

# Adolescents' Digital Skills: Opportunities and Risks

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**Natalie Tercova, M.A. & M.A.**

Interdisciplinary Research Team on Internet and Society, Masaryk University, Czechia

Generation Connect Europe Youth Envoy, ITU

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*Digital media has permeated everyday life.*

*In developed countries, computer use has become less of a lifestyle choice and more of a daily necessity.*

## Importance of Digital Skills for Adolescents

- The digital age we live in requires individuals to have a basic level of digital skills to fully participate in society.
- Adolescents with digital skills have a greater chance of success in education, employment, and personal development.
- Digital skills are becoming increasingly important for accessing public services, participating in democratic processes, and engaging with peers.

# Opportunities

Who are those who are achieving opportunities through higher digital skills?

## **Age**

There is strong evidence that children's digital skills improve with age.

## **Gender**

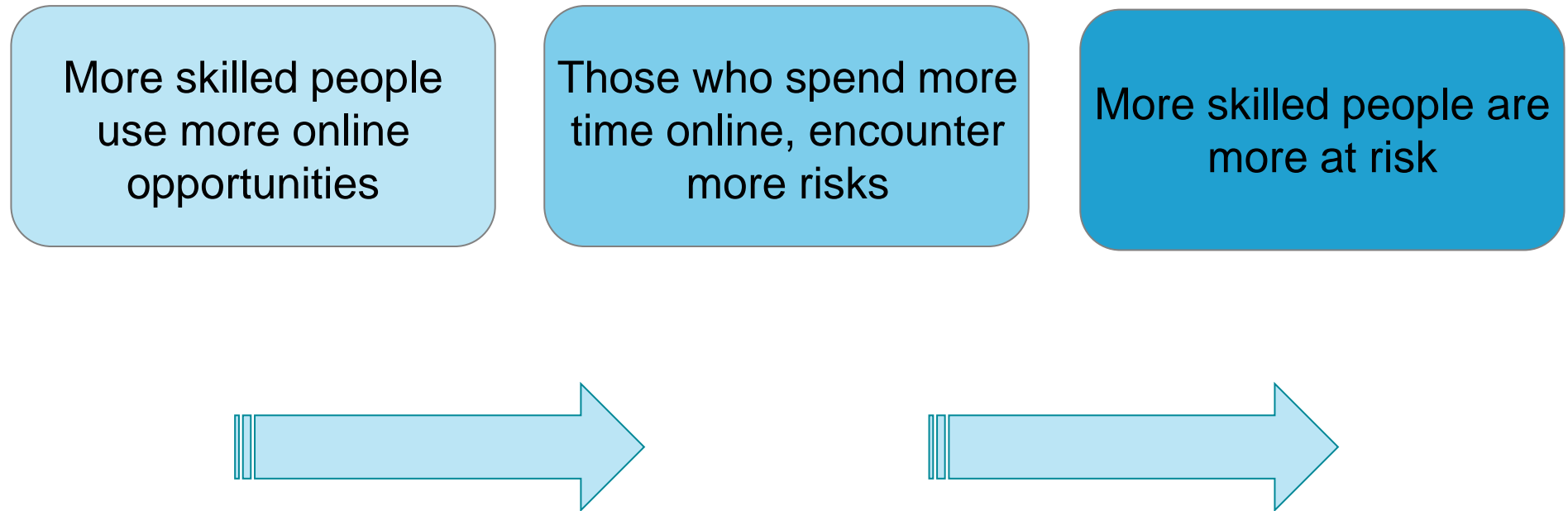
Boys appear to claim better digital skills than girls, but when performance tests are used, there are no gender differences.

## **SES**

Children from higher socioeconomic status households are found to have higher digital skills.

## **Education**

The higher a child's academic achievement, the better their digital skills. Motivation also plays a role and, possibly, learning style.



higher levels of digital skills are associated with more exposure to risky and potentially harmful online content



specific digital skills might in turn act as protective factors against risks



## Risks and Harm

In addition, although children with better skills experience more risks, this **does not actually seem to lead to more harm.**

In fact, in some cases, **better skills reduce harm.**  **coping skills**

## Take-home messages

- Digital skills need to be seen as a double-edged sword
- It is essential to examine the differences between the sub-types of digital skills and what effects they can have on individuals
- Education and facilitation of coping skills in young people is key so that they can better handle possible encounters with online risks

# Thank you for your attention

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Natalie Tercova



NatalieTerc

[natalieterc@mail.muni.cz](mailto:natalieterc@mail.muni.cz)

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