

*96th Quality of Childhood (QoC) Talk:*

## **Empowering children and young people to tackle cyberbullying**



### **Invitation**

***Date and Time:***

Tuesday 4th March 2025 11.00 - 12.30 CET

***Hybrid Event***

European Parliament Info Hub & online

---

Hosted by

***Ewa Kopacz***

*Vice President and the European Parliament Coordinator on Children's Rights*

in collaboration with

***Veronika Cifrová Ostrihoňová,***

*MEP, Co-Chair of the Intergroup on Children*

and

***Alliance for Childhood European Network Group***

**Register**

Follow the debate online via [Webex](#)

## Programme

*The event will be moderated by:*

**Chiara Piccolo** • Managing Director of the Alliance for Childhood

**Monika Jagiello** • Administrator in the Office of the EP Coordinator on Children's Rights

- **11.00 Words of welcome and opening**

**VP Ewa Kopacz** • EP Coordinator on Children's Rights

**Veronika Cifrová Ostrihoňová** • Co-Chair of Intergroup on Children

- **11.10 Introduction**

**Christopher Clouder** • Chairman of Alliance for Childhood European Network Group

- **11.20 Cyberbullying in online spaces, typologies and impact on young people**

**Prof. O'Higgins Norman** • UNESCO Chair on Bullying and Cyberbullying and Director, DCU Anti-Bullying Centre

- **11.35 Supporting the mental health of children and youth through fostering resilience**

**Clara Aerts** • Expert on the HERMMES project coordinated by ECSWE (European Council for Steiner/Waldorf Education)

- **11.50 Youth perspective of the phenomenon**

**Fiammetta Montali** • Student from Lille University Law Department

- **12.00 Q&A from participants**

In presence of the representative of the Commission

**Facilitator: Janni Nicol** • Board Member of Alliance For Childhood

- **12.25 Closing words and end of the event**

**Christopher Clouder** • Chairman of Alliance for Childhood European Network Group

## Background and context

Violence against children and young people takes many forms and can impact them physically, emotionally, and mentally. Among these forms, bullying and cyberbullying are particularly prevalent, especially among school-aged children. While both have similar effects on mental health, they differ in how they occur in the lives of children and youth. Cyberbullying, in particular, is a growing phenomenon due to the increasing use of information and communication technologies and easier access to the online world. This has made cyberbullying a significant issue globally, including in Europe, with serious implications for young people's mental health<sup>12</sup>.

Ensuring that online spaces are safe for children and youth is essential. According to UNICEF's 2021 analysis, children aged 10–19 in Europe are more likely to experience mental health disorders than the global average. Pre-pandemic data suggests that one in every 12 European 15-year-olds were experiencing problematic social media use, a key driver of stress and depression<sup>3</sup>. While online platforms can also serve as a space for young people to seek support and information for their mental health, it is critical to address the risks associated with problematic social media use. Evidence shows that parents and schools can play a crucial role in prevention by providing learning tools, advice on appropriate online behavior, and raising awareness about dealing with cyberbullying—whether as a victim or a witness. A balanced approach that supports children's internet use in an enabling, rather than restrictive manner is key.

Understanding the differences between bullying and cyberbullying is crucial not only for prevention but also for empowering children and youth to cope with such experiences and build resilience for the future.

In 2023, the European Commission published a comprehensive communication on mental health, focusing on children and young people's well-being and addressing the potential negative effects of digitalization on mental health<sup>4</sup>. Consequently, in December 2023 the European Parliament, in its resolution on mental health<sup>5</sup> also focused on children and young people and the affect that digitalization has on their mental health. The important role of education in preventing bullying and cyberbullying in school was underlined, as the cyberbullying victims are at higher risk of depression and suicidal ideation.

To further explore this phenomenon and provide insights into prevention and potential interventions, this event will delve into specific aspects of cyberbullying, the online spaces where it occurs, and strategies to address it. The event will also introduce approaches and tools to empower young people to navigate online risks effectively.

---

1 [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/571367/IPOL\\_STU\(2016\)571367\\_EN.pdf#page=54](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2016/571367/IPOL_STU(2016)571367_EN.pdf#page=54)

2 Bullying and Cyberbullying | UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children

3 <https://www.allianceforchildhood.eu/statement-on-mental-health>

4 [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-0457\\_EN.html](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-0457_EN.html)

5 [https://health.ec.europa.eu/document/download/cef45b6d-a871-44d5-9d62-3cecc47eda89\\_en?filename=com\\_2023\\_298\\_1\\_act\\_en.pdf](https://health.ec.europa.eu/document/download/cef45b6d-a871-44d5-9d62-3cecc47eda89_en?filename=com_2023_298_1_act_en.pdf)