to new media very quickly, which can have a big impact on their development. A young person learns to collect and search for new physical, social and intellectual experiences in order to be able to independently organize new patterns and schemas that can better prepare him for adult life (Bardziejewska 2004, p.346).

For many years, people living in the information society have become increasingly susceptible to the influence of new media. Denis McQuail (2012) distinguishes the most important issues related to this concept including the dominance of information activity, problems of information overload, growth and interconnection of networks, globalization trends, dependence on complex systems, loss of privacy, and reduction of time and space limitations. McQuail concludes in this context that the new technology of media leads to the creation of a society characterized by a large and growing volume of information stream (McQuail 2012, p.121). Research emphasizes that mass media play an important role in society (Pisarek 2006, p.117) and as McQuail (2012, p.112) argues, mass media are necessary in society to achieve the goal of: integration and cooperation; order, control and stabilization; adaptation to changes; mobilization; controlling the tension; continuity of culture and values. The emergence of new media is associated with a gigantic technological advance, while the concept of new media has been used since the 1960s and is changing over time, because technological progress develops very rapidly and for some people the changes that occur due to the development of technology are a surprise. The term new media could be deemed, as the convergence between computational and communicative logic as Manovich (2001) argues, in which it is possible to add the logic of connectivity and

sociality. So much of what defines new media is not standardized; perhaps the potential of new media is a function of its intermediate development and our social, political and economic transition within and outside of it (Socha & Eber-Schmid, 2014).

The meaning of 'new media' is changing – it used to be radio and television, now this scope has expanded to include many other mass media. It is worth adding that „*new media are considered to be an epochal phenomenon, constituting an element of a broader, and even global, historical transformation, regardless of whether it is perceived as its cause or effect*” (Lister 2009, p.17). The author also points out that the term new media is commonly used in a range of contexts to refer to a whole range of phenomena. Therefore, when using this term anyone can interpret it differently, for example as the internet or from a different perspective – as digital television, a blog and the like. Lister notes that „new media” refers to the totality of changes in media production, distribution, and media use, and that these are changes that are technological, textual, conventional and cultural in nature (Lister 2009, p.22).

The rapid development of new media and new technologies allows them to be used to facilitate everyday life. An example is the so-called smart house, or intelligent / multimedia home, which is subject to the flow of various technologies (Latos 2013, p.57). Currently, there are intercoms in houses that allow residents to see who has come and to open the gate even when they are away from home at the time. There are refrigerators with screens with an integrated radio and intercom, which allows the front door to be opened without leaving the kitchen. Modern technology allows to change the temperature at home while abroad – using apps on smartphones. On the market square, the public can also find vacuum cleaners that will clean the house when the owners are away at the time. The clapping of hands enables lights to be turned off and on, and vocalising 'open the front door' it will open.. Such progress is presumably particularly useful for people with disabilities. Social networks are the link between the whole world and the individual. It should be mentioned that „*the way virtual reality functions is very similar to the real world, so participants have a natural need to manifest their own presence*” (Kiszkiel 2013, p.175). By adding own photos, descriptions and comments, users of the social networking site manage to portray themselves.

The new 'new media' provides an opportunity to be even more independent. As Paul Levinson writes, new 'new media' 'by default have a social nature, which means that „*regardless of whether it is blog recipients and commentators, Wikipedia readers / editors or Facebook groups – the social dimension is not only necessary for the functioning of new new media, but also*

*gives them the necessary dynamics*” (Levinson 2010, p.15). New ‘new media’ nowadays are characterized by unprecedented availability, which is not limited by a TV or radio program, so the recipient adjusts the message that is offered to the rhythm of their own life (Levinson 2010, p.15).

The impact of new media on children is huge. The presence of new media in the process of socialization and their impact on children is particularly important (Bogunia-Borowska 2006, p. 83). The parents and the school the child attends are responsible for media education. On the web, children are susceptible to manipulation by, for example, watching advertisements, which are abundant on the internet, that encourage them to buy new toys or eat unhealthy food. The violence in cartoons and fairy tales is highly visible. It should be added that *„cyberspace affects not only the way of thinking, but also the way of proceeding, active actions”* (Roguska 2012, p.31). Tomasz Huk points out that new media are used by children and adolescents, especially for entertainment purposes, and the role of the computer is usually limited to communication between peers, which may *„depersonalize work, learning and other human activities”* (Huk 2014, p.164). Media education should be introduced as a complementary subject for children and adolescents. Young people need knowledge about the world around them. They also need substantive support in situations they are unable to cope with. Media education in the 21st century is as important as other compulsory subjects at school, because the world is constantly moving forward and using newer and newer technologies.

Several studies have been conducted in the context of children and their use of new technologies, as well as the internet. Among other things, it was found that the daily use of the internet may disturb a child’s daily routine, and that excessive use of the internet by children may have an impact on their relationships (social interactions) with their relatives and peers (Young & Abreu, 2011). Other researchers also state that the negative impact of children’s use of the internet may manifest itself in the form of obsession and inability to control their own behaviour, which in turn leads to social isolation, loneliness and thus depression (Kaess et.al 2014; Romer et. al 2013; Yan et. al 2011). A review of the research shows that the internet has positive and negative effects, including. Positive examples are quick and easy access to information, facilitating communication along with everyday work. On the other hand, the negative side of using the internet by children are problems with safety, socialization, addiction and exposure to content that is inappropriate for age, as well as problems with a physiological and psychological basis (Jackson et al., 2007; Kabakci, Odabasi, & Coklar, 2008;

Livingstone & Haddon, 2008; Pakhare, 2013). A study by Ozgür (2016) confirmed the above findings.

## METHODOLOGY

Adolescence is associated with experiencing fears and other difficulties that children must deal with. New needs and interests emerge and the way of seeing the world changes. It is also a time when children make strong and evaluative friendships. Social networks through internal exchange of messages (e-mail) or through instant messaging, which is used for real-time conversations, promotes communication between children for fear of social exclusion. Social networks allow users to search for friends, but also people who, for example, have the same interests.

These are the two hypotheses based on which the research was conducted. The first hypothesis was to verify the assumption that children's growing interest in new media and social media reduces traditional communication with peers. The second hypothesis is that children's use of social media sites is increasingly determined by fear of exclusion among their peers.

The research was aimed at examining whether there is an increasing interest of children in information and communication technologies among primary school children in Poland. Due to the general nature of the study and due to the inability to survey the entire group of children aged 7–13 years; the author decided to select a representative sample. Children aged 9, 11 and 13 years were included in the study.

An online questionnaire was used for the research, because this tool allows for stress-free answering of questions. The author uses stress-free to mean, firstly, it is a tool that allows the respondent to remain anonymous, and secondly, the respondent does not have to worry that for example, when collecting traditionally completed questionnaires, the researcher will remember the piece of paper or recognize the letters when verifying the answer. An online questionnaire allows more credibility of the answers for the people who conduct the survey. An online survey is also one of the fastest methods of collecting information from respondents. The questionnaires for all grades are the same, they do not differ in content. All the questions were properly matched to these three age groups, that is, they were neither complicated nor too long. Single-choice questions and one multiple-choice question were used in the online survey. Closed questions are best for children because they allow for easier processing of questions and answers, do not

require writing, and thus are less time-consuming and do not stress the child who does not know what to answer. Such questions, because they are simple and not complicated, do not require any training of the respondents. Even though closed-ended questions limit the spontaneity of the answers and are sometimes superficial, and do not allow for presenting an individual point of view, for children aged 9–13 years, they are the most appropriate form, as they provide an opportunity to investigate the phenomenon in its quantitative dimension.

The questionnaire contained an appropriate set of questions that were related to each other and divided into individual thematic parts:

1. Children's interest in the internet
2. Children's interest in social media
3. Children's communication online
4. Fear of exclusion
5. Sociodemographic questions.

In order to obtain correct conclusions from the research, it was necessary to create a categorization key in order to be able to analyze the data obtained in the course of the research. This key was based on the division of the internet survey content as follows:

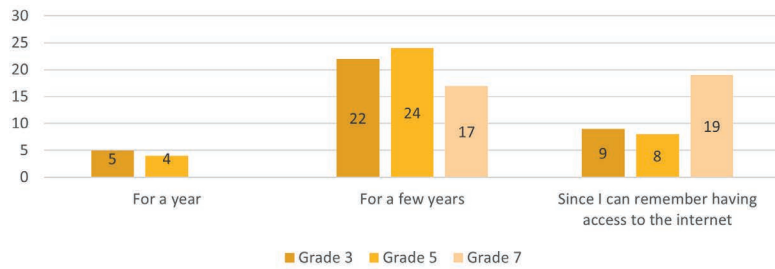
- children's contact with internet
- children's interest in internet
- children's contact with their peers
- children and the peer group.

## **CUMULATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS OF ALL PUPILS IN THE STUDY**

Students in grades 3 (9 years old), 5 (11 years old) and 7 (13 years old) at two primary schools participated in the study. The questionnaire was completed by 18 children from each of the six grade-groups (N=108) with a gender ratio of 55 girls and 53 boys.

To the first question whether children use the internet, only 2% of children (two girls from the 3rd grade) indicated that they do not use it. This means that not all children start their adventure with the internet in the preschool period.

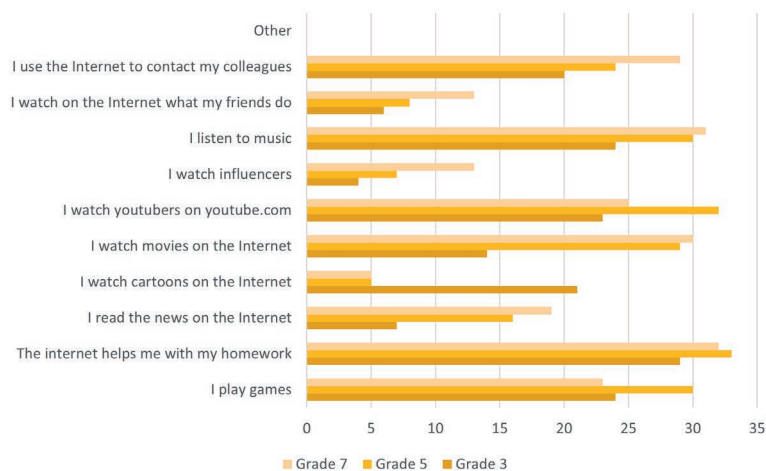
The answers to the second question differ from grade to grade. This is shown in the chart below.

**Figure 1.** Responses to the question „How long have you been using the internet?”.

Source: author's own research

Most 5th and 7th grade children use the internet for more than a year. Few children (3rd grade – 15%, 5th grade – 11%) indicated that they had been using the internet for a year. Most children have been using the internet for several years: 3rd grade 65%, 5th grade 62%, 7th grade 47%. On the other hand, 35% of the children have been using the internet for as long as they can remember – the largest group that marked this answer are children from the 7th grade (18%). There are 22 children from the 3rd grade who believe they have been using the internet for several years, which indicates that their contacts on the internet started at the latest at the age of seven, which means that they could have started even in preschool age. The use of the internet by children in the preschool period or earlier is also indicated by the proposed answer in the cafeteria „Since I remember I have access to the internet”, which was marked by 36 children.

The next question was about what the children do while using the internet (Figure 2).

**Figure 2.** Responses to the question „for what purpose do you use the internet?“

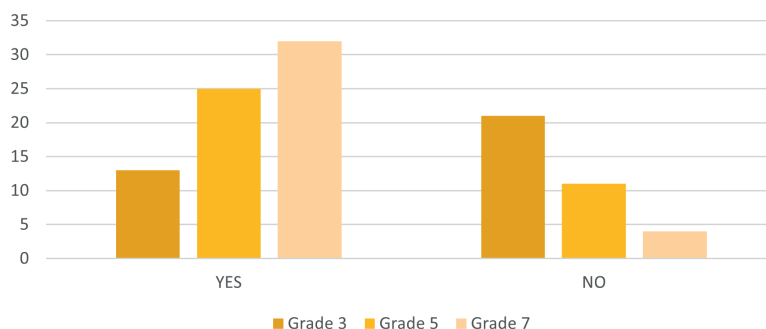
Source: author's own research

When analyzing the chart above, it can be noticed that the use of various opportunities offered by the internet increases with the age of children. Most often, the pupils indicated that they play games online (73%), the internet helps them with their homework (89%), they watch movies on the internet (69%), watch the activity of youtubers on [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) (75%), listen to music (80%) and that the internet is used by them to contact their peers (69%). Differences between children regarding the use of the internet occur, for example, in watching fairy tales: 9-year-olds 62%, 11-year-olds and 13-year-olds – 14% each. This means that the older the child is, the less interested in watching fairy tales – it results from the level of maturity of the child. On the other hand, the opposite tendency can be noticed, for example, in reading news on the internet: 9-year-olds (21%), 11-year-olds (44%), 13-year-olds (53%). This may be because younger children are not interested in serious matters yet, hence the differences in reading news and watching fairy tales between grades, but also may be due to the child's maturity – 3rd grade children may have a problem reading newspaper articles. The reverse is also the case of watching films by children: 3rd grade children watch online films much less often (41%) than 5th grade children (81%) and 7th grade children (83%). Also, the issue of tracking influencer activity may be that most 3rd grade children do not have accounts on social networks where influencers conduct their activities, therefore tracking influencer activity among 3rd grade pupils is less popular (12%) than among children, for example, in 7th grade (36%).



The next question in the survey concerned the use of social networking sites by children (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3.** Responses to the question „Do you have an account on a social network?”



Source: author's own research

Figure 3 is another graph that shows that the older the child is, the more he or she uses the social network. 38% of 3rd grade children, 69% of 5th grade children and 89% of 7th grade children use social networking sites. The frequency of using social networks by children is comparable in the 5th (76%) and 7th (75%) class and concerns the use of websites once a day, while in the 3rd class, 46% of pupils use websites once a day. This means that 5th and 7th grade children spend more time on social networks than 3rd grade children.

When asked whether their use of social networking sites is caused by their peers also using them, the majority of 3rd-grade children (54%) answered „Yes”, while 44% of respondents chose the same answer in the 5th grade, and 25% in the 7th grade. Here, too, it can be noticed that there is a downward trend, the older the child the pays less attention to the behaviour of its peers.

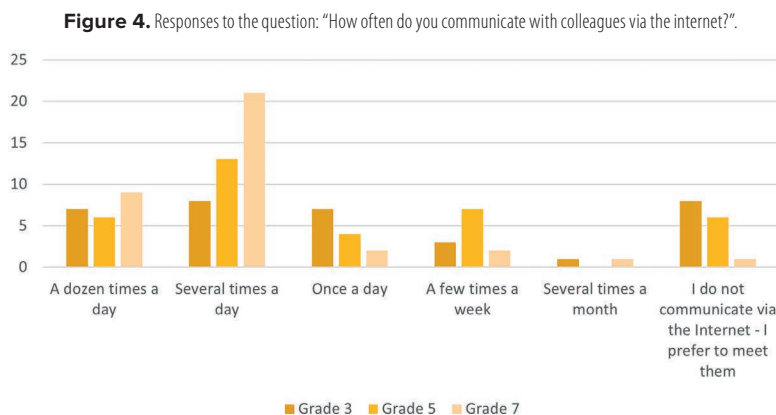
Another question in the survey was about posting photos on social media. In this case, an upward trend can be noticed: the older the child, the more often decides to publish their own photo, which is shown by the following results: in the 3rd grade – 16% of children publish their photos; in the 5th grade – 60% of children publish their photos; in the 7th grade – 62.5% of children decide to publish their own photos. The most common reason for adding photos on social media is the desire to be recognizable among friends (this answer was used by children of all three grades at least once) and for pleasure (this answer appeared at least once in the 5th and 7th grades). On the other hand, the part of the children who indicated that they did not add their photos to the social media argued the lack of parental

consent (3rd-grade children), protection of privacy or the fear that someone would write an offensive comment or that the photos would be used by 3rd parties. The children also indicated that they simply do not like to post their photos and do not like to take pictures of themselves, and that their friends do not need to know what is happening with them, the answer was also „no, because I do not need to conquer my ego with”, which may suggest that this person thinks that others are posting photos online because they want to be appreciated.

The eighth question concerned the influence of peers on children's use of social media, and more specifically, the children were asked if they thought that if they did not have an account on a social media site, their friends would stop liking them. In this case, most of the children (nine-year-olds – 69%, eleven-year-olds – 88%, thirteen-year-olds – 84%) replied that their friends would not stop liking them..

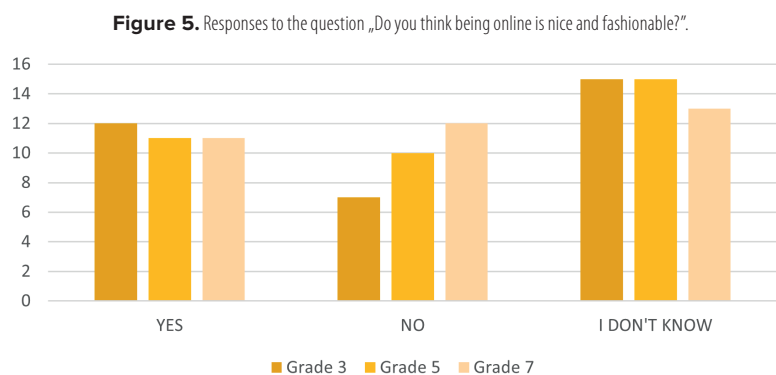
The next question concerned all children who declared in the first question that they use the internet. It was aimed at verifying whether the children prefer to contact their friends on the internet, or whether they prefer to meet them directly. In this case, also the majority of children (3rd grade children – 85%, 5th grade children – 78%, 7th grade children – 72%) marked the answer „No”, which indicates that the children prefer to meet their friends in the real world than in the virtual world.

Another question concerned the frequency of contact between children and their peers on social media. Figure 4 on the next page shows the obtained responses, which are very diverse. The responses of the 7th class indicate that children most often communicate over a dozen times a day (25%) and several times a day (58%), which indicates that children write online with their friends every day. Pupils from other grades also indicated most of the answers to „over a dozen times a day” (3rd class – 21%, 5th class – 17%) and „several times a day” (3rd class – 24%, 5th class – 36%). The last cafeteria response – „I do not communicate via the internet – I prefer to meet them” received the least votes from the 7th class (3%), while the responses of 3rd class (24%) and 5th (17%) were comparable. This may be a consequence of younger children who like to play outside, going to playgrounds, and older children grow out of this type of play and prefer to spend their time differently or have more responsibilities related to, for example, school or home.



Source: author's own research

The last question in the survey (see Figure 5) concerned the pupils' opinion whether they think that being online is fashionable.



Source: author's own research

Students in all three grades have a very divided opinion on the question asked. However, when it comes to comparing the pupils' answers, it can be stated that the answers are comparably distributed among themselves. For example, „Yes” was selected by 35% of 3rd grade children, 31% of 5th grade children and 31% of 7th grade children. It is interesting that the highest number of votes in all three grades was given to the neutral answer „I don't know”, which was marked by a total of 41% of children (3rd grade – 44%, 5th grade – 42%, 7th grade – 36%). On the other hand, the answer „No” was indicated by the least pupils from the 3rd class (21%), successively from the 5th class (28%), while the 7th class was indicated by 33%, which gives a 2% advantage to the answer selected by the 7th class children „Yes”. Such a discrepancy

in the answers may result from children having a problem with identifying their identity on the internet and therefore the obtained results are „fuzzy”.

## **CONCLUSIONS FROM THE SURVEY CONDUCTED AMONG CHILDREN OF 9, 11 AND 13 YEARS**

Summarizing the results of the research conducted in the form of an internet questionnaire in two primary schools, attention should be paid to the similarities and differences resulting from the different ages of children. Comparing the responses of children attending different grades is extremely important to get a complete picture of their online activity.

### **CHILDREN'S CONTACT WITH NEW MEDIA**

Most of the children participating in the survey declare that they use the internet (98% of children). This means that the internet is no stranger to them and they become users of internet already at preschool age (this is indicated by the responses of nine-year-old children that they have been using the internet for more than a year – for several years, as well as access to the internet as long as they remember, which may indicate that they had contact with new technologies as a few years old children), so often being 1st grade children (around 7 years old) they have no problem with using computers or smartphones. The frequency of using internet increases with the age of children, which was presented in the analysis of online surveys for the purposes of this study.

Children use the internet better with age, starting to watch cartoons on the [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) channel, and ending with watching videos and youtuber activity as well as setting up accounts on social media. As the youngest internet users, and thus – inexperienced users have low predispositions to search and choose the right content for themselves, similarly – their ability to recognize content intended for children and adults is quite low. Children in the 3rd grade use social media (38%), declaring that they use them at least once a day (46%). The older the child is, the more likely they are to use social media sites (example from the study: 5th grade children – 69%, 7th grade children – 89%). Children using social media usually cheat information about their age, because most websites require to be 13 years of age to open an account, due to inappropriate content that may be there. Therefore, 3rd and 5th grade children deal with content provided by a group of adult users. Unfortunately, in addition to inappropriate content (such as pornography)

on the web, there are people who can harm children – older people looking for contact with the youngest users. Therefore, parents and teachers should be vigilant and pay attention to what children do online, with whom they write, what websites they visit and what information they have access to. Also, the addition of their photos to the social media by children should be strictly controlled by their parents.

### CHILDREN'S INTEREST IN THE INTERNET

Children as the youngest internet users are characterized by a great interest in social media, and the increase in the frequency of using the internet with the age of the child is undeniable, because the child's contact with internet increases every year, which can be deduced from the analysis of the results of surveys regarding the frequency of using the internet by 3rd, 5th and 7th grade children.

The pupils most often pointed out that they use the internet because they play games, the internet is used to do their homework, they watch movies and cartoons on the internet, watch youtubers' activity on [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com), listen to music and that the internet is used by them to contact their friends.

Online entertainment is one of the most common reasons children use the internet. The variety of games offered by the internet is very large. Playing games has a significant impact on the human psyche, so parents should be mindful of what their children play and how much time they spend online. Another important element of entertainment is [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com), where children can watch cartoons, movies, youtubers and listen to songs. It should be noted that research shows that most children watching cartoons are 3rd grade children, and in the later years of development children more often focus on watching movies. Unfortunately, cartoons often have vulgar parts, so a child may not recognize that they are watching something that is not intended for them. Most of the children from all grades indicated that they watch YouTubers' activity on the internet. Youtubers are people who record videos on various topics and present their opinions and present their point of view and their worldview to users. They can have a significant impact on children as they grow up, and the content delivered online can influence the behaviour and thinking of children. Another form of entertainment is to track the activity of influencers, who may also have a negative impact on children, because there are influencers who often portray a pathological lifestyle in their materials and can teach children bad habits. Thanks to their popularity on the internet and a very high audience share of their activity, they can inspire trust in children, and thus – change the way they think,

including their behaviour. Videos on the internet can also have a negative impact on children as they grow up, as there are many videos on the internet with inappropriate content and pictures available for children. At the same time, not everything online is dangerous – children can learn thanks to educational videos, games and activities. They also have the opportunity to contact their friends and, if they are interested in science, they can find a lot of interesting and reliable information on topics that interest them. It should also be noted that children become very interested in internet very early, which can lead to problems related to internet addiction later.

Considering the above conclusions, it should be noted that guardians' control of the content received by children and how much time they spend online is crucial. It is necessary to supervise the received media messages, because children should not interact on the internet on their own, and if a minor recipient of internet reaches content that is not intended for them, the parent's intervention may be of great importance for the child's further development.

### CHILDREN'S CONTACT WITH THEIR PEERS

Over of children replied in the survey that they would rather meet their friends than contact them online (3rd grade children – 85%, 5th grade children – 78%, 7th grade children – 72%). A small group indicated that they prefer virtual contact, which does not confirm one of the methoses in this paper that children's growing interest in new media reduces the traditional communication with their peers. Yes, children like to use the web, they are interested in discovering the virtual world, but still appreciate face-to-face contacts. It should be noted that children, even though they prefer to spend time with friends in the real world than in the virtual world, maintain communicating via the internet. When asked how often they communicate with their friends, children did not give a clear answer. On the other hand, it can be stated that children are in contact on the internet with close friends from several to a dozen times a day. The difference in the frequency of contacting via the internet can be noticed at the level of grades – 3rd and 5th grade children, in addition to contacting several or a dozen times a day, they also selected the option „I do not communicate via the internet – I prefer to meet friends”, where this option is among 7th grade children only one person (3%) chose it. Summing up, it can be stated that despite the great and undisguised interest in internet, children participating in the survey are still eager to meet their colleagues, which is confirmed by the research carried out in this paper.

## CHILDREN AND THE PEER GROUP

Primary school is an important period in the life of every child, because it is then that their character, behaviour, attitudes and worldview are formed. Adolescence is also associated with experiencing anxiety among children, as well as with other difficulties that children have to deal with. Children want to feel appreciated and needed, which is related to the need for recognition. Children, when asked in the survey whether they use social media because their friends and colleagues use them, answered differently – the difference results from the age distribution. The study shows that the older the student, the less attention they pay to their peers, because most 3rd grade children (54%) answered „Yes”, while in the 5th grade they chose this option by 10% fewer children, and in the 7th grade only 25%. It can also be stated that the older the child, the lesser the need for peer recognition contributes to their greater use of social media sites. However, considering the 3rd class, the hypothesis assumed in the methodology of this work can be confirmed. It should also be noted that children are aware that the lack of an account on social media will not affect their relations with peers and that their friends will continue to like them. The children were also asked if being online was nice and fashionable, to which most children marked a neutral answer, which indicates indecision among children. On the other hand, the answer „Yes” came second, which may indicate that children use the internet to be close to friends and not be excluded from the group of friends (including access to various groups set up on Facebook).

## DISCUSSIONS

New media are becoming an integral part of every child's life, as they take up a significant part of their time thanks to the possibility of entertainment, but also online learning. Thanks to the possibility of using online games and watching cartoons and movies on the internet, in a way exclude traditional types of games that support the emotional development of children. Therefore, it is important that parents, legal guardians as well as educators take care of pupils and control children's behaviour on the internet and while playing with their peers. A child of adolescence needs to feel appreciated and noticed, needs to feel important and accepted among their peers. Being rejected by friends can be a traumatic experience for a child, so every parent should take into account the need for their child to adapt to new media, even

if they do not support such initiatives. This is important for the child's mental and emotional development.

It should be noted that the internet, despite the negative consequences, also has its good sides, such as help with learning, help with revealing passions, hobbies, entertainment that every child needs. In order to be able to reconcile a child's development with the obligation to protect him / her from harmful content, it is crucial to find a consensus that will prevent the child from becoming addicted to the internet, unpleasant situations on the internet, as well as exclusion by colleagues from the peer group, and at the same time the internet will be their additional entertainment, that will develop interests, passions, and help in learning and searching for reliable information and getting to know the world around the child. Other advantages of using the internet include learning foreign languages as well as Polish by learning new words and singing songs. It should be remembered that the judicious and skilful use of the above-mentioned thing can have a number of benefits, so media education at all ages is very important, especially in primary school, as most children entering the 1st grade are already exposed to new media and the internet. It is also important for caregivers to set boundaries regarding the time they spend playing online. It should be remembered that parental control is difficult in a situation where a child has their own devices that allow him to connect to the virtual world, therefore media education at school is an essential element of teaching children how to achieve positive results through using the internet. An important element of children's contact with the internet is the organization of children's free time so that the virtual world does not obscure important aspects of life, such as time spent with their peers in reality and with their family. It is important to maintain a very good contact with the child, so that he or she is aware that in the event of a disturbing situation, can always turn to the guardian or educator for help.

New media, according to P. Levinson's definitions, are media newer than new media, which a few years ago did not exist or did not have a significant impact on reality. Today they are present in everyone's life (Levinson 2010). Children are also becoming new users of social networks, blogs and podcasts. New media allows anyone to become authors, create blogs, posts, and it is also possible to interact with audience. Children know that their peers have the opportunity to comment on their posts, which is why they do not always decide to post their photos. New new media allow access to various content, the subject matter of which is not subject to any restrictions. It should be noted that new media open up many opportunities for users and are increasingly becoming an integral part of the lives of adults and children.



New new media is characterized by high availability, so each user can adapt their use to their needs.

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