CHILD PROTECTION: A LOOK AT SOME INTERNET REGULATIONS

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Introduction

- The internet has become the ‘new medium’ through which much child abuse occurs.
- Focus of attention and regulation in West... but what about African countries?
- This paper looks at current regulations.
- Research with teachers, parents and children in 2 London colleges.
98% of us see the internet as essential for access to knowledge and education (Internet Society, 2013).

99% of children in the UK have access to the internet (Ofcom, 2009).
Online risks for children

- Accessing inappropriate content
- Forming online relationships which may be exploitative
- Identity theft
- Cyber–bullying (Ofcom, 2009)
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

- **Article 4** – Governments have a responsibility to take all available measures to make sure children’s rights are respected, protected and fulfilled.

- **Article 36** – children should be protected from any activity that takes advantage of them or could harm their welfare and development. (UNICEF, 2013)
Byron review in UK recognised that legislation on its own not enough to tackle the problem.

Argued for “a shared culture of responsibility with families, industry, government and others in the public and third sectors all playing their part” (in NIAR, 2010).

200+ organisations came together in UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS).
NSPCC says online threats to children are growing and we face an “e-safety time-bomb” (Sky News, 2014)

Teachers in schools/colleges often best-placed to notice when a child is at risk.
Methodology

- Qualitative interviews in 2 inner London colleges:
  - 30 students (aged 17–18)
  - 10 parents
  - 10 teachers
Findings

- All the participants saw the good in the Internet.
- All the participants agreed that the responsibility for dealing with child protection rests with everyone, children as well as adults.
- Legislation and co-operation by organisations to ensure child protection online was welcomed.
- Internet regulation is necessary for child protection.
Conclusions

- Individuals share many of the same concerns of Government and agencies responsible for child welfare.
- Schools have a key role to play in ensuring procedures and practices in place to help protect children.
- Parents and children also need to take responsibility and play their part.
Literature


