

CHILDREN AS DIGITAL RIGHTS AGENTS



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INTRODUCTION

The timely and important conference theme:

Children's and Young Peoples' rights in the Digital Age

The rights to be heard, seen, protected and to develop and grow

This presentation provides a fragment argument



FOCUS – POINT OF DEPARTURE

Focus on child perspective in research during the past 25 years

In many respects, the research perspective on children and young people has also seen a shift towards the child as agent, as citizen (Reference to Livingstone 2002, 2009; Dahlgren 2007).

With increasing attention given to children's communication rights there is an acknowledgement that children's voices should be heard in all matters that affect them (reference to Hamelink 2008).

Perhaps less focus on children as agents, responsible, in control



FOCUS & RESEARCH QUESTION

Background for research question:

We need to focus more on the active role that children and adolescents play, according to age, skills and various capacities, in identifying, reflecting upon and acting according to opportunities and challenges in relation to digital media and digital rights (reference to Hartman et al 2007).



FOCUS & RESEARCH QUESTION

Research focus

- Children as peer-agents
- Children as opinion leaders
- Change / support to develop best practices & good examples

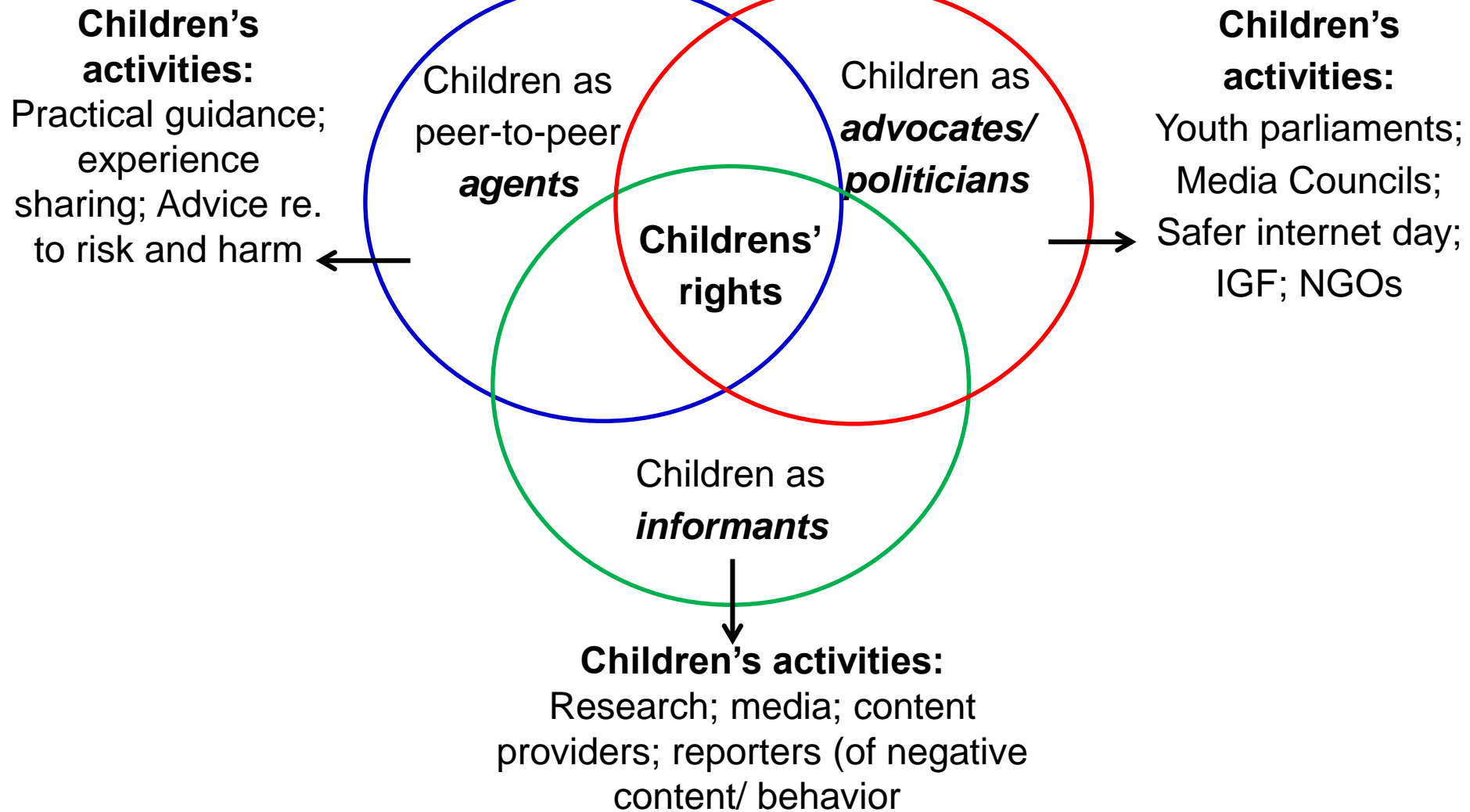
Question: *Do children operate as digital rights agents?*

How?

How can we support that?



MODEL – CHILDREN’S AGENCY





DATA

- EU Kids Online, survey 2010, 9-16 years old
all n=25,142, DK n=1,001
- Net Children Go Mobile, survey 2013, 9-16 years old
All n=3,500, DK n=500
Interviews 2014 / 11 individual, 6 groups, 10 parents, 2 teachers, 2 other adults

And inspiration from older adolescents

- Mobile Media, Mobile Youth 2014, 15-24 years old
Survey / n=1245
Interviews 2014 / 12 individual, 6 group



WHY IS IT INTERESTING & IMPORTANT?

Why is it important?

Insights from multiple perspectives to promote qualitative change

Through

- informed, engaged and involved children
- who learn from each other act and demonstrate that
- Children can *take* a role and are supported in doing it



THEORY - PEER SUPPORT

Support from peers is positively associated with online opportunities and digital literacy; especially for younger children, friends are often the main reason for taking up creative and interactive activities such as social media and blogging (Kalmus, von Feilitzen, & Siibak, 2012). The effects of peer mediation on online risky and harmful experiences are, instead, less clear. The EU Kids Online findings suggest that peer mediation is more likely to follow after negative experiences.

(Net Children Go Mobile final report p.81)



THEORY – PROCESSES OF CHANGE

Inspiration from a very different study:

P. Lazarsfeld, B. Berelson, H. Gaudet (1944): *The people's choice*

Their purpose was to discuss how to conduct social research &
What makes people shift attitudes and change behavior

Inspiration points:

- Face-to-face (personal) contact is most influential
(F2F is perhaps today equivalent to direct contact)
- Opinion leadership is important
- Complex society: variations in affiliations and their meaning and impact mean that the impact and processes of change are different in different contexts.



PEER SUPPORT – EU KIDS ONLINE

Table 58: Peers' active mediation of child's internet safety, according to child

% who say that their friends have ...	9-12 years		13-16 years		All
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
Helped you when something is difficult to do or find on the internet	57	59	66	71	64
Suggested ways to use the internet safely	39	41	47	47	44
Explained why some websites are good or bad	39	40	42	45	41
Suggested ways to behave towards other people online	33	35	39	42	37
Helped you in the past when something has bothered you on the internet	26	25	28	33	28
One or more of the above	68	69	77	79	73

QC336: Have your friends ever done any of these things?
(Multiple responses allowed)

Base: All children who use the internet.

Livingstone, s., Haddon,L., Görzig, A., and Ólafsson, K. (2011). ***Risks and safety on the internet. The perspective of European Children. Full Findings.*** LSE, London. EU Kids Online.

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/Home.aspx>



PEER SUPPORT – NET CHILDREN GO MOBILE

Table 60: Friends' active mediation of child's internet safety, by age and gender

%...	9-12 years		13-16 years		All
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	
Helped when something was difficult to do or find on the internet	60	53	71	78	66
Explained why some websites were good or bad	27	33	39	48	37
Suggested ways to use the internet safely	25	27	34	42	32
Suggested ways to behave towards other people online	21	29	31	44	32
Helped in the past when something bothered child on the internet	21	25	32	47	32
In general, talked about what to do if something on the internet ever bothered them	22	26	33	48	33

Q58: Have your friends ever done any of these things? Please say yes or no to each of the following...

Base: All children who use the internet.

Net Children Go Mobile

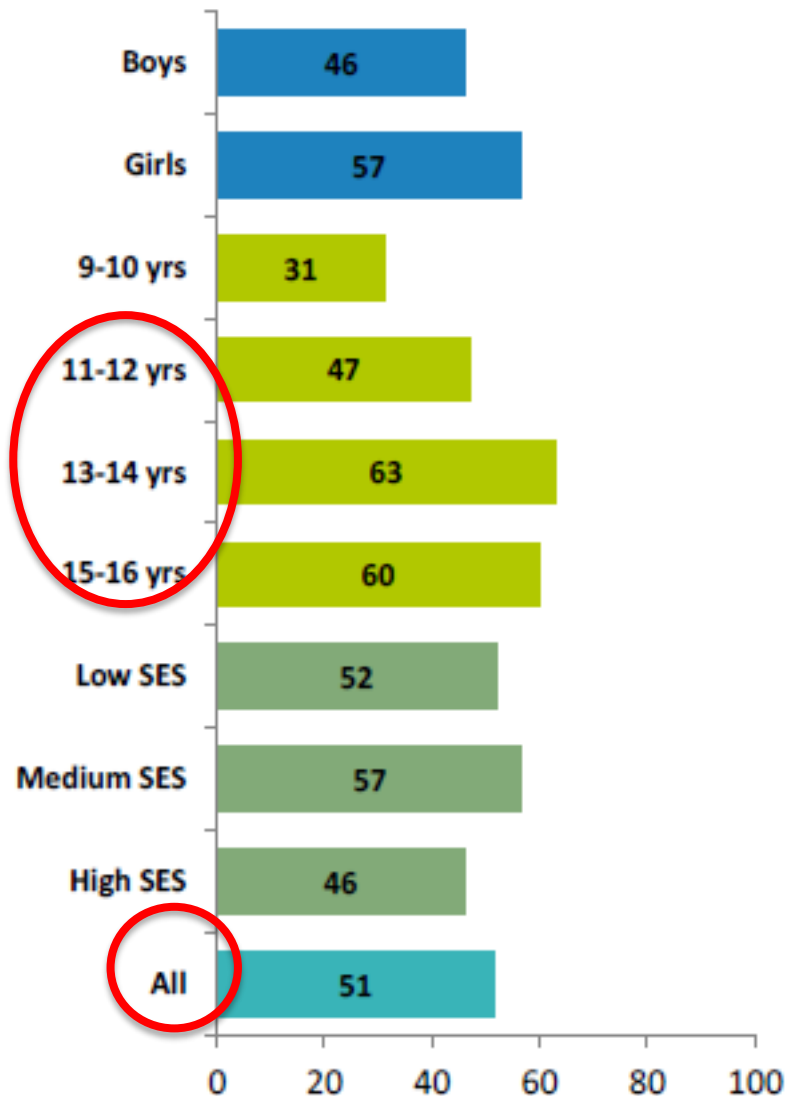
Final report may 2014 p.81

<http://netchildrengomobile.eu/reports/>



PEER SUPPORT – NET CHILDREN GO MOBILE

Figure 79: Friends' active mediation (%) of child's internet use, by gender, age and SES



Net Children Go Mobile

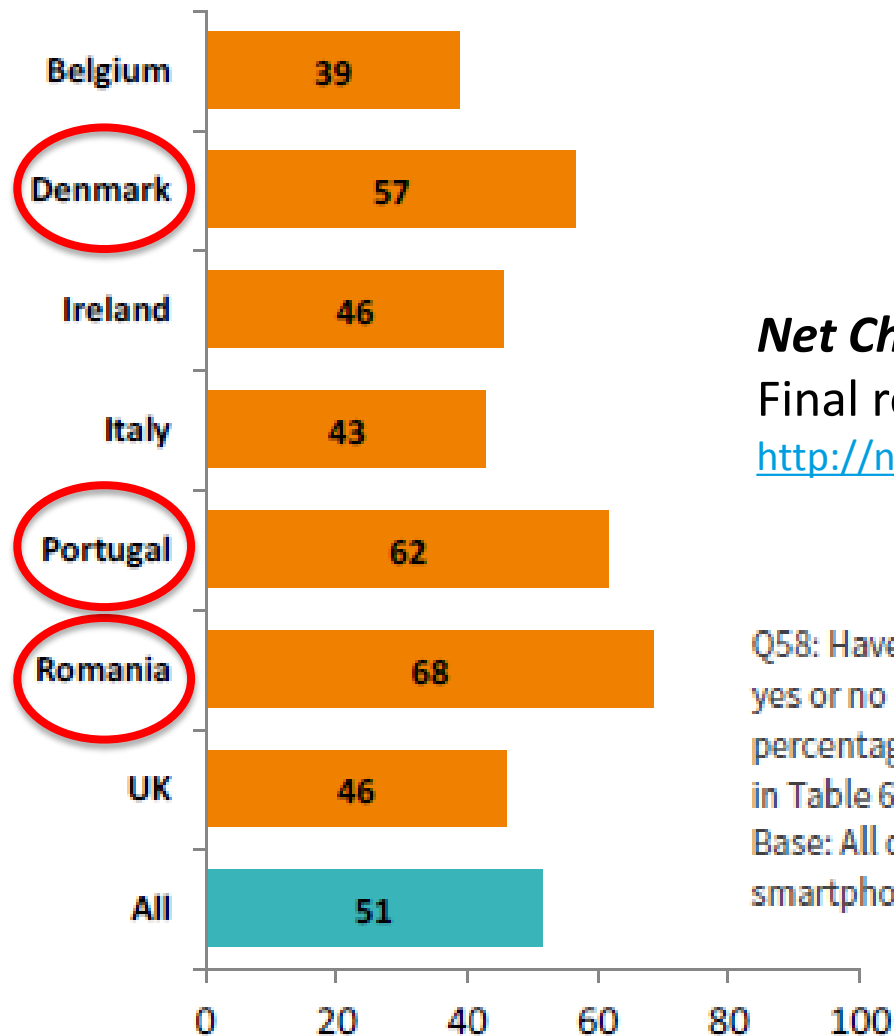
Final report may 2014 p.81

<http://netchildrengomobile.eu/reports/>

Q58: Have your friends ever done any of these things? Please say yes or no to each of the following... The graph shows the percentage of children who say 'yes' to at least two of the items in Table 60.

Base: All children who own or have for their own use a smartphone.

Figure 80: Friends' active mediation (%) of child's internet use, by country



Net Children Go Mobile

Final report may 2014 p.81

<http://netchildrengomobile.eu/reports/>

Q58: Have your friends ever done any of these things? Please say yes or no to each of the following... The graph shows the percentage of children who say 'yes' to at least two of the items in Table 60.

Base: All children who own or have for their own use a smartphone.



THE CHILDREN'S VOICE 1

Discussing norms + younger siblings' behavior:

Some don't like that you take pictures of one another and then post them to everyone else. Så we have talked about that, like. And we agreed, that we simply do not want it. So, you should probably not post it on MyStory and something like that.

About three younger siblings who she finds spend too much time on computer games:

Because, it is not that healthy again, just sitting and ... because they do not have as much homework as I do. So, they do not have much else to do, so to say.

Andrea, girl, 14 years old



THE CHILDREN'S VOICE 2

Being in control – but still friendly:

You know, I reply when I feel like it. And then of course someone will do like “why don’t you reply?” exclamation mark, exclamation mark, exclamation mark.

Then sometimes I write “I also have other things to do”, or, “I am just relaxing a bit...”

Sebastian, boy, 12 years old



THE CHILDREN'S VOICE 3

Rules, best example, and personal investment:

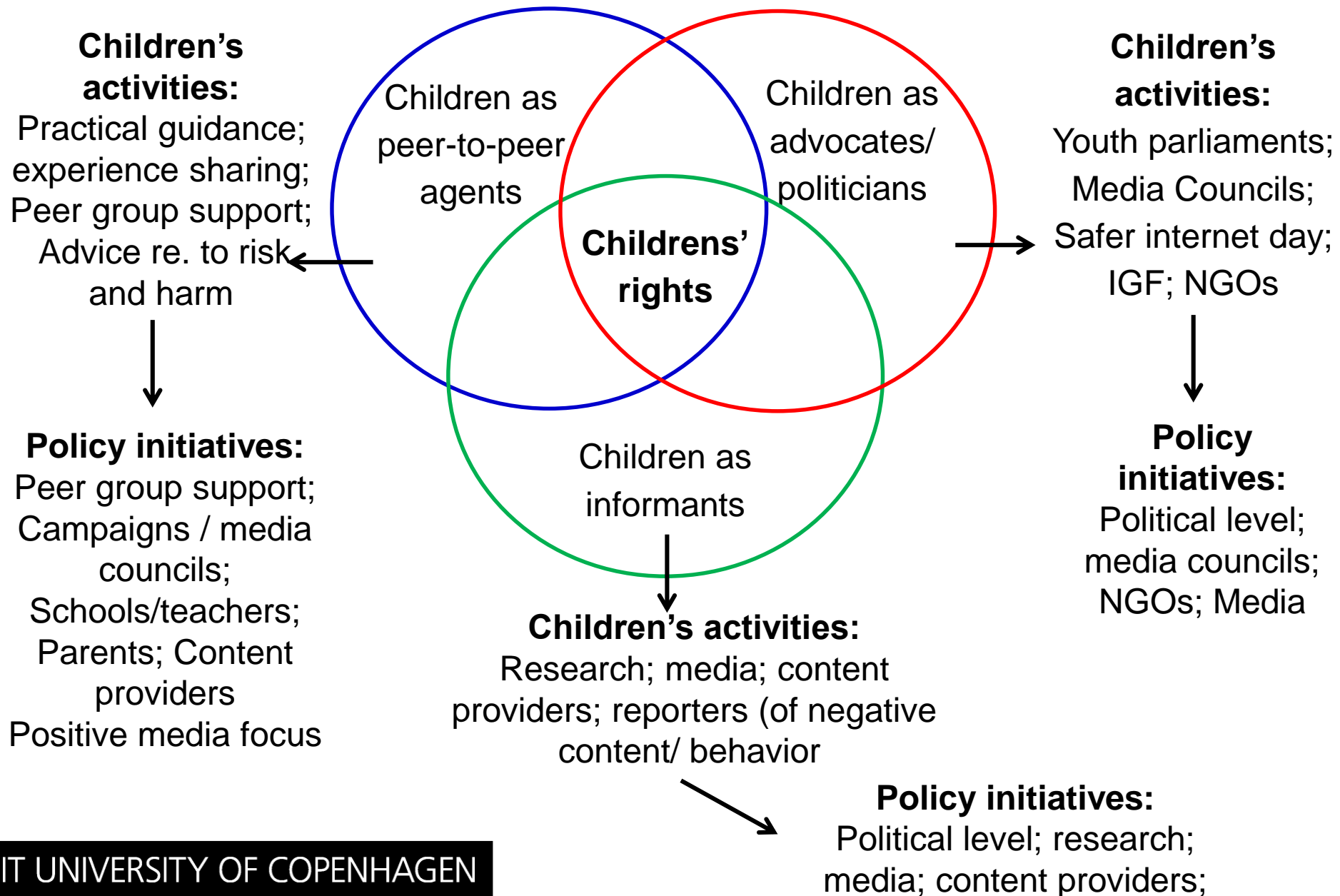
I find that everyone should abide by the rules. You must show one hundred percent respect towards other people, when you write to them. You cannot write all kinds of ridiculously stupid things. And, for your own sake, you shouldn't write anything that can be used against you. Well, so ...

My best friend's father was just told that he has incurable cancer. So my friend is not doing so well. So, I talk to him, also on the phone. I don't do it via messages because, there you cannot really express how you feel. So then I call him and sometimes we have some rather lengthy conversations.

Emil, boy, 15 years old:



5. CONCLUSION – SUPPORT STRATEGIES





REFERENCES

Net Children Go Mobile publications:

<http://netchildrengomobile.eu/reports/>

EU Kids Online publications:

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/media@lse/research/EUKidsOnline/Home.aspx>

Vincent, Jane (2015): **Mobile Opportunities. Exploring positive mobile media opportunities for European children**

- Children as Advisors
- Children as Problem Solvers
- Children as Explorers
- Children as Sharers

<http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/61015/>

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