



Institute for
Media Research and
Media Education

www.jff.de

The JFF has been investigating how younger generations deal with media through research and practical experience since 1949.

For more than 60 years the starting point for JFF activities in the fields of research and pedagogical work has been the media usage of adolescents and promoting media competence.

Combining empirical research and educational practice is characteristic of the working methods of the JFF. Research results form the basis of educational schemes for educational, developmental, and cultural work with children and adolescents. These research activities are reciprocally supplemented by educational practice.

The JFF is run by the non-profit organization JFF – Jugend Film Fernsehen e.V. The activities of the institute are accompanied by a Board of Trustees with representatives from politics and the media.



The work objective of the JFF is to understand the media usage of adolescents, to identify opportunities and challenges and to convey options for action to teachers, social workers and parents.

Essential to understanding the media usage of adolescents is comprehension of their **environment**. The work of the JFF in research and practice thus focuses on the concept of contextual understanding: Media usage can only be approached properly when the individual and environmental conditions of the subjects are taken into account. Furthermore media and their scope, content and structures must be understood as embedded in society.

Another important reference framework for all activities at the JFF is orientation towards the **resources and competencies** of the adolescent. Adolescents use media for entertainment purposes, for orientation, information, communication and to present themselves. Adolescents' skills in dealing with media depend on the one hand on the range of media available, and on the other hand on basic pedagogical parameters.

Theoretical and methodological foundations of applied pedagogical activities at the JFF comprise the concept of active media work with the precepts of **project-oriented, active and social learning**. Based on lifeworld, resource and competence orientation, the objective here is the promotion of media competence of children and youth by helping them encounter media in an active mode and to utilize them in participation in society.

The JFF Organization and Departments at a Glance

Supported by the
nonprofit organization
JFF - Jugend Film Fernsehen e.V.

Board of Trustees

Executive Board: 9 members
Chair: Prof. Dr. Bernd Schorb
Directors: Dr. Ulrike Wagner, Kathrin Demmler

Research

Understanding media appropriation
of children and youth
Evaluating projects in the field
of media education

Educational Practice

Promoting media competence
of children and youth
Developing innovative media
educational approaches

Transfer of Results and Consultation

Setting up standards and guidelines for policy making
in education and regulation
Publications, teaching materials, journal merz | medien + erziehung,
regular online services (e.g. www.flimmo.tv), conferences, consultancies

JFF research investigates media appropriation of children and young people with a focus on media education.

Empirical studies

The JFF studies yield results on the media appropriation of adolescents against the background of personal and socio-cultural contexts. Besides the perception, use, and evaluation of media, the focus centers on the complex processes of integrating media into the individual child's environment. With the objective of improving our understanding, we combine qualitative and quantitative methods of empirical social research.

Evaluations

When conducting companion studies and evaluations, questions of implementation and the adequacy of media educational projects and actions are the focus. The methodical approaches ensure that the research process and the wording of the results are transparent and understandable for all involved.

Expert reports

When preparing expert reports we implement theoretical and practical specialist knowledge from media education for different topic areas, e.g. informal learning with and via media, or specific aspects of media usage by particular target groups.

Based on research, the project **FLIMMO – fernsehen mit Kinderaugen** (Watching Television Through Children's Eyes) conveys a child's perspective on television content to parents and educators, and encourages them to provide televisual education that boosts children's competences. The JFF is responsible for the contents of FLIMMO, which is published by Programmberatung für Eltern e. V. (Program Consultation for Parents). Contact: redaktion@flimmo.tv, www.flimmo.tv

Department head
Dr. Ulrike Wagner

The JFF promotes media competence among adolescents through active media work and develops media educational concepts.

Pilot Projects

The JFF is committed to examining current social and media educational issues in the form of pilot projects. Based on an action-oriented, holistic approach to active media work, we draft, test, evaluate, and publish innovative practical concepts as models. In this context we focus on different target groups from all fields of education as well as the whole spectrum of the media.

Financial Support and Training Courses

Through project funds, e.g. regarding film, audio and multimedia productions (“In eigener Regie”) or peer-to-peer-education (“peer³”), the JFF provides expert knowledge and content advice as well as financial and technical support to children’s and adolescents’ groups and educational staff.

The JFF runs two local facilities (MZM – Media Center Munich and MSA – Media Center Augsburg) and the Media Expert Board in Bavaria, and collaborates with institutions across Germany.



Festivals

Young people find an audience at festivals such as the Bavarian Children and Youth Film Festival “JUFINALE”, the mobile phone clip competition “Ohrenblick Mal!” or the “Children’s Photo Award”, organized by the JFF in cooperation with diverse partners.

Networks

The JFF is active in German media education networks on both regional and national levels, for example the Munich Media Competence Network “Inter@ktiv” and a network of German-speaking media centers “FRAME”. Both are dedicated to establishing media education concepts and models in children’s and youth work.

Department heads

Günther Anfang, Kathrin Demmler

A core task of the JFF is to convey results from media educational research and practice to educational, scientific, and political spheres.

Designing teaching aids

We provide information on media education as well as advice for parents and professional educators on how to work with media.

Specialist events

We organize and run conferences and training courses picking up on results from science and educational practice in the field, which we then pass on to the experts. We also present stimulating discussions on relevant media educational topics.

Consultation

The JFF provides expert knowledge for different target groups, e.g. for professionals in the diverse fields of education and research, and, on request, we organize specific events and support educators in dealing with media educational topics.

Issuing scientific and practical education publications

We publish current research results, guidelines, and background literature in research and application in media education.

An example for publications is [merz | medien + erziehung](#). The only independent specialist magazine on media education in Germany addresses current issues in media education and discusses them from different viewpoints. Publishers: Prof. Dr. Bernd Schorb, Prof. Dr. Helga Theunert, Responsible editor: Dr. Susanne Eggert, www.merz-zeitschrift.de



Work at the JFF currently focuses on the following topics

Media Education in the Family

Media are a permanent fixture in everyday family life. The cornerstone for media interaction in later life is already set in the pre-school and primarily school years in the context of the family; the first “contact” with media content usually takes place within the family. This means the influence of the parents and other attachment figures in the promotion of media competence is substantial from the earliest stages. The extent of the formative influence of family life on the interaction of children with media depends on family-internal factors. Furthermore, modified societal prerequisites and developments in the media landscape also affect the degree to which parents are able to realize proper media education and the quality of this education. In this context the Research department of the JFF derives empirical fundamentals, concepts and materials in various projects which provide the family with essential support and accompany the media education on a target group-oriented basis. Particularly interesting in this regard are concepts that actively expand parenting skills and enrich the dialog between parents and children, instead of confining themselves to functional information and “tips”.

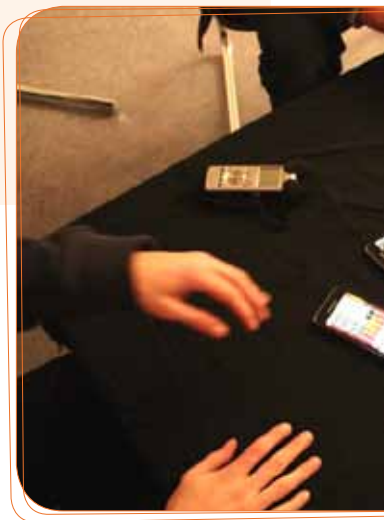


Generations

Cooperation in solidarity is an essential prerequisite for a functioning society. Promoting this factor appears more important than ever in the context of the interchange between the generations, all the more so because the generations can profit from one another, as becomes particularly clear in medial contexts: Due to the rapid pace of change in terms of dissemination of information and emergence of technologies, the ability to deal with such change manifests differently in different age groups. Here the approach is to bring the generations to exchange experiences and examine their respective resources in order to meet the challenges of the information age. Thus the project “Generations in Dialog” promotes empathetic, constructive co-existence and an exchange across age boundaries. Here both adolescents and older participants communicate under media educational instruction regarding and using media. The project has received a number of prizes, including the Evens Prize for Media Education 2011.

Events such as “MyGames”, “MyNews” and “GamesLab” invite school classes and individual youth groups to youth conferences to discuss certain media-related topics from their respective points of view. Films and interactive elements convey important background information. During the conference the youth participants play an active role, their opinions and questions are integrated in lectures and in the course of a panel discussion. The auxiliary activities include continuing education sessions for pedagogical specialists, teachers and educators both within and outside of the school, as well as parent-teacher conferences. The action-oriented concept of the youth conferences is intended to encourage young people to reflect on a given topic, to contribute and publicly discuss their point of view and to deal effectively with the opinions and points of views of others in a constructive manner. As is the case with the youth media festivals of the JFF, the objective here is to offer children and youth a forum for their interests and concerns, to publicly express their attitudes and media contributions and to bring youth into dialog with similarly oriented peers.

Encounters



Under the conditions of mediatization and media convergence, individualized patterns of media usage are increasing in significance. In particular the information-oriented use of the Internet offers adolescents a wide range of opportunities while at the same time presenting a number of new challenges. When selecting and receiving information in the Internet, youth utilize a wide variety of journalistic sources and forms of user-generated information. At the same time the range offered by Web 2.0 also represents opportunities for participation in the new information landscape, for example in the context of actively obtaining, creating and disseminating information in the media. In the study “Reception and Production of Information by Youth” the JFF addresses the question of how youth deal with information of social and political relevance in media. Using semi-standardized quantitative procedures as well as qualitative case studies, the study examines information-related media usage by adolescents between 12 and 19 years of age.

Information and Participation





Cultural Diversity

Tolerance means recognition and respect for different attitudes, external characteristics and behaviors. The objective of tolerance is constructive encounter. Tolerance can be promoted through openness and communication. These two aspects constitute one of the most important cornerstones of media educational project work.

In group work and open dialog, youth confront their own environments, values and aspirations. All of these aspects can be supported through active media work. Becoming an active producer of media content requires mastering a varied range of challenges. In the project KAJUTO for example, it is essential for the adolescent to be confronted with tolerance and intolerance: Beginning with the youth's own prejudices towards others, the adolescents formulate topics together and realize them in media campaigns which they develop themselves.



Identity Development

The encounter with media has always played an increasingly important role in adolescent identity development. Today Internet platforms such as Facebook and YouTube offer youth a new, expanded framework for action. The self-portrayal and medial articulations they enable provide youth with avenues for expanded self-reflection and self-experience. Furthermore, young people locate themselves in social network services in both social and cultural terms while receiving feedback from other users. However, youth walk a tightrope between privacy and publicity with these forms of identity development. The JFF study “The Internet as a Platform for Reception and Presentation of Youth” is aimed at a comprehensive enlightenment of the media behavior of youth in today’s “User-Driven Internet 2.0”. The current section of the study is devoted in particular to the identity-relevance of online activities. Here young people participate in qualitative interviews on their use of social networks. The investigation is a part of media convergence studies, a research focus for the JFF since 2001.

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