



Keep children safe while browsing the internet, say MEPs

The Committee on Culture and Education is calling for action to protect children from inappropriate content on the internet. In adopting yesterday a report from Marielle DE SARNEZ (ALDE, FR) on the protection of minors and human dignity, the right of reply and the competitiveness of the European audiovisual and information services industry, MEPs said action was needed from politicians, the industry, schools and parents.

The committee is recommending the creation of a new top-level domain name ".kid" (like .com or .org) with content reserved for children, which could provide a secure Internet area regularly monitored by an independent authority. MEPs said the Commission should introduce a European free telephone number providing information on existing filter methods and making it easier to lodge complaints with the relevant authorities or report harmful sites. This is intended to offset the absence in some Member States of such hotlines.

The latest statistics show that young people spend more time on the Internet than watching television. At the same time, there are around 260 million pages with pornographic content circulating on the Internet. According to Ms De Sarnez, information from some Member States (including Ireland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark) shows one young person in three taking part in discussion forums or chat rooms is subject to sexual advances.

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