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| Contribution from the Center for Global IT Cooperation | |
| ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ALLIANCE FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN IN THE DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT | |
| **Purpose**  Presenting the work of the Alliance for the Protection of Children in the Digital Environment in the Russian Federation.  **Action required**  This report is transmitted to the Council Working Group on Child Online Protection **for information**.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **References**  <https://internetforkids.ru/en/>; <https://internetforkids.ru/en/charter/> | |

The Center for Global IT-Cooperation (CGITC), being a representative of the Russian civil society and a Sector Member of the ITU-D is playing an active role to support activities of the [Alliance for the Protection of Children in the Digital Environment](https://internetforkids.ru/) (Alliance).

1. The Alliance is a collaborative effort of major Russian telecom, media and tech companies that was launched on September 1, 2021. The goal of the Alliance is to create a safe digital environment, where children will have the opportunity for creative and professional growth, socialization, and safe communication in the virtual space.

The Alliance promotes protection of the younger generation from cybercrime not through restrictions, but through education, creation of positive content, such as games, podcasts and various formats that attract children and educate them about potential dangers of the world wide web.

The Alliance's flagship project is the [Digital Ethics of Childhood Charter](https://internetforkids.ru/charter/), which contains recommendations concerning the issue of child safety for parents, teachers, government officials, and private sector. It is one of the world's first “soft law” documents that is based on ethical principles: respect for the child as an individual, shared responsibility, protection of privacy and values in the online space, as well as inclusivity.

At the moment, more than 12,000 organizations in Russia and abroad have voluntarily joined the Charter and adhere to its principles.

One of the key points of the Charter is self-regulation of digital platforms in terms of proactive content moderation. This means that platforms vow to take steps to prevent the spread of negative content that could potentially harm children.

The creation of the Alliance and the Charter has become an important step in protecting children in the digital environment. What is more, this example demonstrates that, given the right conditions, major digital platforms are willing to admit their responsibilities and take action to shield children from negative content and other online threats without the government interference.

1. The Alliance contributes to the national efforts to improve digital literacy of children and adults. This includes providing training programs and activities aimed at developing safe online behavior. Over the two years, the Alliance has held more than 20 topical events devoted to increase the level of digital literacy.
2. The Alliance is doing its best to strengthen the fight against the spread of child sexual abuse material (CSAM) and, in general, the spread of sexually explicit content that threatens the mental health of children. The Alliance considers that the most effective and practical measures are:

- exchange of data on the localization of materials harmful and dangerous to children and on new methods and mechanisms used by criminals to spread such content;

- creation of “black lists” of online resources containing CSAM and child pornography;

- creation of new technical capabilities for identifying and blocking CSAM and taking comprehensive measures by the Internet services providers including effective use of AI technologies to solve these problems.

1. In this regard Alliance’s flagship project named “Hash Database” is aimed to protect children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse online. This database allows digital platforms to transmit information about illegal content in the form of digital fingerprints (hashes) and links, verify them, mark controversial content, and automatically delete illegal content entered into the database on their sites. All connections are encrypted. The work is focused to prevent distribution of several categories of illegal content: sexualized children's content, illegal drugs promotion, promotion of deviant behavior.

In 2022 since the start of the project, more than 9,100 units of content were removed in the category “distribution of sexualized children’s content” using the hash database. In January-September 2023 only, more than 232,400 units of such content were removed.

The largest players on the Russian ICT industry are participating in this project on a voluntary basis. It is noteworthy to mention that even natural competitors in the industry join forces to protect children in the digital environment.

1. The Alliance for the Protection of Children in the Digital Environment is open to collaboration with ITU and other interested parties and stakeholders from all over the world and looks forward to share and exchange technical solutions, recommendations and initiatives related to the protection of children in the online environment.

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