



Digital Dialogues
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Project 7b
“**Mothers and daughters learn about
the internet**”

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Project 7b

“Mothers and daughters learn about the internet”

Short summary



The central idea of this project was an active and cooperative involvement of mothers and daughters with the internet and with computers. Numerous media endeavors in the fields of producing images, editing audio material and processing text were undertaken with the aid of computers. As a final step in the project, the various outcomes of work done by the

mothers and daughters were incorporated into a homepage and presented on the internet.

Media courses at the WI-JHW Media Centre

With its courses and projects for children, teenagers, and young adults, the Scientific Advisory Institute of the Youth Aid Organization of Freiburg (WI-JHW) has been promoting the constructive use of media since 1984, involving video, radio, computer and internet, and offering access to new media and technologies. The goal of the WI-JHW is to give young people, especially those from socially disadvantaged backgrounds, a chance to take part in the ‘information society’.

The concept for reaching this goal relies on active and practically oriented media work. By creating their own media productions such as video films, radio clips, computer and multimedia products, young people are encouraged and enabled to communicate and articulate their own thoughts and desires. Here they can acquire the knowledge necessary for experimenting with the creative possibilities of media. At the same time, their social and media competence are enhanced. One focal point in the pedagogical work of the



media centre is gender-specific media work with girls and young women.

In the process of actually using different media, children and young people gain insight into how the media work and what they can be used for. They learn to employ them creatively and also to regard them critically. This learning process also helps them to acquire or reinforce various social skills.

- Working on media projects, girls make contacts that they would never have dared to initiate without this support.
- Children – on the street with a microphone in hand – are pleasantly surprised to see that adults suddenly take them seriously as conversation partners. Adults will grant attention and time to children who are working with video cameras.
- An all-girl editorial staff puts together a media calendar for girls that is informative, and at the same time witty and ‘hip’. It is regularly sold out at the beginning of the school year.
- Girls and their mothers take their first steps together in learning about the internet and its possibilities. They research topics of interest to them, gain self-confidence, and design their own homepage.

Thanks to the financial support of the state-funded project “medi@girls – Strengthening the media competence of girls and young women,” a comprehensive spectrum of courses and projects dealing with various media was made possible for the first time in 2001. The project “Mothers and daughters learn about the internet” builds on the experience gained in the previous medi@girls project and profits from its publicity and networking activities, which were instrumental in recruiting participants for the “mother and daughter” project.

The WI-JHW cooperates with youth organizations and schools in the city of Freiburg, Germany. In addition to video and radio clips that have been broadcast by local commercial stations and the creation of the girls’ calendar, there have been various other multimedia activities pursued at the media centre – such as introductions to working with the internet, production of homepages or CD-ROMs.

Participating in new media

Today the trend in practical media pedagogy is to involve participants in recent digital and multimedia developments and, through practice and critical discussion, help them keep pace with the possibilities presented. This means, on the one hand, emphasizing the interconnectedness of

video, radio, and computer in productive work with young people, and on the other, expanding or replacing older (analog) technology with more recent digital techniques and applying digital technology in productions created by the young participants.



There are well-founded fears that technical developments are leading to new class divisions in society: to a split between the ‘information rich’ and the ‘information poor’. With this thought in mind, the WI-JHW media centre aims at participation: its goal is to enable young people – especially those who are socially disadvantaged or marginalized, i.e., those likely to belong to the ‘information poor’ – to partake actively in the revolutionary changes occurring within the field of information technology. This means active involvement in developments surrounding media and multimedia technology, personal engagement in (multi)-media communication and also in social processes for which computer technology is a driving force.

Competence in the use of new media is a pre-requisite for future success in the professional world and other areas of life. The percentage of women and girls working in the promising field of information and communication technology is far lower than that of their male counterparts. Gender-specific attitudes about the competence and interests of women in technical areas often create a barrier for girls when it comes to learning about computers. This pattern is generally established within the family – where fathers and brothers are the ones that handle the computer, while the mothers have little or no computer experience. This affects girls’ development of identity in as much as they frequently regard access to technology as something unattractive to them. The concept of the project “Mothers and daughters learn about the internet” takes this problem as its starting point.

Pedagogical concept

The media offerings available at the Youth Aid Organization in Freiburg are characterized by the fact that they are voluntary (as opposed to school) and aimed at having fun while learning. These are very important elements which trainers have to keep in mind during all work phases. Our workshops in the field of media pedagogy are what we call “resource oriented.” This means that each participant’s situation is taken into account – their previous background, their social and creative

potential, and their individual interests determine the shape of the course. Thus the project has a broad base, it is flexible and can adapt to the experiential world of the participants. It supports them in achieving a confident and competent relationship to the media, which play such an essential role in their everyday lives.



Since women and girls are more interested in content than in technical aspects and tend to see the computer as a tool, acquiring computer skills is easier for them when placed in the context of media productions. In action-oriented projects, group dynamics are considered to be just as important as

production processes. The courses are planned in such a way that at the end of each course, one or more productions – e.g. audio reports, text collages and homepages – are completed and incorporated in a presentation.

The creation of a good learning environment and of a pleasant atmosphere are central features of the pedagogical efforts within the project, alongside the aims of mastering course content and conveying a sense of achievement. Having fun and engaging in creative and experimental work are two elements of the project that should not be underestimated, since girls comprehend media and learn about them in a more playful manner than their male counterparts.



An important goal is the development and encouragement of cooperative forms of work. Factors such as a non-hierarchical division of labour and accepting responsibility are given special attention. Individual work steps may be pursued by a participant working alone, working together with a partner, or in small groups. It often happens that one person becomes a “specialist” who is then called in to give others the benefit of her experience. In applying their knowledge and summarizing it for others,



participants experience positive reinforcement from the group. Cooperative effort on media productions encourages teamwork and helps participants to develop key qualifications.

The overall didactic concept of the course, involving positive role models,

requires that only female trainers or specialists (such as women photographers or journalists) conduct the courses. This makes it possible for girls and women to reflect their own self-image and their images of others in regard to media and technology. They can question stereotyped roles and re-define their own attitudes on the basis of their own positive experience. Gender-specific courses offer girls and women the chance to engage in behaviour and activities that are generally subject to gender stereotypes and that would ordinarily be left to men and boys if they were present.

Requirements for women in media pedagogy

A woman working in media pedagogy faces a wide variety of tasks. Apart from her teaching abilities, she should possess technical knowledge and mastery of the computer programmes employed, knowing how to solve problems that come up. Depending on the kind of course being offered, she may need background in graphics, journalism or other creative areas. Furthermore, it is advisable that she consult a specialist in the area. A woman as trainer is responsible for the planning, organization, and scheduling of the coursework as well as the guidance of group dynamics processes.

This involves organizing an opening round for introductions, assisting each participant to get a good footing within the group, and planning a final session for the course that will be satisfying and successful for all. It is important to keep an eye on the group and its members so that disruptions can be spotted early and dealt with appropriately, and so that excessive demands on individuals can be avoided. Sufficient breaks must be planned and observed carefully, since working at the computer can easily lead to overstepping personal limits (“I just want to finish this part!”). Getting away from the computer for a while will help establish the distance necessary to develop new perspectives and to maintain the concentration required.

The participants should receive as much input as they need; however, once they have the necessary knowledge, trainers should step back and let the girls work on their own. The trainer must have the ability to support the girls in their own efforts to attain independence, often fulfilling a function as coordinator and mediator. She encourages the girls to find their own solutions and calls in other participants before becoming active herself as a problem solver.

Goals

The overall goal is to give mothers and daughters an impetus toward using new media and to help them acquire skills in this field by means of practical experience:

- to encourage self-confident handling of technical equipment and computer technology
- to support the participants in publishing their own media productions
- to encourage critical reflection on / engagement in social developments
- to introduce women and girls to new media in such a way that they enjoy working with them
- to reduce inhibitions and negative attitudes toward media through creative involvement
- to attract families from socially disadvantaged situations as course participants
- to strengthen the media competence of girls and young women by introducing them to new media and giving them the opportunity to acquire application skills
- to improve understanding of the inner workings of the media and to suggest ways in which the participants can use media for their own purposes and as a creative tool.



Backgrounds and qualification of participants

Mothers and daughters from different social strata registered for the workshop. The participants had diverse background and qualifications: from “I’ve never even touched a mouse”, to one mother who uses a PC at work. The expectations of the participants also varied widely: one of the mothers stated clearly at the outset that she wanted to overcome her fear of computers. Up to then, her husband had been the one using the family computer, and she hadn’t seen any necessity to deal with it herself. The situation was similar for her two daughters, who had merely come into marginal contact with computers at school. Another mother and her two daughters had had no experience whatsoever with computers up to that point. This family, originally from Kosovo, wanted to catapult itself out of its “Stone Age” situation into the present (as they put it).

In comparison to the abovementioned families, another mother-daughter team had much more extensive background. The mother used the computer professionally and privately. She saw the workshop as an opportunity, along with her daughter, to do something constructive in her free time and at the same time to expand her knowledge.

Content

Within the framework of the project the following topics were handled:

- introduction to the graphics program *Paint Shop Pro 7*
- use of digital photo cameras, audio recording units and microphones
- investigation of websites specifically for girls and young women
- information on protection of children and young people using the internet
- introduction to the World Wide Web and its services (search programmes)
- introduction to the audio editing program *Cool Edit*
- production of an audio clip (informal opinion survey)
- creating a homepage with the programme *Macromedia Dreamweaver*

Course Schedule (including preparatory phase)

The project covered a period of three months. There were eight weekly meetings, which lasted three hours each, and four weekend meetings. The preparation and follow-up work by the trainers on course content and technical aspects required about the same number of hours. This included research on and composition of suitable training materials as well as testing programmes for use in the pilot course. Because of technical problems with the recording units during the course, additional time and effort had to be invested.

Technical facilities, logistics, work space

The media courses take place in the media centre, which is located in an idyllic house with garden away from the street in a quiet neighbourhood. The garden and all the rooms of the three-story house serve as a setting for the media projects, and at the same time can be incorporated in various ways due to their diverse technical qualities and specifications. The WI-JHW media centre has an excellent technical and spatial infrastructure available to media projects such as “Mothers and daughters learn about the internet.” A video studio and a radio studio as

well as a computer room with nine networked computers and several recording units provide ideal conditions for work in media pedagogy. Sophisticated technical equipment and professional software are available: pre-requisites for a high standard of quality in multimedia productions.

Hardware

- computer with 500 MHZ, 12832 MB graphics card, USB – XXXX, 20 GM hard disk, CD-RW
- color printer, computer screen projector and scanner
- digital camera

Software

During the project the participants worked on nine networked computers using the *Windows* operating system. The software applied included:



Paint Shop Pro 7.0.lnk

1. The graphics programme *Paint Shop Pro* from the company Jasc was chosen because it offers a number of design tools which can be used by non-specialists in creative media projects. In addition, this popular programme has a browser function handy for filing and finding images. It also is suitable for producing basic GIF animations.



IrfanView.lnk

2. *IrfanView* is a small freeware programme that is useful in presenting outcomes, for example in the form of a slide-show. It features a thumbnail-viewer in which pictures can easily be located.



Dreamweaver.lnk

3. *Dreamweaver* is a software programme that can be used to make user-friendly homepages/websites without mastery of the programming language HTML.



Cool Edit 2000.lnk

4. An internet connection, with *Internet Explorer* as a browser
5. The audio editing programme *Cool Edit* is very easy to use and can be downloaded from the Internet in a test version.

This is especially advantageous, since the participants can continue to work with it after the course.

For the production of audio clips, two recording devices and microphones were available.

Work space

The available rooms included

- the computer room, equipped with 9 PCs and a printer
- the radio studio, equipped with professional editing programs, high-performance computers
- group room and a kitchen

Project description



The first day of the workshop was reserved for the participants to get acquainted with one another.

They used the digital cameras to make photos for collages. Then they learned how to transfer the digital photos from the camera to a PC. This was their first “technical contact” with the computer. Some of the

participants created a folder on the hard disk for the first time in their lives, using it to store their photos. The girls and women had one camera per group and took turns experimenting with it. So that they would learn their way around the Media Centre, they were given the assignment of taking pictures anywhere in and around the building and then incorporating them into a guessing game.

On the second day, there was a short introduction on how computers work and on the graphics programme *Paint Shop Pro*.

The digital photos were altered, using stencils, and then printed. At the next meeting, the participants learned about services on the internet and how to set up their own e-mail addresses.

The following session was devoted to surfing the net, investigating and evaluating good websites. The mothers and daughters generally worked alone, later discussing their experience and exchanging information about links and other details. Often, each participant worked by herself at a computer.



Whereas most of the daughters handled keyboard and mouse with ease, at least two of the mothers had considerable difficulty coordinating the mouse and dealing with the tool bar and different frames in *Windows*. Nevertheless, one could observe their pleasure and amazement when they succeeded in finding a homepage or website that interested them. The group decided on “witches and magic” as a theme for developing a homepage. The participants themselves played the witches, used the digital cameras to photograph themselves, and were introduced to additional tools in the programme *Paint Shop Pro 7*. The mothers formed one group, the daughters another. Each group produced a collage.

Since it was also planned to integrate audio elements into the homepage, the children set out with recording devices and microphones to interview passers-by on the topic of witches. The girls were given instructions on using the recording units and later shown how to handle an audio editing programme, so that they could re-arrange their own recorded material. They then used the editing programme to compress their audio clips into an mp3 format and insert them into the homepage.

After the basic goal of creating a homepage had become clear to everyone, tasks were assigned to smaller teams. A brainstorming session produced a wide variety of possible themes. After a long discussion, the mothers and daughters finally agreed on the topic “witches and magic”. The next work steps were planned, with participants taking on different aspects of the job. One group was assigned to the task of designing buttons and arrows for navigation on the homepage; others were busy creating graphics and text to accompany them.

In the course of the last workshop weekend, the results of the various assignments were composed into a homepage. As a relaxing break, a musical piece was recorded in the sound studio by the participants, who brought along their own music instruments for the occasion. One member of the group, who turned out to have genuine musical abilities, directed the session. At the conclusion of the course, the homepage was presented and uploaded onto the net.

Summary

Mutually, mothers and daughters were able to motivate one another to participate in this course. For some of the mothers, one aim was to be involved in an activity together with their daughters – something they have little time for in everyday life. The daughters generally placed more emphasis on learning about new topics. Two mothers reported that they would not have signed up for the course if their daughters hadn't insisted on it. Another parent motivation was interest in knowing what daughters do at the computer when their mothers aren't present. Mothers also hoped to discover new topics to exchange on with their daughters, or wanted to gain more understanding of things their daughters are interested in. It also was a motivating factor for the participants to register for a course given only by women and for women.



The fact that mothers and daughters worked together in this workshop had a number of consequences. At the outset, several participants had indicated that one motivation for visiting this course was to spend some of their free time together. This aspect was taken into account by giving the group enough time to exchange ideas and thoughts and to go on mutual discovery tours, together with the digital camera. A significant contributing factor to the positive atmosphere in the group and among the family members was getting together to cook a midday meal on the weekends. During the breaks, the mothers frequently chatted and, at the end of the course, decided to get together again informally.



The mothers and daughters supported and complemented one another's efforts. They were proud of one another and of their newly acquired abilities and skills. Since the children in the group were more adventuresome, they were soon able to show their mothers all kind of effects they managed to achieve with the picture editing programme. Most of all, the girls enjoyed painting with the computer and printing out the results to take home. The daughters profited from the

concentration and goal-oriented work of their mothers, who took on most of the work that the children considered boring or that reminded them of school – such as writing text for the informative sections of the homepage. Developing the concept demanded a good deal of concentration on the part of all participants. The chosen theme on witches did, however, help motivate everyone to get through this difficult phase of the work.

Almost all of the participants stated explicitly that they wanted to attend the workshop without male members of the family so that they would feel free from the usual role assignments within the family, which tend to determine who is considered competent (or incompetent) at using the computer.

By using their newly acquired technical know-how to create their own homepage, the participants were able to improve their media competence. For purposes of transparency and orientation, it is important that computer beginners always maintain an overview, keeping the overall process and the general assignment in mind. This was accomplished by having the participants present their intermediate results at intervals and discussing them with the whole group. The results were documented on a flip chart and supplemented whenever new content came into play, which also helped enhance different levels of reflection.

During the group activities, it became increasingly clear how greatly the individual participants enjoyed discovering new media. The workshop was intended to be action-oriented, so that each participant could be introduced to the various media at their own speed. The girls and women acquired enough skill to allow them to experiment with technical and creative possibilities. In technical respects and in matters of content, but also in a social context, the project was directed toward the previous experience, interests and abilities of the families. Different media were employed to different extents by the mothers and daughters for self-portrayal. The participants articulated their own needs; desires and interests developed in new ways. Everyday experience with media – and in particular the way they are used – were a central topic of discussion.

Literatur:

"medi@girls - Medienprojekte für Mädchen"; Hrsg. Karin Eble, Irene Schumacher. Kopaed Verlag München 2003

"Mädchen machen Medien- Stärkung der IT- und Medienkompetenz von Mädchen und jungen Frauen am Beispiel des Landesleitprojektes "medi@girls"; Hrsg. Karin Eble/ Martin Welker . Stuttgarter Beiträge zur Medienwirtschaft Nr. 8, April 03

Anhang- Materialsammlung

Links für Mädchen und Frauen

www.mediagirls.de - Medienproduktionen von Mädchen, sowie Informationen für Pädagoginnen
www.lizzynet.de - die Community und Selbstlernplattform für Mädchen von Schulen ans Netz e.V.,
www.zickenpost.de - das Forum für Mädchen im Internet
www.women.de - Verzeichnis mädchen- und frauenspezifischer Webseiten im Internet
www.sexundso.de - pro-familia- Beratungsangebot für Jugendliche
www.internet-abc.de - gibt Eltern, Pädagogen und Kindern Tips zum richtigen Surfen

Suchmaschinen

www.google.de - übersichtliche und schnelle Suchmaschine, ohne Werbung
www.topscout.de/suchma.htm - Suchmaschinenübersicht (auch Metasuchmaschinen und spez.Suchmaschinen)auf einen Blick
www.suchfibel.de - für Einsteigerinnen
www.blinde-kuh.de - Suchmaschine für Kinder

Homepagegestaltung

www.gifsworld.de - Cliparts, Bottons usw., werbefrei
www.bingo-ev.de/graphic/ - Button, Hintergründe...zur Homepagegestaltung

Audio

www.soundnezz.de - Audioprojekt im Internet für Kinder und Jugendliche
www.dasding.de - Medienproduktionen von Jugendlichen beim SWR Südwestrundfunk

Medienpädagogik

www.mediageneration.net/nexum
www.gmk-net.de -Gesellschaft für Medienkompetenz und Kommunikation
www.lag-maedchenpolitik-bw.de - Landesarbeitsgemeinschaft für Mädchenpolitik

Jugendschutz

www.jugendmedienschutz.de/
www.usk.de - Unterhaltungssoftware, Selbkontrolle: Datenbabk der Altersbeschränkungen

Linkliste für die Mädchen

- www.sowieso.de
- www.girliestyle.de
- www.schloss-einstein.de
- www.pfefferkoerner.de
- www.britneyland.de
- www.hp-fc.de
- www.funonline.de
- www.cooeschule.de
- www.kids-box.de
- www.kindernetz.de
- www.kika.de
- www.pokemon.de
- www.zickenpost.de
- www.mediagirls.de
- www.blinde-kuh.de (Suchmaschine für Kinder)

- www.karef.de (Kinderbücher im Internet)
- www.benjaminbluemchen.de
- www.palisto.de (Online Jugendmagazin)
- www.youngnet.de (Internetplattform für Jugendliche)
- www.kindersache.de
- www.webchat.de (Auflistung verschiedener Chats)
- www.elmos-welt.de
- www.kidsville.de
- www.pixelkids.de

Was ist ein "Bit / Byte / Kilobyte / Megabyte / Gigabyte"?

Ein Bit ist die kleinste Informationseinheit, die in der Computerei verwendet wird. Ein Computer funktioniert mit Strom und durch eine geschickte Kombination von "Strom fließen lassen" und "Strom nicht fließen lassen" - und das ganze mehrfach hintereinander.

In einem Bit speichert man, ob Strom fließt (1) oder nicht (0). Oder ob eine Stelle auf einer Diskette magnetisch ist (1), oder nicht (0). Oder ob eine Stelle auf einer CD Licht durchläßt (1) oder nicht (0). Die Kombination von acht Bits -also acht Nullen und einsen- nennt man ein Byte. In einem Byte kann man ein Zeichen, also zum Beispiel einen Buchstaben darstellen und speichern.

1 Zeichen	= 1 Byte	= 8 Bit		
1.024 Zeichen	= 1024 Byte	= 1 Kilobyte	= 1 KByte	= 1 KB
1.048.576 Zeichen	= 1024 Kilobyte	= 1 Megabyte	= 1 MByte	= 1 MB
1.073.741.824 Zeichen	= 1024 Megabyte	= 1 Gigabyte	= 1 GByte	= 1 GB

Der Computer funktioniert nach dem EVA Prinzip

Eingabe

Mit einem Eingabegerät, z.B. Maus, Tastatur oder Grafiktablett, werden Daten in den Computer eingegeben.

Verarbeitung

Der Rechner wandelt die Signale und verarbeitet die Daten.

Ausgabe

Die Daten werden über den Bildschirm oder Drucker dargestellt und ausgegeben.

Bestandteile eines Computers

Prozessor

Der Prozessor ist der wichtigster Bestandteil, die CPU (Central Processing Unit)

z.B. 900 Megahertz (MHz) CPU

Je höher die Taktfrequenz (gemessen in Herz- Hz), desto schneller arbeitet der Computer

RAM

RAM wird der Arbeitsspeicher bzw. Hauptspeicher genannt (z.B. 128 MB SDRAM)

Die Größe des Arbeitsspeicher ist entscheidend für die Leistungsfähigkeit des Computers

Grafikkarte

Die Grafikkarte ist dafür verantwortlich, dass Bilder auf dem Bildschirm erscheinen können. Der Rechner sendet Signale zur Bilddarstellung an den Bildschirm.

Soundkarte

Die Soundkarte ist dafür verantwortlich, dass Töne über die Boxen hörbar sind. Töne können eingespielt werden, wenn ein Mikrofon an die Soundkarte eingesteckt wird und dann mit einem Programm aufgenommen wird, z.B. „Cool edit“. Der Rechner sendet Signale zu den Boxen.

Eingabegeräte

Eingabegeräte sind z.B. Tastatur, Maus, Bildschirm, Drucker, Scanner oder Modem

Externe Speichermedien

Daten (Texte, Bilder, Töne) können auf Speichermedien z.B. Disketten, Festplatten, CD-ROM und DVD gespeichert werden.

Festplatte

Die Festplatte ist das größte und wichtigstes Speichermedium, das im Computer eingebaut ist. Hierauf sind die Programme und das Betriebssystem und gespeichert (Festplattengröße z.B. 20 Gbyte)

CD/ DVD-Laufwerk

Abspielgeräte für unterschiedliche Formen von Speichermedien CD-ROMs oder DVDs

CD-Brenner

Daten oder Musik können auf eine CD gebrannt (kopiert) werden.