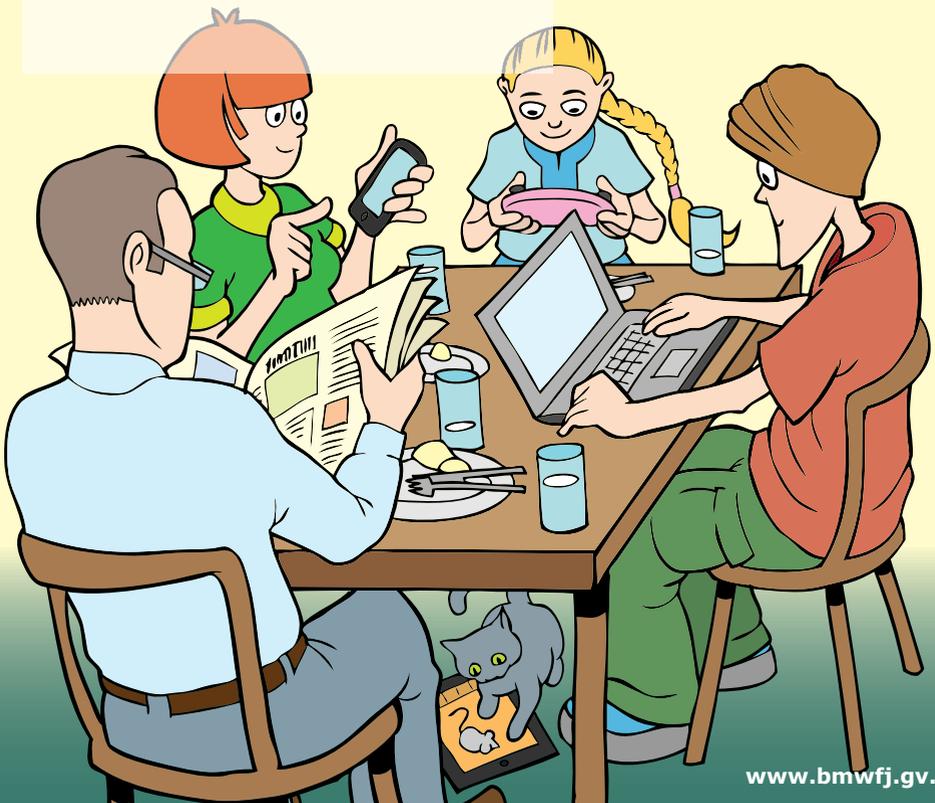


Media in the Family

Advice for Parents



IMPRINT

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Preface

Digital media have become part and parcel of everyday life. Be it at the workplace, at school, or at home – the use of the internet, smartphones, and so on simply comes with the territory. This is especially true for children and young people who quite naturally grow up with and handle “new” media. For parents, however, it is not always easy to stay up to date. For many parents, rapid technological developments lead to worry and concern:

- What exactly is my child doing?
- What can or should I control?
- When do I have to “interfere” or set boundaries?
- What are the legal requirements?

This guidebook offers parents tangible help with responding confidently to common situations and supporting their children in the best possible way when they use media. Based on twelve case studies – ranging from TV to Facebook – current aspects of media use by children are examined in a way that is easy to understand. Pick and choose whatever applies to you and your children right now!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Reinhold Mitterlehner'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a small black dot.

Dr. Reinhold Mitterlehner
Federal Minister of Economy,
Family and Youth

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MEDIA VERSUS FAMILY LIFE - A CONSTANT COMPETITION

MEDIA IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN DINNER

Children's contact with digital media starts earlier and earlier; thanks to smart phones and tablet computers, even babies may be getting involved. Screens of any kind, games and computers **are incredibly fascinating to children and teenagers**. While for younger children it is more about consuming and playing, when they get older it is also about communicating and interacting with friends. Even though content and programs change, media continues to draw a lot of attention in each phase of life. Sometimes **this may affect family life**. Maybe dinner cannot begin because one child needs to finish a TV show, and another has not yet reached a point in their game where they can save. A third child absolutely has to finish the chapter in their book. And even parents are not safe from temptation: Maybe work e-mails have to be answered or a client's call needs to be taken. Media and family life are in constant competition. No one is exempt, and **conflict is bound to occur**. This is true even though each individual request may be completely justified - at least from the viewpoint of the person in question. The client's call is long awaited, the TV show is not coming on again, and the game is going so well just now...

For family life, rules are a good way to avoid conflict. To make them easier to follow, these rules and possible consequences should be developed by all family members together. But remember: All rules need occasional exceptions.

DEALING WITH PARENTING CHALLENGES

For parents, digital media is more than competition; it presents challenges for day-to-day parenting. Many **parents feel that they "can't keep up"**, that they are not up to date when it comes to the latest technological developments. This concern oftentimes leads to an urge to control their children: Filters and locks shall protect them from "harmful" and age inappropriate content. **Parents can gain knowledge** and stay up to date by, for example, joining a social network and trying it out by contacting their own friends. Or they can try out the latest computer games together with their children and let their children enjoy being "better than the parents". Or they can catch up **on current dangers on the internet** (for

Introduction

example, by going to **www.saferinternet.at**), and make sure that their own computer is always up to date when it comes to **antivirus software** and **security updates**.

WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY?

When it comes to media use by their children, many parents wonder about the legal situation: What is illegal? What obligations do I have as a parent? What are possible consequences?

Many laws can be relevant when it comes to media use, ranging from **internet privacy and data protection** to **copyright laws**. In addition, the Austrian legislature provides special protections for minors (in the form of "Jugenschutz", or **youth protection laws**). Their purpose is to protect young people from dangers to their physical, intellectual and psychological development. Thus, when it comes to media, exposing a child to pornography, for example, is an offence. We all know, however, that in practice it may not be possible to enforce youth protection laws on the internet.

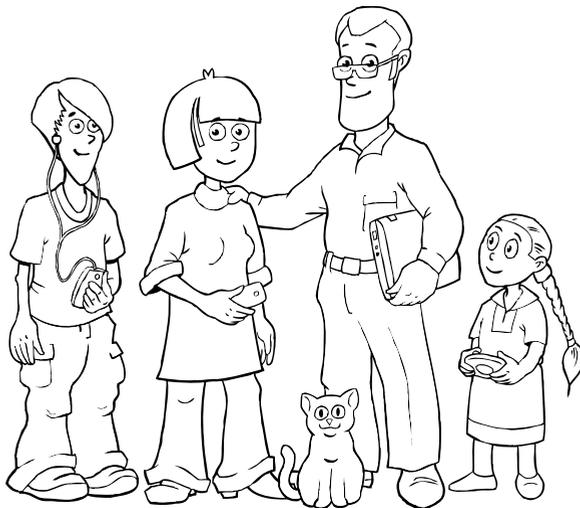
Up until their 14th birthday, children who break the law may not be criminally punished in Austria. Their parents, however, do have parental responsibility and can be held responsible for their children's offenses. It is impossible to make blanket statements as to how far this **parental responsibility** goes. In the end, as with many legal questions, it will depend on the circumstances and ultimately on a judge's decision.

Clearly different countries have different legislation, and understanding child and parental obligations is important.

EMPOWERING CHILDREN AND LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER

The truth is that technological solutions cannot guarantee the protection of our children from the risks of media use. We can, however, support them in developing skills to better handle problematic situations; increasing their resilience. The key word is digital literacy: That is the competency to use media deliberately, to handle media responsibly, and to meet one's own and other people's needs with the help of media without causing harm to oneself or others. All these skills are part of media competency, and they are not always easy to master. **Parents not only serve as powerful role models, they are also an important resource for their children.** But above all, we need to support our children in becoming competent themselves. This can often be accomplished by establishing **open communication between parents and children** about everyone's media use. Even "deals", such as parents being taught technical skills in exchange for children being shown how to critically assess media may help. Learning with and from one another is the name of the game.

Note: Whenever we speak of parents in this guidebook, naturally, we mean to include parents, carers and even grandparents.



1. EVERYTHING FACEBOOK

10-year old Letitia wants to sign up on Facebook. Her parents disapprove, but eventually they notice that even their veto cannot prevent it. They wonder what is better: to prohibit Facebook or to support it? They decide to create a Facebook profile together with their daughter. Two months later, Letitia found out that Facebook was not that interesting for her and stopped using it.

Tips

- **Take an interest in your child's daily life.** Digital media and platforms, like Facebook, are a part of it. Over dinner, ask your kids what's new on Facebook. Try the platform yourself.
- **Friending your child on Facebook?** Consider carefully if you want to be "friends" with your child on Facebook. If your child is young, this can be advantageous since it allows you to "monitor" their activities. However, when your child decides at some point to "unfriend" you, you should accept that. After all, in real life, too, a parent's role is different from that of a friend.
- **Establish rules.** Regularly discuss what your child may publish online and what they may not (for example, no mention of telephone numbers, address, school, etc.); i.e. what is personal information. Postings that may have negative consequences are not permitted (for example, insulting teachers or classmates, demeaning photos, videos of party excesses, etc.). Anything that is published online can spread rapidly and is almost impossible to remove.
- **Protect their privacy.** If you believe that your child may not be able to appreciate the consequences of their own behaviour, support them with the following advice:
 - Instead of the last name, a middle name can be given when signing up for social networks.

- Review the privacy settings together. Only real “friends” should be able to see your child’s own activities.
- Make sure that your child’s age on Facebook is under 18. That way, more secure standard settings for minors will apply.
- Report incidents. If your child is upset by something that happened on the net (harassment, insults, threats, inappropriate content, etc.), the incident should always be reported to the provider, for example Facebook. Do not judge your child! If nothing has happened after a few days, contact the internet ombudsman (www.ombudsmann.at).

LEGAL ISSUES:

- According to Facebook’s terms of use (as of August 2012), registration is restricted to those 13 years and older. This is mainly due to current online privacy laws in the United States (where Facebook is based), which do not allow companies to collect personal information from persons under 13 for commercial use.
- There is no reason to assume that Facebook as a medium is “harmful” to young people according to the Austrian youth protection law and must therefore be prohibited. Instead, it is up to us parents to decide how we want to handle Facebook use in our families.
- Generally, parents have a legal responsibility to monitor their kids. However, there are no established rules stating to what extent parents have to monitor their kids’ online activities. In any case, the extent of supervision should be usual and customary.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE WEB:

■ www.saferinternet.at/leitfaden

Go here for simple step-by-step instructions to adjusting the privacy settings in the most popular social networks (there is also an English-language "Facebook-Check").

■ www.facebook.com/safety/groups/parents

This site contains official safety information by Facebook for parents.

■ www.rataufdraht.at

Help with problems on or with Facebook can be found at "147 Rat auf Draht".

■ www.ombudsmann.at

The internet ombudsman can help with removing denigrating content from the web.

2. COUCH POTATO KIDS

5-year old Fabian likes nothing more than watching TV. It starts in the morning, even before he eats breakfast and gets dressed. And when he comes home from kindergarten, he is right back at it. If someone tries to turn off the TV or to change the program, trouble ensues.

Tips

- **Establish rules.** Clear boundaries are important for children and have to be observed by everyone (shows, times, breaks, etc.).
- **Don't let your child watch TV out of boredom.** Instead, purposely choose shows together with your child and only turn on the TV once they are about to start. Always watch a show to the end and put a halt to disruptive channel-surfing (remove the remote).
- **Be a role model.** Kids often imitate their parent's behaviour. Make sure to follow your children's rules yourself as well (for example, don't watch TV out of boredom).
- **Establish family times.** No TV during dinner. No food while watching TV.
- **Get moving from time to time.** Even just jumping on the sofa or doing ten quick squats... You'll see how much fun this can be together!
- **Offer alternatives.** Don't let TV become your child's most faithful leisure companion. Instead, take your child on an exciting trip or encourage him or her to meet with friends.
- **Bring the heroes home.** Most kids have a favourite "hero" or "heroine". Encourage your child to not only admire them on screen but to bring them home into their own bedroom. Bedding is just the beginning – your child can draw pictures and craft objects, invent his or her own stories, record mini-movies on a mobile phone camera and so on.

Television

BROCHURES:

- **“Ich will jetzt fernsehen”** (I want to watch TV now), for parents of preschoolers and grade-schoolers, published by the Salzburger Gebietskrankenkasse (Salzburg Regional Public Health Insurance). www.sgkk.at
- **“Mit Kindern über das Fernsehen reden”** (Talking with kids about TV), published by Suchtprävention Vorarlberg, with tips for parents. www.supro.at



FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE WEB:

■ www.schau-hin.info

This website by the German Ministry of Family Affairs provides guidance for the world of digital media as well as proven tips for parents and caretakers.

■ www.flimmo.de

This site contains information for parents about programs on German TV stations that may interest kids up to 13 years of age.

■ okidoki.orf.at

Kid's TV on ORF.

■ www.kika.de

German Kid's Channel.

■ www tivi.de

Children's programming on ZDF.

3. MOBILE PHONES ... ALWAYS A TOPIC

13-year old Valentina is supposed to pay her mobile phone bill with her allowance. But somehow that never seems to work out. There is never enough money - even though a year ago, Valentina and her parents switched from an expensive prepaid mobile service to a cheaper contract phone. But now, the 2,000 free text messages are not enough and Valentina desperately wants a smart phone, so she can play on her phone like her friends. Facebook should also work better on the new phone than it does on her old one.

Tips

- **Agree on the rules.** What happens if the charges exceed a certain limit? When will a new phone be bought? What are the consequences if rules are broken? Make long-term agreements.
- **Don't give in too often.** The rules are the foundation, but parents have to adhere to them, too. Bear your kids' complaints and stay consistent!
- **Know your mobile phone plan.** Together with your child, examine how much different activities cost (calling, texting, mobile internet, apps, etc.). With your plan, is it better to write several text messages instead of calling? Are in-app purchases really necessary? Is there an app that could take the place of texting and save money? Revisit these questions regularly together with your child.
- **Block certain applications.** Make use of options to block certain services or applications either through your mobile phone provider (for example, premium charged content, mobile internet, or payment functions) or on the phone directly (for example, in-app purchases, data roaming, mobile internet). Keep passwords, such as those to the app store, to yourself.

- **Dispute mobile phone charges.** If you receive a questionable mobile phone bill, complain in writing to your mobile phone provider and simultaneously lodge a complaint with the RTR (www.rtr.at). The internet ombudsman (www.ombudsmann.at) will also help you with questions or problems.



SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE:

- **www.rtr.at**

The conciliation body of the Austrian Regulatory Authority for Broadcasting and Telecommunications (Schlichtungsstelle der RTR) helps with disputes about mobile phone bills.

Costs & mobile phone wishes

BROCHURES:

- Parent guide “**Handy und Smartphone sicher nutzen**” (Using mobile phones and smart phones safely), published by the initiative Saferinternet.at. **www.saferinternet.at**
- Information sheet about safe use of applications by the internet ombudsman. **www.ombudsmann.at/apps**

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE WEB:

- **www.handywissen.at**
Portal with information on using mobile phones safely.
- **<http://handy.arbeiterkammer.at>**
Calculator for comparing different mobile phone plans (“Tarifrechner”).

4. HOW TO SPEAK ABOUT "IT"?

Recently, 11-year old Nico's mother wanted to bring her son his mobile phone as he was lying on the sofa with a sprained ankle. On her way, she wanted to briefly look something up on the internet, but then she nearly dropped the phone: There they were – actual porn sites, opened by her son... Her son! Who still seemed so innocent! Now she was really distressed.

Tips

- **Porn is fake.** Talk about the fact that porn does not depict reality. Draw a comparison with action movies. There, too, the effects are achieved with actors and technical tricks.
- **Everyone knows about it!** Relax: It is very likely that just about every boy age 12 has seen porn at one point – at least, that's what studies say. However, that doesn't have to mean that your child watches it regularly.
- **Suggest good sources of information.** Children and teenagers have a great need for good sex education resources. Discuss with your child which sources of information about "sexuality" are recommended on the internet. Also, provide your child with options for age-appropriate resources outside of the internet, such as brochures or books.

LEGAL ISSUES:

- According to the Austrian youth protection law, pornography is considered "jugendgefährdend" ("**harmful to young persons**"). **As soon as parents find out** that their children have downloaded prohibited materials onto their phones or computers, they have to **delete them or have them deleted**. Parents, however, are not obliged to continuously monitor their kid's phones for harmful data.

Pornography

HELP AND GUIDANCE:

■ www.rataufdraht.at

“Rat auf Draht” is a free, anonymous 24-hour hotline for children, young people and their caregivers and can be reached under the phone number 147 (no prefix).

■ www.firstlove.at

Advice centre for young people with general information.

■ www.maedchensprechstunde.info

This is an initiative of the Austrian gynaecologists with advice and information.

■ www.feelok.at

An internet-based intervention program for adolescents, originally from Switzerland.

■ www.oesterreichisches-jugendportal.at

This site offers a comprehensive link list compiled by the Austrian Jugendinfos (Youth Information Centres), including amongst other topics “Liebe und Sexualität” (Love and sexuality).

■ www.herzklopfen.or.at

This service offers online and telephone counselling every Saturday afternoon.

■ www.mona-net.at

This site offers online advice and counselling specifically for girls.

BROCHURES:

■ “Love, Sex und so ...” – (Love, Sex and so on) – Sex education for adolescents published by the BMWFJ. www.bmwfj.gv.at

■ Parent guide “Sexualität & Internet” (Sexuality & the internet) by the initiative Saferinternet.at. www.saferinternet.at

■ Teaching material “Ganz schön intim” (Pretty intimate) for elementary schools. www.selbstlaut.org

■ “Let’s talk Porno” – Work material for schools by the initiative Klicksafe. www.klicksafe.de

The fact is:

- The more basic knowledge there is about sexuality,
- The older the child,
- The more positive a child's relationship with his/her own body and emotions,
- The better a child has learned to handle media,
- The larger the number of professional resources about sexuality that are permitted and offered,

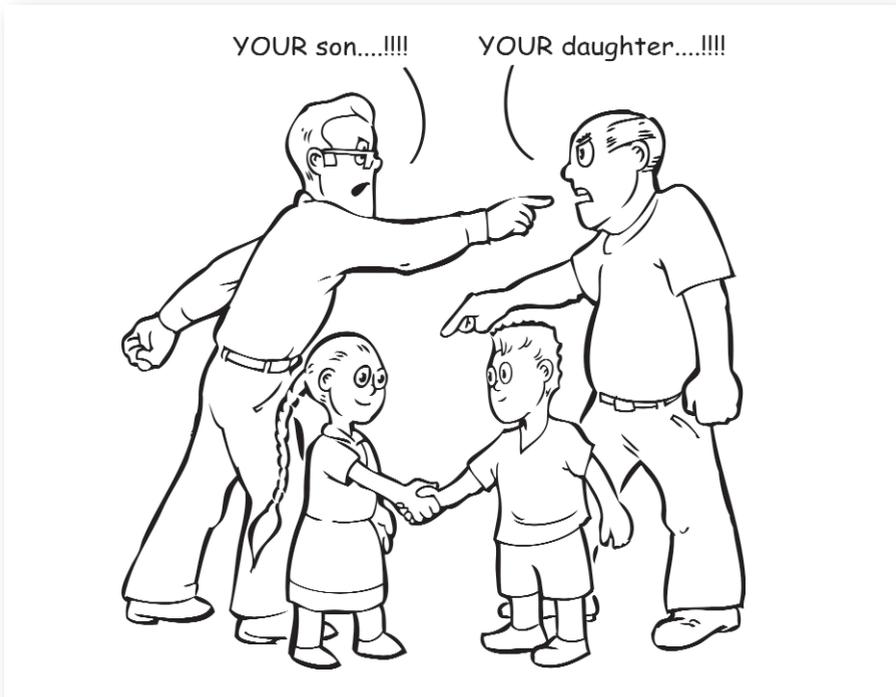
... the less a child will be hindered in his/her sexual development by the consumption of pornography!

5. JUST KIDDING!

13-year old Tanja took a photo of Anna in a really stupid situation. Yes, somehow Tanja knows that she shouldn't have done that, but the picture is just too great! When she puts it up on Facebook without her friend's consent, Anna is really mad. She demands that Tanja take down the picture right away. But Tanja doesn't want to. Anna then shows the picture to her parents and asks them for help.

Tips

- **Get rid of embarrassing photos.** Help your child without overreacting. Report content to the website and request its removal. If that doesn't help, the internet ombudsman can lend support (www.ombudsmann.at).
- **Point out consequences.** Talk with your child about the consequences that can be associated with problematic postings (harassment, being victimised yourself, misuse of photos, becoming liable to prosecution, etc.). And don't forget: On the internet, no one is anonymous!
- **Respect your child's opinion.** Accept when your child does not want to be photographed, starting from an early age. Even if they complain later that they are never in any pictures!
- **Always ask.** Remind your child that they always need to ask before taking a picture of someone else and before publishing it.
- **Editing photos?** It's fun! However, once in a while consider together with your child at what point a photo edit has created an "embarrassing picture".



LEGAL ISSUES:

- **The right to one's own image** (Urheberrecht § 78/Austrian copyright law § 78) protects people from unfavourable (embarrassing) pictures. It stipulates that the person who posted it has to remove such pictures upon request. Generally, one always has to ask the depicted persons before publishing a picture on the internet!
- According to Austrian criminal law (Strafgesetz), **libel, insults, defamation and damage to one's business reputation** (Kreditschädigung) are punishable offences, even if they happen on the internet. The same rules apply, whether on the internet or in "real" life. Starting at 14 years of age, adolescents can be prosecuted for their own actions; they have reached the age of criminal responsibility.
- Generally, parents have a legal responsibility to monitor their kids. However, there are no established rules stating to what extent parents have to monitor their kids' online activities. In any case, the extent of supervision should be usual and customary.

Defamation

HELP AND GUIDANCE:

■ www.rataufdraht.at

“Rat auf Draht” is a free, anonymous 24-hour hotline for children, young people and their caregivers and can be reached under the phone number 147 (no prefix).

■ www.kija.at

This site has information about special offers by the offices of the Ombudsmen for Children and Young People (Kinder- und Jugendanwaltschaften Österreichs) in the Austrian states.

■ www.familienberatung.gv.at

Throughout Austria, there are family counselling centres that will assist you with parenting issues. Information and addresses can be found on this website under the menu item “Beratungsstellen”.

BROCHURES:

■ **“Aktiv gegen Cyber-Mobbing”** (Active against cyber mobbing) teaching material published by Saferinternet.at, with general information and information sheets for pupils. www.saferinternet.at

■ Parent guide **“Handy und Smartphone sicher nutzen”** (Using mobile phones and smart phones safely) – published by the initiative Saferinternet.at. www.saferinternet.at

■ **“Cyber-Bullying”** – a compact brochure for young people, published by the Jugendinfo für Bremen und Bremerhaven. It can be found under the menu item “Cyberbullying”. www.jugendinfo.de

6. WHEN YOU JUST CAN'T TURN IT OFF!

16-year old Manuel plays video games day and night. That's at least how it seems to his parents. Ok, from time to time he goes to school (most of the time, actually), and Saturday nights he still goes to meet his friends. But apart from that: Nothing but playing and playing. His room is dark, his headphones have become a permanent feature, and it is the rare occasion on which he joins his parents for dinner.

Tips

- **Look out for 'telltale' signs.** Consider: Could the "addicted" behaviour of your child be a sign for a crisis or massive problem? Is it a red flag for entirely different areas of life that only come into view after the withdrawal into the game?
- **Create alternatives.** Even if your (older) child may not engage as much with you anymore, you are still showing your interest by searching for alternatives to the game, possibly together with your child.
- **Show interest.** Let your child explain the games to you and try them out together. Acknowledge the feats your child accomplishes while playing, and tell him or her. After all, if your child scored a goal at the soccer tournament, you'd cheer him or her on, too... 😊
- **Compare.** Would you find it equally worrying if your child read or played sports to the same extent that he/she is playing online?
- **Get help.** If, as a parent, you feel overwhelmed by the situation: Look for support, for example by contacting a family advice centre.
- **Addiction is a medical condition,** and without help, it is hard for those affected to get better. But not every problematic behaviour of your child means that they are addicted. The medical diagnosis can only be made by professionals – get help from that direction!
- **It can all be very normal.** At some point, every child starts to more or less turn away from his or her parents and finds other activities to be more interesting and exciting. Here, you need to find new ways of relating to each other.

Online addiction

HELP AND GUIDANCE:

■ www.familienberatung.gv.at

Throughout Austria, there are family counselling centres that will assist you with parenting issues. Information and addresses can be found on this website under the menu item "Beratungsstellen".

■ www.antonprokschinstitut.at

The *Anton-Proksch-Institute* (API) offers ambulatory treatment as well as in-patient therapy for internet and computer addicts.

■ www.dialog-on.at

The *Verein Dialog* offers help for family members and online counselling.

■ www.praevention.at

The *Institut Suchtprävention Pro Mente OÖ* offers informational materials as well as a host of information and links to available services.

BROCHURES AND TEST:

- **"Handy, Computer und Internet: Wie kann ich mein Kind gut begleiten?"** (Mobile phone, computer and internet: How can I properly support my child?), published by the Institut für Suchtprävention der Stadt Wien.

www.drogenhilfe.at

- Parent test **"Ist mein Kind internetsüchtig?"** (Is my child addicted to the internet?)

<http://arbeitsblaetter.stangl-taller.at>

- **"Online sein mit Maß und Spaß"** (Being online in moderation and fun), published by the German Bundeszentrale für gesundheitliche Aufklärung for parents of adolescents.

www.bzga.de

- Parent guide **"Computerspiele"** (Video games), published by the initiative Saferinternet.at.

www.saferinternet.at

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE WEB:

■ www.bupp.at

On the website of the *Bundesstelle für die Positivprädikatisierung von Computer- und Konsolenspielen* you will find a database with recommended games for each age group.

■ www.onlinesucht.at

This is an information portal about the topic of internet addiction from Austria.

■ www.internet-abc.de

This site offers special chapters for parents on the topic of video game addiction.

■ www.commonsemmedia.org/game-reviews

Independent reviews for games (and other media) with regards age appropriate content.

FOR TEENAGERS:

■ www.suchthaufen.net

Questions, answers and video clips about media addiction for young people.

■ www.ins-netz-gehen.de

An information portal for young people. Under the menu item "Check dich selbst" (Check yourself), the test "Bin ich süchtig?" (Am I addicted?) can be found.

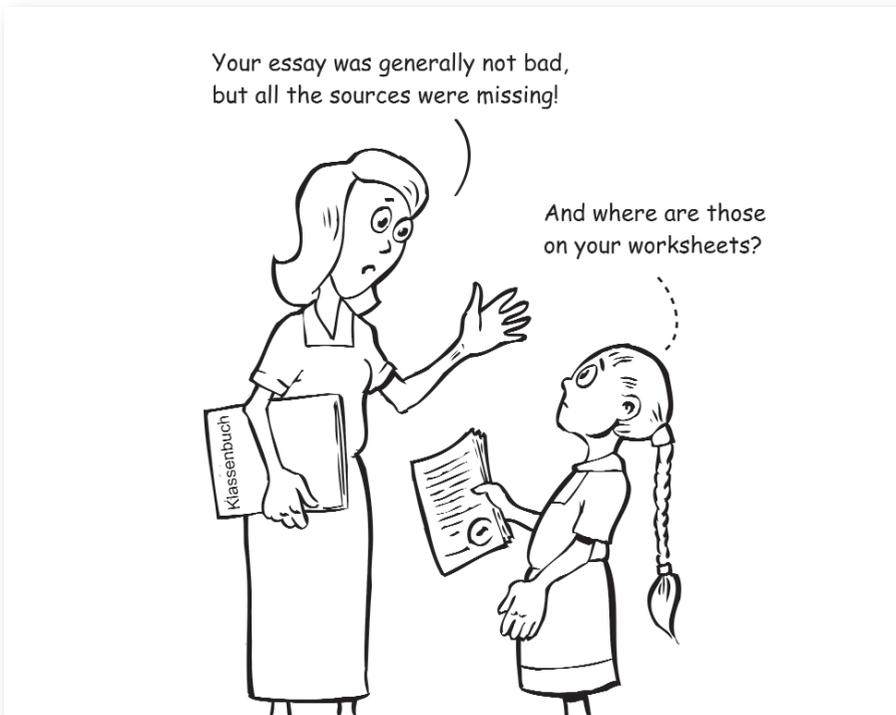
7. GENERATION “COPY & PASTE”

“What, another presentation?” 11-year old Jana’s mother is surprised; after all, there was one already this semester. But this time, Jana has to do everything herself, without the help of classmates. Now, her mother should help. And Jana has a plan: To look for pictures on Google, copy appropriate texts from Wikipedia and print it all out. The presentation will be done in minutes!

Tips

- **Use search engines for kids.** Search engines for kids help find suitable internet content for the “little ones” or use ‘safe search’ features. Good examples are www.blinde-kuh.de and www.fragfinn.de. English examples are www.k9safesearch.com, kids.yahoo.com or www.swiggle.org.uk.
- **Understanding online content.** Not everything you find on the internet is true. Practice together with your child how you can verify the accuracy of internet content (for example, use multiple websites, compare websites, discuss the credibility of websites, question the authorship, etc.). Also address the question of what the limits to Wikipedia’s usefulness are, for example, that content is not always comprehensible or correct. Wikipedia is a good place to start for internet research, but it shouldn’t stop you from doing an intensive comparison of websites!
- **Respect copyright.** Any original intellectual creation – including texts, music, images, software, etc. – is protected by copyright laws. It is generally an offence to acquire content (for example music or films) without having paid for it. You may face hefty fines!

- **Reference sources.** For homework, presentations, etc., extracts from other works ("quotes") may be used, if they are marked as such and if the sources are referenced. Passing off work by others as your own, however, is not acceptable. By all means, practice with your child how to reference correctly, since this is not so easy. A correct quote must include: Name of the author, year of publication, title of the paper/book/internet page, and page number or full internet address with the date of the last visit to that website.
- **Creative commons licenses.** Content that is shared under a creative commons license can be used by others under certain conditions. Explain to your child why it is better to use CC licensed content and practice together how to find, for example, such images (search.creativecommons.org).



Copyright, understanding online content

LEGAL ISSUES:

- In principle, all content is owned by its author and generally subject to copyright. This should be considered before copying anything from the internet. Special care should be taken before publishing anything – fines of up to several thousand Euros could be levied if one hasn't asked the copyright owner for permission first.
- As an alternative to content with traditional copyright protections, content with creative commons licenses can be sought. CC licensed content may be used for free if certain conditions are met (for example, if the name of the author is given).

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE WEB:

- **www.creativecommons.org**
This site offers extensive information about CC licensing and includes a search engine for CC licensed content.
- **www.bilderpool.at**
Search engine for CC licensed images for use in schools.
- **www.compfight.com**
Search engine for CC licensed images. Caution: Only after conducting a search is it possible to select only CC licensed content in the left-hand menu bar.
- **www.jamendo.com/de** (in German) or **www.jamendo.com/en** (in English) CC licensed music for further use in one's own work, such as films or podcasts.
- **www.kidsville.de**
The "Mitmachstadt im Internet" (Participatory city on the internet) invites children to publish their own texts.
- **www.surfen-ohne-risiko.net**
Brochures, tips, a quiz, and the tool "Meine Startseite" (My start page), which helps you design an individual, kid-friendly start page.

8. "FREE" CINEMA – RIGHT NOW!

Every new motion picture is a must see, without delay. It's not that 17-year old Lukas doesn't go to the cinema anymore, but the movie must still be seen again on the internet. Is that really legal? His mother is not so sure. But Lukas assures her that he never downloads anything, anyway. All he does is watch the movies online. "That's allowed, mama!"

Tips

- **Be careful with sharing files!** Any upload of content that isn't your own – and therefore copyright protected – is prohibited by law. This is true even for file-sharing sites, in social networks and on private websites! Alert your child to this fact repeatedly.
- **Talk about possible consequences.** Even if you probably can't prevent conscious violations anymore once your child reaches a certain age, remind your child that copyright infringements carry possible fines of several thousand Euros!
- **Consider alternatives.** Together with your child, look for content that they may publish (for example, in a social network or in an assignment for school). A good option, for example, is creative commons content. Under certain conditions, these may be used for free.
- **Use an official *Mediathek*** (media content provided by TV-stations). Current TV movies, series and documentaries can be watched (downloaded or streamed) legally, for example on these sites: **www.tvthek.orf.at, www.ardmediathek.de, rtl-now.rtl.de.**

Streaming, File-Sharing

LEGAL ISSUES:

- Generally, **no files may be published on the internet** if you do not have permission from the author. Publication is always prohibited, no matter if you do it on purpose or on accident.
- Whether **downloading** (or streaming) **alone** of files that have already been provided illegally is prohibited is **not settled by Austrian law**. If you don't do it, you are definitely on the safe side. Watch out: On **file-sharing sites**, downloaded files are often automatically made available for upload as well, which is clearly illegal and makes you liable to prosecution!

BROCHURES:

- **www.ideensindetwaswert.at**

A packet of teaching material with the most important info about the topic of intellectual property; may be downloaded or ordered for free.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE WEB:

- **www.creativecommons.org**

This site offers extensive information about CC licensing and includes a search engine for CC licensed content.

9. READING WITHOUT BOOKS?

In the past, 15-year old Philipp did sometimes read a book. But that seems to have been a very long time ago. His mother hasn't seen a book in his room in a while. He is always on the computer, with his mp3-player in his ear. Reading? Well, that's really gone out of fashion.

Tips

- **It doesn't matter what your child is reading**, as long as they are reading! That includes catalogues, technical brochures, Facebook entries and computer game manuals. Let your child choose what they want to read.
- **Set a good example.** Often children will inherit their reading habits from their parents. Be aware of your important status as a role model.
- **From the start:** Read to your kids, tell stories, read together... Kids love reading time with you, and so it should become a regular feature in your family's life. Let your child read aloud as often as possible, too, or take turns reading to each other.
- **Show interest.** Take an interest in what your child likes to read. Go ahead and browse your child's favourite reading material and talk with him or her about it.
- **Create a cosy atmosphere for reading.** Together with your child, establish a little library in your child's room and make space for a cosy reading corner. Use special occasions such as birthdays, Christmas, graduation, etc., to stock the library with new reading material.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE WEB:

■ www.buchklub.at

The *Österreichische Buchklub* (Austrian book club) has recommendations for children and young people.

■ www.kirango.at

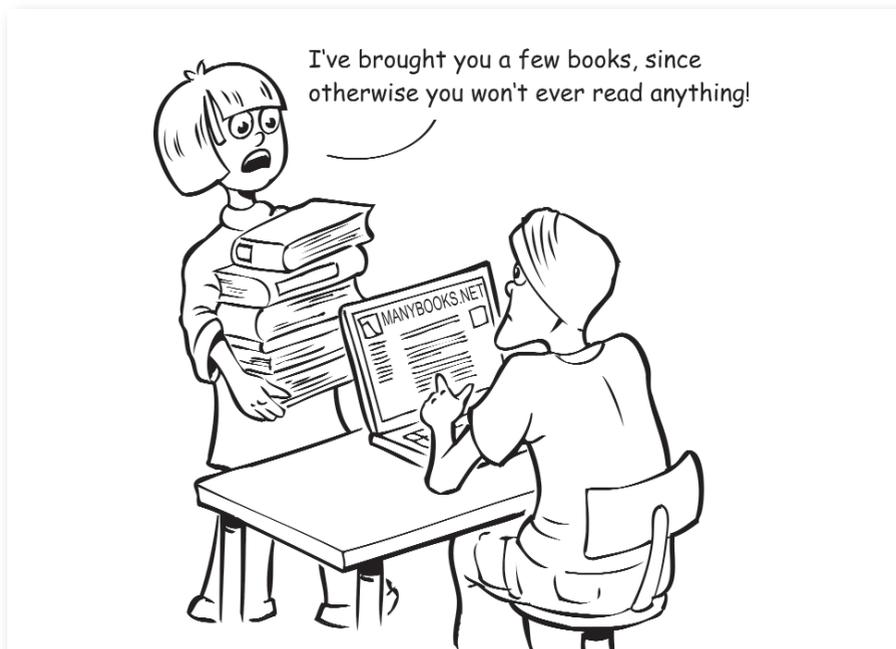
This site offers tips for kids from the *Wiener Büchereien* (Vienna public libraries).

■ www.literacy.at

This information portal about reading offers many book reviews for young people.

■ www.facebook.com/belletristik

Here, you will find a Facebook community about all things reading for both young people and adults.



10. LOVE 2.0

“It was really embarrassing for both of us: Recently, when I came into the room of my daughter Carina, she had nude pictures of herself open on her computer. She closed them very quickly, but I had seen them. Then, we both pretended that nothing had happened. At first I thought, well, this is none of my business; it’s a private matter. But somehow, I still have a strange feeling about it.” - Father of a 16-year old girl.

Tips

- **Inform yourself.** Look for information on “sexuality and the internet”; much has changed in the last few years. “Web sex” (sex over the internet and mobile phones), “sexting” (sending or receiving of personally intimate images) or more formally SGII (Self Generated Illegal Images) is becoming more and more common among young people.
- **Talk about the consequences.** Alert your child to the fact that pictures and films, once taken, can fall into the wrong hands and serve as the basis for blackmail and harassment. When you post something online, it will be there forever. Even when looking for a job, such images can be harmful.
- **Explain the legal framework.** Possessing or forwarding pornographic photos and videos of persons under 18 is by definition illegal.

LEGAL ISSUES:

- **The right to one’s own image** (Urheberrecht § 78/Austrian copyright law § 78) protects people from unfavourable (embarrassing) pictures. Nude pictures number among those – therefore, they may not be published without the consent of those depicted. This applies to forwarding pictures that one received from a friend on one’s mobile phone as well!

Sexuality and the internet

- If young people take and distribute **nude images of themselves or others**, this can be classified as **child pornography**, especially if those images are distributed on the internet. "Child pornography" is any depiction of a sexual act and nudity that involves underage persons. Underage is anybody who has not yet reached the age of 18. Many young people are unaware that this can make them liable to prosecution. So far, no young people have been convicted in Austria (but this has happened in other countries).

HELP AND GUIDANCE:

- **www.rataufdraht.at**

"Rat auf Draht" is a free, anonymous 24-hour hotline for children, young people and their caregivers and can be reached under the phone number 147 (no prefix).

- **www.stopline.at**

Anonymous complaints concerning child pornography and re-engagement in National Socialist activities (*Wiederbetätigung*) on the internet can be made at www.stopline.at.

- **www.selbstlaut.org**

Selbstlaut is an initiative targeting sexual violence against children and teenagers, offering prevention, counselling, and help in case of suspicions.

BROCHURES:

- Parent guide "**Sexualität & Internet**" (Sexuality & the internet) by the initiative Saferinternet.at. **www.saferinternet.at**

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE WEB:

- **www.thatsnotcool.com**

This site offers English-language educational videos for young people about "sexting" (i.e., the exchange of nude pictures or erotic information amongst young people).

- **www.saferinternet.org.uk/sexting**

The most common advice around sexting is simply not to do it. Research and evidence demonstrate, however, that sexting is not uncommon, which shows that many youth don't follow this advice. "So you got naked online..." helps those who find themselves in this position to take back some control.

11. BRUTALLY NORMAL

“But mom, Tobias is allowed to play GTA! It’s so cool! Why are you always so mean?” 11-year old Marcel is devastated. His parents always have to ruin everything.

Tips

- **Talk rather than prohibit.** Video games alone will not make your child violent. If you as parents don’t like a game but your child is fascinated by it, simply prohibiting it will probably not achieve much, there may be significant peer pressure for them to get and play a particular game. Rather, talk with your child about it and explain your worries and concerns. Look for alternatives together.
- **Play together.** If you don’t play computer games, you will have a hard time understanding your child’s enthusiasm. Let your child explain games to you and, first of all, play together WITH your child. Many aspects that make a game exciting are not perceptible through watching alone (for example, the communication with other players). At the same time, playing together will help you understand why your child likes to play. That will also help you suggest alternatives.
- **Check the PEGI rating.** The “Pan European Game Information” (PEGI) rate games with an age rating. The rating is made based on a series of characteristics, such as violence, drugs, sex, racism etc. PEGI does not, however, give any information on the actual playability. Games that are rated as “3+” or “6+” are frequently much too complex to actually be played by children of that age group.
- **Question your habits.** Together with your child, reflect on your day-to-day media habits and do include yourself (work habits at home, checking e-mails). You are always setting an example with your kind of media consumption that your child will learn by watching, even when it’s not about video games. Be aware of your status as a role model. Also take a moment to think about the health aspects – posture, vision problems, hydration etc.

Video games and violence

- **Be considerate of younger siblings.** If there are siblings around, make sure that the games played are appropriate for them, too. Even if they cannot actively play yet, attentively watching younger siblings are just as involved in the game. For such situations, agree on rules with everyone.

Come on, why can't I play that?
At Marcus's place, it's no big
deal at all!

Please be quiet for a second.
I have to look this up in my
parenting app.



BROCHURES:

- Parent guide “**Computerspiele**” (Video games) by the initiative Saferinternet.at. **www.saferinternet.at**

LEGAL ISSUES:

- The content of video games is regulated by the **youth protection laws** (*Jugendschutzgesetze*) of the Austrian states. Media content that could harm young people’s development may not be offered, demonstrated, given to or made available to them in any other way. That means, for example, that video games that are rated as 18+ may not be played by younger kids.
- Labelling with the **PEGI symbols** (**www.pegi.info**) has been mandatory in Vienna since April of 2008: Only video games that are marked with a PEGI symbol may be sold. Therefore, all games in Austria have de facto been marked. Games may only be sold to kids who have reached the age specified in the PEGI rating.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE WEB:

- **www.pegi.info**

This site provides detailed information about the PEGI rating. A free PEGI iPhone app is available in the Apple iTunes store.

PARENTAL CONTROLS FOR GAME CONSOLES:

- Xbox: **www.xbox.com/familysettings**
- Wii: **www.nintendo.de** – Look for: “Altersfreigabe” (age rating)
- PlayStation: **www.playstation.at** – Look for: “Kindersicherung” (child safety lock)

RECOMMENDED VIDEO GAMES:

A selection of recommended video games for kids, sorted by playability and age:

- **www.bupp.at**
- **www.spielebox.at**
- **www.acos.at**
- **www.spielbar.de**
- **www.feibel.de**

12. DIGITAL VACUUM SCHOOL

Marie's mother is unhappy. Back in elementary school, Marie almost never did anything on the computer. But now, in high school, it is even worse: In her class, they almost never use the computer. And yet, Marie would be really interested. Her mother thinks that one of the tasks of school is to teach the kids how to use the computer in a meaningful way, so that it's not only used for "pointless stuff", such as playing games.

Tips

- **Online learning tools.** Research interesting links, programs or apps that will complement your child's current school curriculum or help with learning (for example, telling time games, mathematical formulae, vocabulary trainers, times table trainers, etc.). Encourage your child to utilize these additional aids.
- **Smart apps.** Believe us, there is an app for almost any anything... 😊
- **Touch typing trainer.** Motivate your child to learn touch typing (www.tipp10.de), even if it may seem cumbersome at times. Stay with it!
- **Expectations.** Have expectations when it comes to technology use at school. Encourage teachers to make use of digital learning in the classroom. An overview of existing e-learning initiatives at Austrian schools can be found at www.schule.at.

FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE WEB:

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AGE:

■ **www.internet-abc.de/kinder**

Web platform for kids with links, information and ideas for things you can make yourself.

■ **kidsweb.at**

Texts, presentations, games and links for children.

■ **www.elbot.de**

Here, kids can practice chatting in a safe environment with a robot (press the red button).

■ **www.internauten.de**

Games and tips for kids about computers and the internet.

■ **www.hamsterkiste.de**

Find non-fiction stories and educational games.

■ **www.kidsnet.at**

Practise for school, for example with sample *Schularbeiten*, or tests.

■ **www.tuxpaint.org**

Free drawing program for download, with lots of stamps and colors.

10 to 18-YEAR OLDS:

■ **www.exelearning.de**

Create web content.

■ **audacity.sourceforge.net**

Use this free software for recording and editing sound.

■ **www.toondoo.com**

Use this free software for creating comics; registration is necessary.

■ **comiclife.com**

For-pay software for creating comics; free trial version.

■ **www.aviary.com**

Comprehensive image editing software.

■ **www.photofunia.com**

Create funny animations.

■ **befunky.com**

Create photo effects (free photo editor).

Media literacy at home

- **www.voki.com**

Create small videos with an avatar.

- **www.phwien.ac.at/ekey**

Download free software for displaying and editing text, image, video and audio files.

- **lms.at/otp**

Use this educational software based on the self-learning concept "OTP - Opportunity to Practice" to learn independently, practice and test yourself.

FURTHER INFORMATION IN ENGLISH:

- **www.saferinternet.org**

Insafe European network of Safer Internet Centres

- **www.saferinternet.org.uk**

United Kingdom Safer Internet Centre

- **www.webwise.ie**

Ireland Safer Internet Centre

- **www.cybersmart.gov.au**

Australia cybersafety education programme

- **www.isafe.org, www.connectsafely.org**

Online safety projects in the USA

- **protectchildren.ca**

Online safety projects of the Canadian centre for Child Protection

SUPPORT AND COUNSELLING

FAMILY COUNSELLING CENTRES

Throughout Austria, there are *Familienberatungsstellen* (family counselling centres) that will assist you with parenting issues of all kinds.

www.familienberatung.gv.at

PARENT EDUCATION

Under the title *Elternbildung* (parent education), you can find pedagogical articles to topics such as social networks, mobile phones and sex education.

www.elternbildung.at

SAFERINTERNET.AT AND HANDYWISSEN.AT

On these sites, you can find tips and information about safe and responsible use of the internet and mobile phones; includes a section for parents.

www.saferinternet.at

www.facebook.com/saferinternetat

www.handywissen.at

147 RAT AUF DRAHT

Rat auf Draht is a free, anonymous 24-hour hotline for children, young people and their caregivers and can be reached under the phone number 147 (no prefix).

www.rataufdraht.at

STOPLINE

Anonymous complaints concerning child pornography and re-engagement in National Socialist activities (*Wiederbetätigung*) on the internet can be made here. **www.stopline.at**

THE MOST IMPORTANT TIPS AT A GLANCE

Tips

- **Balancing family life and media use.** At some point, young people orient themselves rather outside of the family when it comes to their media activities; this is part of their normal development. Stay relaxed and set a good example when it comes to your own media use!
- **Discover media together.** Sharing experiences with regards to the internet will make it easier to talk about positive and negative incidents during media use.
- **Agree on rules.** Rules about internet, mobile phone and gaming console use can include, for example, time limits, content, the handling of pictures and personal data or the costs. Rules will only be effective if your child understands and accepts them.
- **Protect your computer.** Take precautions to ensure the technical safety of your computer by using, for example, anti-virus software, parental controls, firewalls and regular software updates.
- **Address the issue of privacy.** Talk with your child about the risks of carelessly publishing or sharing personal information on the internet. Your child should only share their name, address, telephone number and personal photos with anyone after talking with you.
- **Watch out when meeting online acquaintances.** It is okay to meet friends from the web – but only in public places (for example, at a cinema or café) and accompanied by someone else (an adult, or at least a friend). Talk with your child about possible risks.
- **Discuss the reliability of online content.** Show your child how they can assess the validity of content by comparing several sources. Ads, too, are often hard to see through for children.

- **Nobody is anonymous on the web.** Always take into account that both you and your child leave a trail with every activity on the internet.
- **Alert your child to dos and don'ts on the internet.** On the internet, there are rules, too. Simply put: What's permitted in real life is permitted on the internet. What's forbidden in real life is forbidden on the internet as well.
- **Stay informed.** Regularly let your child show you his or her current favourite sites, games or software. Make talking about internet and mobile phone use a customary topic in your family.
- **The main point is to read!** No matter what your child is reading, the main point is that they are reading! Don't be too critical and let your child decide themselves what they want to read.
- **Television – more than a diversion!** Television offers a lot of opportunities and interesting subjects if you use it sensibly. Choose your programmes carefully before turning on the device. And allow your child to watch TV out of boredom only on rare occasions – in those cases, offer alternatives.
- **Digital Footprint.** Regularly search for yourself and your family online to keep track of your digital footprint, i.e. to see what information the internet contains about you.
- **When it comes to media, the opportunities outweigh the risks!** Don't be too critical when it comes to your child's media use. The internet can be an excellent resource that can be used both for learning and leisure. Encourage your child to use media consciously and to discover all the opportunities it offers. With guidance, the risks can be minimized very effectively.

Television, internet, smart phones & co have become part and parcel of everyday life – especially for children and young people. Children learn how to use digital media starting at preschool age or younger. Partly as a response to the use of media in education, kids advance rapidly. For many parents, that can lead to feelings of insecurity:

- What exactly is my child doing?
- What can or should I control?
- When do I have to “interfere” or set boundaries?
- What are the legal requirements?

The guidebook “**Media in the Family – Advice for Parents**” offers parents tangible help. Based on twelve case studies and in an easy-to-read manner, it provides answers to these questions. Every story is supplemented with parenting tips and information on further reading material and links, as well as legal information.



Co-funded by the
European Union

Saferinternet.at
Das Internet sicher nutzen!



**FEDERAL MINISTRY FOR
ECONOMY, FAMILY AND YOUTH**