A youth work matrix of risks related to online-usage and digitalization

Online-services hold, besides many opportunities for the users, also a number of risks and hazards, which can become relevant for individuals but also for whole societies. Some risks can be avoided by individuals. Other risks can hardly be solved on an individual level - or rather each individual would be overtaxed if they were held individually responsible.

Knowledge of potential risks, as well as of ways to contain risks at an individual or collective level, is thus also an essential area of educational work with children and adolescents. Accordingly, "Safety" is also a separate area among the training needs in the report of the EU expert group "Developing digital youth work". This method represents a contribution to this area.

Objectives of the method

The exercise introduces the topic and prepares the basis for planning digital youth work on the risks of the digitalisation.
-   The youth workers discuss and reflect on the risks and threats associated with Internet use and digital transformation.
-   The youth workers deal with the question of who the risks and hazards can have consequences for.
-   The youth workers deal with the question which of the risks and hazards they already address in their work and which should be addressed in their work from their point of view.

Implementation

The method is divided into two phases: a spontaneous association phase and a group work phase.

Introduction:
-   Introduction to the topic (there are no guidelines here, if necessary key points from the area of safety from the training needs can be used for the introduction).
-   Preparation of the group phase (groups should be formed even before the association phase, in which work can then continue, maximum group size 5 people)

Association phase:
-   Provide moderation cards and pens
-   Task: "Spontaneously note four risks that may arise from the use of digital media and/or as a result of digitalisation".
-   One card should be used at a time.

Group work phase:

- Now the participants come together in the previously formed groups and briefly present their cards. The time can be used to develop a common understanding in the group by asking questions: What is seen as a risk? What consequences can arise from this? Etc. (If necessary, further cards can be added).
- When all cards have been presented, the risks noted on the cards should be located in the following matrix. Key questions are:
  - Are short-term or long-term consequences for individuals and/or society to be expected or feared?
  - Are the risks already addressed in one's own work or not?

Long term consequences for yp / society		
Immediate consequences for yp / society		
	Is being addressed in our organisation	Is not being addressed in our organisation

- First of all, the cards should be mapped in the matrix in the group setting. This can lead to an exchange about the way in which risks are being addressed.
- If several groups work in parallel, the results of the groups are then brought together in a larger matrix in a second step. (To have enough space for this, the matrix can be visualised on the floor with paint crepe. So the participants can stand around the matrix.)
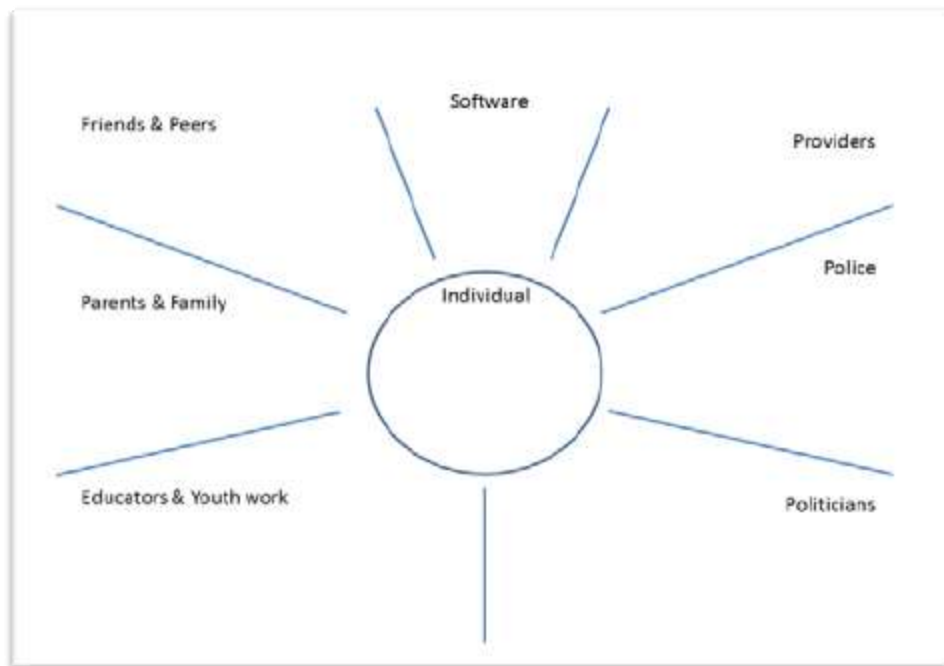
Follow-up:

- The following questions can be used for the follow-up:
  - Are we setting the right priorities so far in terms of supporting young people in dealing with the risks and threats associated with digitalisation?
  - What phenomena should we become active on?
  - What resources (young people, organisation, partner organisations) can be activated to work on this issue?

Supplementary exercise as an introduction to planning

If you want to get more involved in planning the work on a risk or endangerment, the following worksheet can be helpful. The aim of the worksheet is to consider, for a concrete risk, which actors could make which contribution in order to contain the risk or to deal with it as meaningfully as possible in a concrete case.

It is important to focus not only on young people but also on a wide range of actors who could make a contribution if necessary. The actors mentioned are not selective (provider and software), but this is not essential. The idea behind this approach is that this reflection tool could potentially also be used to formulate demands on corresponding actors from the specialist field of youth work.

For more information about the project visit: https://www.digitalyouthwork.eu/