

## **Children experiencing negative incidents on Facebook. Analysis of risk and harm.**

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The Internet social networking sites (SNS) have become even more common today. In a sample of 1035 Slovak children aged between 11-18, 86,5% has a profile on Facebook. That makes 895 children whose data were analyzed for experiencing the contact risk and harm on Facebook.

The online activities bring opportunities and risks for children, often hand in hand. Yet, the exposure to online risks does not necessarily result in harm; often children do not feel bothered afterwards (Livingstone et al., 2011). Coping strategies and self-efficacy help children deal with online risks (Vandoninck et al., 2012). More experienced and skilled Internet users benefit more from online opportunities, but also encounter more risks (Sonk & deHaan, 2012; Livingstone & Haddon, 2009, Livingstone & Helsper, 2010). However, more self-reported Internet skills do not contribute to variance of harm and rather small variance of measure of harm was explained by demographics, Internet experience and skills, suggesting the urge to examine psychological factors and context of the Internet use (Sonk & deHaan, 2012). Research focused on specific risks and types of online activities is also needed (Vandoninck et al., 2012). SNS were proved to have an influence on the adolescent self-esteem by frequency and polarity of peers' feedback (Valkenburg et al., 2006). In early adolescence self-esteem depends a lot on peers' approval (Harter, 1999) so opportunities that Facebook offers to children are very attractive but risks are very jeopardizing. Self-esteem may be considered as a result of one's identity approval and at the same time as a protective source when approval is unsatisfactory (Cast & Burke, 2002). It was proved that children who use SNS encounter more online risks than those who do not and that the majority of cyberbullied children were bullied on SNS too (Staksrud et al., 2012). Bullying migrates from offline to online (and vice versa) and also between the role of a victim and perpetrator (Livingstone et al., 2011). In comparison with other online risks, cyberbullying provokes most harm; majority (77%) of children tell somebody about it (Lampert & Donoso, 2012), but rarely to their parents (Gregussová et al., 2010). We emphasize that not all negative Facebook phenomena do youngsters interpret as bothering. If children do not feel threatened, they more likely react indifferently (Staksrud & Livingstone, 2009). We suggest that mainly frequent users got resilient to negative Facebook phenomena and that social support (I told parents/ teachers/ friends about what happened), anxiousness and self-esteem would matter when explaining the measure of harm.

In the proposed paper we analyze the difference between those young Facebook users experiencing potentially harmful negative incidents on Facebook (15 items scale, e.g., Someone wrote nasty comments on my wall, Someone corrupted and misused my profile) and those not experiencing any. We suggest that negative Facebook incidents are significantly linked with lower self-esteem, higher anxiousness, dissatisfaction in peer relationships and also with cyberbullying and bullying.

Negative Facebook incidents are rather common among Slovak Facebook users - 64% of young Facebook users experienced at least one of the negative Facebook incidents though 60,6% of them do not consider such incidents to be bothering at all. The extent of harm was measured as index counted from intensity and duration of being bothered (feeling uncomfortable or upset) after such incident.

Children who experience negative Facebook incidents are older, spend significantly more time on the Internet, using Facebook and have significantly more Facebook instrumental skills. They are more experienced Internet and Facebook users though significantly lower in self-esteem, more anxious and less content with their offline peer relationships, which may be both the cause and result of experiencing negative phenomena. In harmony with the bullying migration hypothesis, children experiencing a contact risk on Facebook are those who experience significantly more bullying via the Internet, via mobile phones and also offline, and they significantly more often conduct such negative Facebook incidents to others.

Linear regression analysis was used to identify the significant predictors of variance of measure of harm perceived by 573 children experiencing some negative Facebook incident(s). The time spent online, time spent on Facebook, sum of Facebook instrumental skills neither their application to block/report/expel the perpetrator do not predict the variance of measure of harm significantly; nor does the level of one's self-esteem or satisfaction with peers' relationships. The only significant predictors of variance of harm when experiencing negative incident(s) on Facebook are the extent of negative incident(s), measure of victim's anxiousness and not/telling parents about what happened.

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