

## Safer Internet for Children

Since 2005, ARC Fund coordinates the Bulgarian Safer Internet Centre (SIC), representing two networks - Insafe, a European network of Awareness Centres promoting safe, responsible use of the Internet and mobile devices to young people, and INHOPE, the International Association of Internet Hotlines that coordinates a network of Internet Hotlines all over the world, supporting them in responding to reports of illegal and harmful for children content and conduct. These initiatives are supported by the EC Safer Internet Program and the OAK Foundation's Child Abuse program.

In 2012, ARC Fund continued to work towards a safer and better internet for youngsters in partnership with Parents association, ARC Consulting and DeConi Agency, mainly

focusing on the following areas:

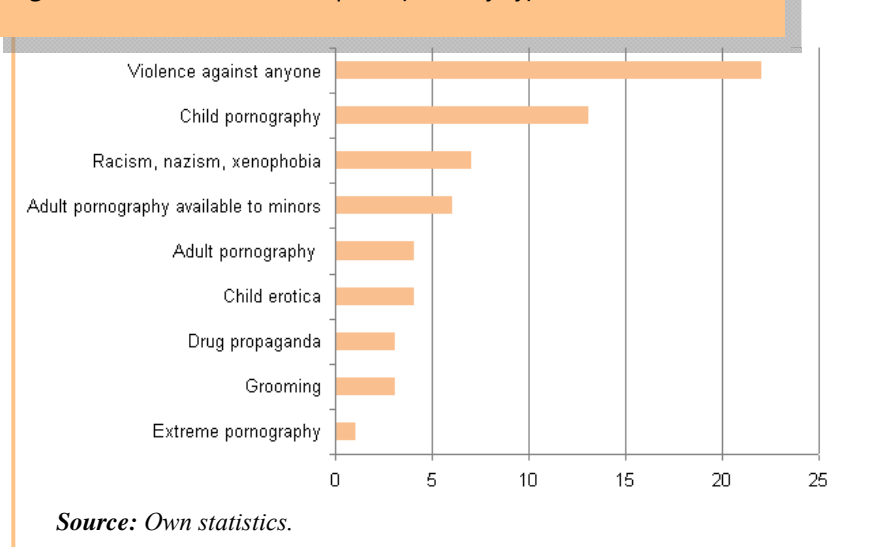
- Protection of minors from all forms of abuse enabled by internet technologies;
- Organization of trainings, seminars, round tables and other activities to increase awareness about online safety among children, teenagers, parents, teachers and other helping professionals;
- Development of awareness raising materials and training methodologies to increase safe and responsible online behaviour and prevent online abuse;
- Knowledge building regarding the current trends and developments in internet and mobile usage among youngsters.

### *Protection of Minors from All Forms of Abuse Enabled by Internet Technologies*

In 2012 the Bulgarian online helpline Web112.net received over 1000 reports, 416 of them were actionable. Over 20 of the reports were related to some kind of illegal action, so they were referred to the authorities and to other INHOPE helplines, where necessary. Through the year the Bulgarian Safer Internet Helpline

consultants received plenty of inquiries from children, parents and teachers through the low-toll telephone number, Skype and e-mail. In some of these cases, a face to face consultation with psychologist was organized to address the support needs of the client.

**Figure 3.** Distribution of unique reports by type



**Trainings, Seminars, Round Tables and Other Awareness Raising Activities**

To celebrate the Safer Internet Day (SID) on 7 February 2012, the Bulgarian Safer Internet Centre organized a national competition for student playwrights centered on the theme of SID 2012 "Connecting generations and educating each other", where young and old users are encouraged to "discover the digital world together...safely!". The teams behind the three best playwrights performed on stage at Sofia Puppet Theatre on 7 February. They were selected by a jury chaired by Milena Damyanova, Deputy Minister of Education, Youth and Science. She claimed that the Safer Internet Day, widely celebrated throughout the country, demonstrates the commitment of the major stakeholders to children's online and offline safety, and the recognition of the important role of the school in ensuring that safety. As a result of

the activism of the Public Council for Safer Internet the Minister of Education, Youth and Science introduced additional classes dedicated to the safer use of internet. During the event, Ms. Damyanova reassured that the Ministry will take further actions to integrate the topic in school curriculums.

SID 2012 was marked by various initiatives across Bulgaria. For a third consecutive year, Varna Municipality embarked on promoting internet safety among young people and organized a variety of events to celebrate the Safer Internet Day. This year the major focus was the award ceremony during which ten students received their *Expert Safer Internet Certificates* for their successful competition of a distant online safety training developed by the Directorate of Preventions at Varna

Municipality and the Bulgarian Safer Internet Centre. The ten trainees were invited by SIC to join the team of the helpline as peer consultants. In addition to supporting the periodically held training courses for

students and professionals, Varna Municipality cooperates with experts from the Bulgarian Safer Internet Centre in elaborating its annual action plan for preventing internet abuses.



*Graduates of the Safer Internet Course in Varna*

In order to promote family and European values the Parents Association, Bulgarian Safer Internet Centre, National Centre for Youth Programs and Initiatives and Municipality of Sofia jointly organized an event dedicated to the Day of Europe, May 9, and the International Day of the Family, May 15. Over 3000 families participated in the numerous activities and competitions to celebrate family, sports, creativity and healthy lifestyle. Official guest of the event was Yor-

danka Fandakova, Mayor of Sofia. Sofia Municipality provided financial support for the event and took a major role in promoting it. After its success, the municipality financed similar, smaller-scale events in four schools in Sofia.

Like in previous years, there was an orienteering track called the Little Europe. The children were “traveling” across Europe to learn more about the culture and traditions of the different nations. They even had the chance to meet people from

these nations as over 30 foreign volunteers participated in the planning and management of the event. The helpline at the Safer Internet Centre organized a special contest “Artware” for art pieces from computer parts. The winning project was a handsome eco-robot, created by

the Ecology club at the 42th School in Sofia. Another initiative of the Safer Internet Centre was the flash mob which aims to promote the safe and responsible attitude towards handling online privacy and passwords.



*Famillathlon 2012 in Sofia*

For the first time in June 2012, ARC Fund explored the opportunities offered by non-formal learning in the area of preventive services. The first regional conference on prevention through interactive non-formal education, which brought together representatives of leading NGOs from the Balkan countries to share their expertise, was held in Sofia. It was attended by professionals from Al-

bania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia and Serbia including representatives of international organisations such as OAK Foundation and Save the Children. The conference was part of the project “Prevention of real and virtual violence through interactive education in schools”, co-financed by OAK Foundation and EC Safer Internet Program and implemented

by ARC Fund and Association Parents.

This year for the second time the SIC team took part in the “Sofia breathes” street festival. For three weekends in a row the experts were delivering open lessons outdoors. Through their participation in the two SIC vinyl games “Flashboy trainer” and “Flashboy in the land of Spammies”, children learned about safer online behaviour and had the opportunity to discuss the online risks and challenges they face. Experts consulted parents and dis-

seminated awareness raising materials such as “10 Myths about the Scary Internet”. Furthermore, in order to increase its outreach the SIC team participated in the “Expo4Kids”, which took place in March in Gallery shopping centre in Plovdiv. During the well-attended event children and parents received awards as well as informational materials such as the SIC booklet *10 myths about the scary internet* and the *Family contract for safe use of the computer*.



*Dimitar Alexandrov, regional governor of Shumen region, speaking at the round table on online protection of children in Shumen*

ARC Fund's role in protecting children from online and mobile threats and facilitator for strengthening the necessary institutions have been widely recognized. Mayors of Varna, Shumen, Ruse, Vratsa, Silistra, Pazardzhik, Dimitrovgrad, Yambol and Sofia, as well as many school principals requested or continued their partnerships with ARC Fund to institutionalize trainings and classes on internet threats, aggression and coping strategies. Throughout the year young people, parents, teachers, school counsellors and social workers participated in trainings, seminars and open lessons organized by Bulgarian SIC experts in cooperation with local public organisations and NGOs. More specifically, attendees learnt about common online traps while playing,

communicating and shopping online, and how to protect themselves from becoming a victim online.

A round table on online protection of children was held in 10 November in the city of Shumen with the participation of the high-level regional and national policy-makers, cyber-crime specialists, university professors, social workers, parents and pupils. The Safer Internet Centre in cooperation with the International Cyber Investigation Training Academy and the University of Shumen prepared a plan for opening a special education module on information protection that was sent to to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Science.

#### *Awareness Raising Materials and Training*

Throughout the year, a number of materials and online resources have been successfully developed, in many cases in close cooperation with other NGOs, government bodies and private firms. The expected impact of their dissemination is to raise awareness among young people and their parents about lurking internet threats and to nurture a culture of responsible online behaviour.

At the SID 2012 award ceremony on 7 February in Sofia the Bulgarian

Safer Internet Centre presented the brand new educational video quest game, developed in collaboration with Dechica.com. This marked the start of a month long student gaming competition with attractive prizes. In an official ceremony on 28 July the video game „Zone of risk“ was proclaimed the best web product in the category Science and Education by the Bulgarian Web Association. In addition, the game was nominated as a top online tool in a resource competition by the European network Insafe.

17:14:11    Време: 00:03  
Точки: 100    ПОМОЩ    Информация за медиите

България  
улица  
БОРИШ

Едва ли някой може да си представи съвременния свят без Интернет. Световната мрежа се превърна в ежедневна среда за комуникация, работа, бизнес и развлечения.

Младите поколения от все по-ранна възраст са онлайн. Интернет обаче крие и рискове, както за възрастните, така и за децата.

НАЧАЛО

ZONE OF RISK

ins@te    ЦЕНТЪР ЗА ПРИОБЩАВАЩО ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ    OAK FOUNDATION    Save the Children Norway    eSKILLS WEEK 2012    European Commission

Zone of risk homepage found at [www.game.safenet.bg](http://www.game.safenet.bg)

With the support of the Raiffeisen's corporate social responsibility campaign "Choose to support", the Bulgarian SIC translated and produced hard copies of the e-safety family kit, developed by Insafe. It is aimed at families with children who are beginning to explore the Internet. The kit includes practical assignments, exercises, materials for drawing and painting, golden safety rules, family contract, situational cards, stickers. Parents are the main target of another material developed by SIC: the booklet "10 Myths about the Scary Internet" that challenges some of the widely held misconceptions about children and new media.

Two resources, developed recently by the Bulgarian Safer Internet Centre, won first and third award in the Insafe resource marketplace, which took place in Budapest in September 2012. The Bulgarian SIC was awarded first place in the section Offline resources for the interactive game "Flashboy

trainer" and third place for the booklet for first graders "My First Memo Book". The latter, which contains a chapter about safer use of internet and mobile technologies, has already reached every first-grader in the country.

One of the SIC trainings, a distance learning course for online safety for students, was translated and adopted by the Safe the Children– Sarajevo. Supported by the Bosnia and Herzegovina's Ministry of Education, Youth and Science the course is delivered in all schools. Based on the success of this distance learning model, SIC and Varna Municipality developed a similar course for teachers and social workers. The first trainings started in October. The Austrian Safer Internet Center adapted the "Real and Virtual Violence prevention methodology" developed by ARC Fund and integrated it in their new teacher handbook.





Booklet for first graders "My First Memo Book"