

CONCLUSIONS

Young people in Australia score the highest for instrumental strategies and behavioural preventive actions, and also rank second for disengaging with risk, avoiding risk through an awareness of online content and in

seeking advice for communicating a problem. A number of strategies exist in Australia, including the Government Cybersmart programme, which encourages young people to demonstrate positive, ethical and balanced online behaviour (UNESCO, 2014).

The success of these strategies seems to be shown in the findings, with Australian children being the most likely to seek help when faced with risk (20% using a hotline and 42% speaking to a parent/guardian). 59% are also able to ignore risk and are aware of the dangers when online. As a result children in Australia demonstrate high levels of disengagement from potential harm when online.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Compared to the other countries analysed, Australia has already implemented a wide range of policies to increase child online resilience.

Consequently, we would recommend the extension of existing programs, and to focus on the improvement of hotline support services as a more reliable means to convey child concerns, and to report problems when online.

THE RESEARCH

This multinational research explores the role of digital resilience intended as the ability to prevent and respond to online risk, and in providing children with the skills and characteristics needed to navigate the internet safely.

Analysing the findings from children aged 9-18 in Indonesia, Japan, Australia, South Korea and Taiwan; it investigates the ways in which young people can be encouraged to be resilient users.

ABOUT THINKYOUNG

ThinkYoung is the first think tank dedicated to young people.

Founded in 2007, ThinkYoung has expanded to have offices in Brussels, Geneva and Hong Kong. It is a not for profit organisation with the aim of making the world a better place for young people, by involving them in the decision making process and by providing decision makers with high quality research on youth conditions. Think Young produces research papers, surveys, documentary movies and education programs.

As of today, ThinkYoung projects have reached over 600,000 young people.

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We lobby for young people

DIGITAL RESILIENCE EMPOWERING YOUTH ONLINE

Practices for a safer internet use.
A major survey targeting Australia, Japan, Indonesia, Korea, and Taiwan.

COUNTRY BRIEFING: AUSTRALIA



INTRO

The following country profile presents the key findings from Australian children in response to a survey investigating the role of digital resilience in positively impacting children's online engagement. Shedding light on how a digitally resilient young person responds to potentially risky online content, the research investigates the ways in which young people can be encouraged to be resilient users when online through the

analysis of data from Indonesia, Australia, South Korea, Japan, and Taiwan.

The survey targeted children and young people between the ages of 9-18 and was administered in two parts: the first directly to respondents above the age of 16, and the second with the consent of parents (9-16 years!).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In response to the growing policy debate between online risk and opportunity, the following research aimed to shed light on child attitudes in dealing with online risk. Moreover, a focus was placed on integrating safety concerns with the promotion of a positive uptake of online opportunities for children, through the concept of 'digital resilience'.

Based on the survey administered, this research has first measured levels of digital resilience by analysing the responses adopted by young people to varying online risks. From these results, it has then sought to **investigate how children prevent and react to online risk, taking into account:**

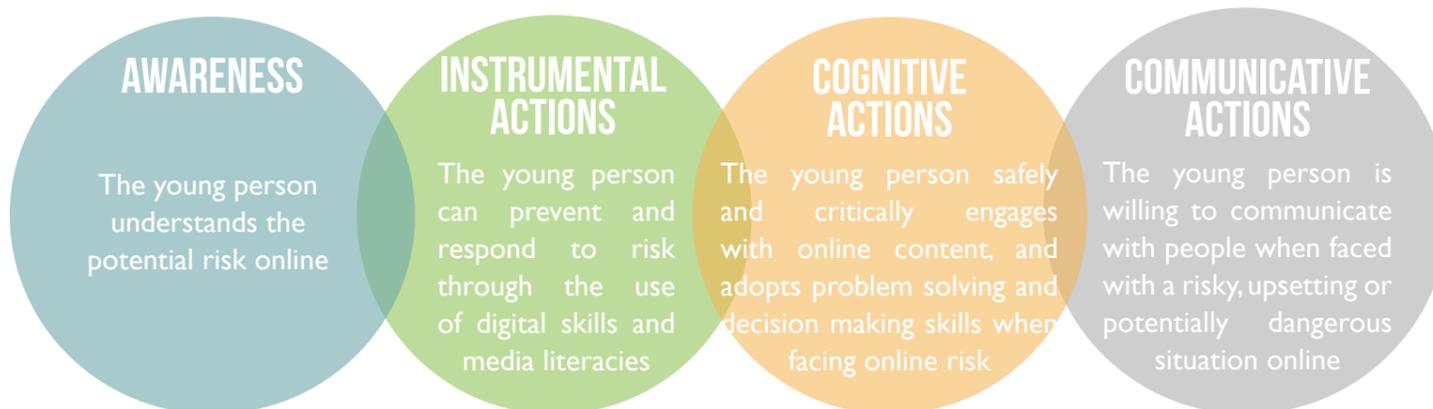
 The impact of awareness and self-regulation in understanding the potential for risk, and in engaging with online content in a resilient manner.

 How children and young people can enhance their levels of resilience through communication and from seeking advice.

 The role of media skills and digital literacies in improving resilience, and the types of responses used by technologically adept young people.

WHAT IS DIGITAL RESILIENCE?

Drawing on the most prevalent scientific literature on resilience, the report presents the fundamental characteristics of the ideal digitally resilient young person, encapsulated by:



The concept of digital resilience includes both a preventive and reactive phase where at first young people are able to self-regulate and avoid online risk and, when faced with risk, are able to employ coping mechanisms in order to respond to the risk or harmful situation in a problem focused manner.

 **PREVENTIVE RESILIENCE**
Resilience strategies employed to avoid risk including instrumental (using technical skills to avoid risk) and behavioural (avoiding risk through specific safety behaviours and online awareness).

 **REACTIVE RESILIENCE**
Resilience strategies adopted after coming into contact with an online risk. These include:

- 1 Instrumental (using technical skills).
- 2 Confrontational (confronting the source of the risk).
- 3 Communicative (seeking advice).
- 4 Disengagement (ignoring the risk).

¹In gaining parental permission for the 9-16 year olds a very clear statement of intent was given to parents/guardians in advance, outlining the exact purpose of the study, sharing the exact questions and giving assurances that the data would be treated anonymously.

KEY FINDINGS

Children in Australia are confident in preventing risk through instrumental and behavioural actions, with 70% likely to make their profile unavailable to the general public. Likewise, 92% are likely to keep their password completely secret and 61% to have software to avoid unwanted content. Amongst all Australian children, 49% had been exposed to inappropriate content.

Moreover, when responding to risk young Australians are also confident using digital skills, with 51% who would change their password when personal information is misused. 19% of the children surveyed had experienced this risk.

While 25% had experienced cyber-bullying, among the top reactions to deal with this risk, 52% of children in Australia would delete the contact of a bully and 50% would talk with a parent/guardian about what to do.

Children in Australia are comfortable in disengaging from risk with 59% stating they would immediately ignore a stranger who contacted them online. Amongst all Australian children, 31% had experienced this risk.

Young people in Australia show a critical awareness in their use of the internet, with 69% very careful about what they say or post online, and 66% avoiding suspicious material.

In response to a request from an online contact to meet in person, 73% would refuse to meet and 34% would seek help from a parent/guardian.

Children in Australia are likely to keep their password completely secret



Children in Australia change their password when personal information is misused



Children in Australia would delete the contact of a bully



Children in Australia would immediately ignore a stranger who contacted them online



Children in Australia are very careful about what they say or post online



Children in Australia would refuse to meet in person an online contact



THE ONLINE RESILIENT YOUNG PERSON

The graphical representation below illustrates how well children in Australia fare in comparison to the ideal digitally resilient young person, who would score 3 points in each area of resilience. Each child obtains a score from 0 to 3 depending on how many cognitive, instrumental and communicative strategies he or she is likely to adopt. It also compares the results in relation to the average resilience scores from the APAC region.

