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A Challenge Instead of a Bedtime Story

Challenge na dobranoc. Próba usytematyzowania pojęć

Abstract:

The Internet is a global network that connects users regardless of their legal status, age, or place of residence, and provides information, knowledge, and entertainment. Over 30% of internet users take advantage of the games offer, appreciating, among others, the possibility of improving language skills, establishing contacts or achieving the status of a winner. For several years, challenges have been gaining in popularity. Among adults, the rules of these types of games serve to achieve, among other things, prosocial goals, while children and teenagers treat them as a tool for gaining popularity and making friends. Controversies surrounding the participation of children and adolescents serve as a basis for discussions on, among other things, children's rights to make decisions, the reasons behind those decisions, and parental authority (the child's welfare, parental control). The purpose of the article is to highlight the issue of the influence of social media, especially so-called challenges, on the formation of self-destructive behaviors in children and adolescents. The issue requires in-depth analysis in the field of social communication

and media studies, law, and management. The exploratory nature of the publication allows, among other things, for understanding the mechanisms of the challenge, and provides knowledge about the reasons and risks associated with the participation of children and youth in games. The knowledge gained is a source for further scientific research.

Key words: challenge, child rights, video game, parenting

Streszczenie:

Internet to globalna sieć łącząca użytkowników niezależnie od statusu prawnego, wieku czy miejsca zamieszkania, która dostarcza m.in. informacji, wiedzy, rozrywki. Ponad 30% internautów korzysta z oferty gier doceniając m.in. możliwość podniesienia kompetencji językowych, nawiązania kontaktów czy uzyskania statusu zwycięzcy. Od kilku lat, coraz większa popularność zyskują *challenge* (wyzwania). Wśród dorosłych zasady tego typu gier służą realizacji m.in. celów prospołecznych, zaś dzieci i młodzież traktują, jako narzędzie dla zdobywania popularności, znajomości. Kontrowersje związane z udziałem dzieci i młodzieży w wyzwaniach, zwłaszcza balansujących na granicy ryzyka uszczerbku na zdrowiu czy utraty życia, stanowią asumpt do dyskusji dotyczącej m.in. praw dziecka do podejmowania decyzji, przyczyn takich decyzji i władzy rodzicielskiej (dobra dziecka, kontroli rodzicielskiej). Celem artykułu jest uwypuklenie zagadnienia dotyczącego wpływu mediów społecznościowych, a zwłaszcza tzw. wyzwań (challenge'ów) na kształtowanie zachowań autodestrukcyjnych dzieci i młodzieży. Problematyka stanowi zagadnienie wymagające pogłębionej analizy z zakresu nauk o komunikacji społecznej i mediach, prawa i zarządzania. Eksploracyjny charakter publikacji pozwala m.in. na zrozumienie mechanizmów działania challenge`u, dostarcza wiedzy o powodach i ryzykach związanych z udziałem dzieci i młodzieży w grach. Uzyskana wiedza stanowi źródło dla prowadzenia dalszych badan naukowych.

Słowa kluczowe: wyzwanie, prawa dziecka, gra video, rodzicielstwo

1. Introduction

Access to the Internet is increasingly perceived through the lens of fundamental human rights. It is regarded as a tool that enables the exercise of freedom of expression and access to information. "The Internet is

the most significant vehicle of civilizational change in the contemporary world [...]. It has brought about a radical transformation of social space and the social context in which the individual operates. [...] The Internet has become the fullest expression of the postmodern, networked information society"[1]. to approximately 5.35 billion people around the world, but also serves educational and entertainment purposes[2]. Among the vast array of platforms and search engines, games capture the interest of approximately 32.4% of Internet users[3]. Games are attributed with cognitive, educational, and socializing functions, but a contrario, they can also lead to destructive behaviors. The development of gaming is driven by a desire for competition and widespread access to electronic services. Popular challenges are a specific type of game with varied goals and themes, where victory is paradoxically determined not by points, presence, or who finishes first, but by the number of likes or followers. Controversies surrounding the participation of children and adolescents serve as a basis for discussions on, among other things, children's rights to make decisions, the reasons behind those decisions, and parental authority (the child's welfare, parental control).

2. Methodological Assumptions

The aim of this article is to highlight the impact of social media - particularly so-called challenges - on the development of self-destructive behaviors among children and adolescents. The issue is situated within the episteme of cultural studies[4], which "encompasses the entirety of human experience"[5], including a focus on the subjectivity of the child[6]. It requires in-depth analysis within the fields of media and communication studies, law, and governance. The working hypothesis assumes that

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[1] M. Marody, M., Batorski, D., A. Nowak (ed.), *Społeczna przestrzeń Internetu*, (*Social space of the internet*), Publ. ACADEMICA, Warszawa 2006, issue 1, pp. 5, 18.
[2] *Digital 2024: Global Overview Report*, p. 16, https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2024-global-overview-report [accessed: 5.05.2025].
[3] *Digital 2024…*, pp. 60.
[4] E. Domańska , *Jakiej metodologii potrzebuje współczesna humanistyka?*, (*What methodology does modern humanities need*) „Teksty Drugie" 2010, No.1-2,p. 53.
[5] C. Barker, E. A. Jane, *Cultural Studies. Theory and Practice*, SAGE Publications Ltd, New South Wales 2016, issue 5, pp. 5.
[6] J. Clarke, *The Sociology of Childhood*, [in:] *Childhood Studies: An Introduction*, D. Wyse (ed.), Oxford 2004, pp. 78.

challenge-based games influence self-destructive behaviors in children and adolescents, posing a risk to their health or life. The following research questions supported the reasoning process: What is a challenge? What types and categories of challenges can be identified? What factors encourage children's and adolescents' interest in challenges?

The complexity of the issue requires an interdisciplinary approach, which entails methodological interdisciplinarity. The adopted research strategy is partially based on a review of existing literature that employed specific tools, techniques, and methodologies. The qualitative analysis focused on Polish and English-language texts[7] selected from scientific databases (Web of Science™, Scopus, Google Scholar). Legal information resources such as ISAP (Internetowy System Aktów Prawnych) and the LEX Legal Information System were also used to analyze legal texts and case law. Data selection was guided by predefined keywords: "child," "challenge," "network," "video game," "parental authority," and "videos," which served to identify a thematic component grouping these concepts. While thousands of publications address issues such as family protection, cybersecurity, and children's rights, relatively few examine online challenges involving minors. To address this gap, an internet geography method[8] was applied to analyze search engines and platforms, revealing that challenges most frequently appear on TikTok and YouTube. A sample of 300 videos/challenges was collected for content assessment[9]. Given the aim of this publication, it does not propose concrete solutions or research challenges but seeks to provide insight into online challenge practices and the reasons behind their appeal to children and adolescents. This perspective frames the media not only as a space for information exchange but also as a source of behavioral inspiration for underage users.

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[7] S. Cisek, *Metoda analizy i krytyki piśmiennictwa w nauce o informacji i bibliotekoznawstwie w XXI wieku*, (*Method of analysis and critique of literature in the science of information and library science in the 21st century*) „Przegląd Biblioteczny" 2010, No.78(3), pp.273-284.

[8] K. Janc, *Geografia internetu, Rozprawy Naukowe Instytutu Geografii i Rozwoju Regionalnego*, (*Internet Geography, Scientific Dissertations of the Institute of Geography and Regional Development*), Publ. I–BiS ,Wrocław 2017, issue 1, p. 17.

[9] S. Michalczyk, *Uwagi o analizie zawartości mediów*, (*Comments on media content analysis*) „Rocznik Prasoznawczy" 2009, No, 3, pp. 95-109.

3. The Concept of the "Challenge"

The English term "challenge" means, among other things, a difficult task or situation requiring effort, sacrifice, or testing one's knowledge, resilience, or skills[10]. The term "challenge" is primarily associated with sports disciplines and competitions, involving overcoming personal weaknesses to achieve the best results or competing against others for victory. Sporting event names often imply rivalry and the need for proper fitness or endurance, e.g., Baltic Challenge Cup[11]. While sports competitions are tied to physical venues like fields or rings, in the context of online games, Internet access is key[12]. "Some view games as 'bait'—a trap to expose internet users' naivety—while others see them as a call to action" [13]. In this sense, the goal is to expose certain widely disseminated online content. In everyday language, a challenge is linked to planning by individuals or groups aimed at achieving a specific goal. The phrase "to issue a challenge" can sometimes encourage criminal acts, such as fights[14]. The wide variety of situations labeled as challenges makes defining the term difficult.

For this study, a challenge is defined as a viral invitation to actively participate in a game, addressed to a specific person via the internet by the challenger, documented by audiovisual material shared online. The concept of a game may refer to a computer or video game. "A computer game is a multimedia, multi-element product designed primarily to entertain players according to predefined rules, with gameplay visualized on a screen—either an independent device (e.g., TV) or part of an output device (e.g., tablet, mobile phone, or smartphone)" [15]. "A video game is an activity conducted using an audiovisual device, consisting of data

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[10] *Słownik angielsko – polski*, (*English to Polish dictionary*), Word: „challenge", https://www.diki.pl/slownik-angielskiego?q=challenge [accessed: 24.05.2025].

[11] *Baltic Challenge Cup. dotyczy rywalizacji w pływaniu długodystansowym*,(*Baltic Challenge Cup.* concerns long-distance swimming competition) http://balticchallenge.com.pl/ [accessed: 24.05.2025].

[12] K. Król, *Gra wideo czy gra komputerowa? W poszukiwaniu definicji*, (*Video game or computer game? In search of a definition*) "Digital Heritage White Papers" 2020, No. 1(2), pp. 1-7, http://digitalheritage.pl/white-papers/ [accessed: 7.05.2025].

[13] R. Siewiorek, „*Powaga: Beka z beki*", (*Serious: Making fun of making fun*) „Dwutygodnik.com" 2014, www.dwutygodnik.com/artykul/5610-powaga-beka-z-beki.html. [accesed: 15.05.2025].

[14] Art. 159 ustawy z 6 czerwca 1997 r. Kodeks karny (The Criminal Code Act of June 6, 1997), (t.j. Dz. U. z 2025 r. poz. 383).

[15] K. Szpyt, K., *Obrót dobrami wirtualnymi w grach komputerowych. Studium cywilnoprawne*. (*The Circulation of Virtual Goods in Computer Games. A Civil Law Study*) Publ.C. H. Beck, Warszawa 2018, issue 1, p. 12.

stored on a content carrier, which may have a storyline"[16]. Normatively, video games are creative works[17] classified as cultural art[18]. A challenger is an original video shared globally, showing the participant's behavior according to challenge rules. The initiator and player can be anyone who publishes the game or accepts the invitation, regardless of age or other criteria, provided they have an electronic device with Internet access. One "becomes" a player by accepting an invitation sent by the organizer or a previous participant. M. Gannon describes the challenge mechanism: "Musk was nominated by Microsoft founder Bill Gates, who accepted the challenge from Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg. Over Twitter, Musk passed the torch to pro skateboarder Tony Hawk, actor Johnny Depp, and Minecraft creator Markus 'Notch' Persson (who has apparently already stepped up to the challenge)"[19]. It is a chain reaction, an "infection"[20], phenomenon where people influence each other, creating networks[21] of global connections (social network theory[22]) involving participants and observers.

Among game participants, a significant group consists of children aged 6–17. It is difficult to determine the exact number of participants, as many do not admit their involvement. Regarding published statistics on game victims, for example, the USA recorded about 10,000 cases in 2017[23]. The cross-border reach of information about the game and participants enables media image building and gaining popularity. By showcasing their skills, participants gain more followers and likes. Therefore, public

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[16] N. Esposito, *A short and simple definition of what a videogame is*, (in:) *Proceedings of DiGRA 2005 Conference: Changing: Views – Worlds in Play*, University of Vancouver, BC, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, 2006, 16–20 June DiGRA'05.

[17] Directive (EU) 2019/790 Of the European Parliament and of the Councile of 17 April 2019 on copyright and related rights in the Digital Single Market and amending Directives 96/9/EC and 2001/29/EC. OJ L 130/92, 17.5.2019, pp. 10–19.

[18] Point 18. European Parliament Resolution of 18 January 2023 on Consumer Protection in Online Video Games: A European Single Market Approach (2022/2014(INI)), P9_TA(2023)0008, OJ C 214, 16.6.2023, 2023/C 214/03

[19] SpaceX's Elon Musk Takes Ice Bucket Challenge August 19, 2014, https://www.space.com/26876-spacex-elon-musk-takes-ice-bucket-challenge.html [accessed:.3.05.2025].

[20] F. Lupariello, SM.Curti , E Coppo E et al.: *Self-harm risk among adolescents and the phenomenon of the "blue whale challenge"*: *case series and review of the literature*, "Journal of Forensic Science" 2019, No. 64, pp. 638–642

[21] B. Latour B., *Reassembling the Social: An introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*, Oxford University Press, Oxford-New York 2005.

[22] P. Klimas, *Analiza sieciowa w naukach o zarządzaniu (Network analysis as a research method in management sciences)* [in:] *Podstawy metodologii badań w naukach o zarządzaniu*, (*Fundamentals of research methodology in management sciences*), W. Czakon (ed.), Oficyna Wolters Kluwer, Warszawa 2013, issue 1, p. 161.

[23] Strona internetowa American Association of Poison Control Centers, https://poisoncenters.org/ [accessed:. 4.052025].

challenges are often accepted out of fear of criticism and social exclusion (actor-network theory, ANT)[24]. Mutual influence frequently drives uncritical decisions to join the game, which do not always end with success as seen in sports competitions.

4. Typology of Challenges

Online games represent one of the most popular forms of leisure activity among children and teenagers[25]. Among the wide range of available options, particular interest has been observed in various types of challenges. Research conducted by Deslandes et al.[26] Miranda & Miranda[27] has shown that YouTube hosts a vast number of challenge-based videos, which attract significant attention from younger audiences. TikTok has gained widespread popularity in this context. Gaming transcends borders, connecting users of different ages and interests. It facilitates relationship-building, fosters knowledge acquisition, and provides entertainment. Beyond their cognitive, educational, and socializing functions, games can also serve as a medium for self-actualization, becoming a source of motivation to undertake new challenges[28]. Activities such as learning to cook, exploring hairdressing techniques, or experimenting with painting demonstrate the educational and recreational potential of these games[29]. Although challenges are often associated with pleasurable and positive experiences, many of them encourage participants to push personal boundaries. An analysis of challenges disseminated online has served as the basis for distinguishing certain typologies, based primarily on two criteria: Objective, Number of participants.

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[24] B. Latour B., *Reassembling the Social...*.

[25] 53% nastolatków gra w gry online. See: R. Lange, *Nastolatki 3.0, (Teenagers* 3.0)*, NASK – Państwowy Instytut Badawczy, Warszawa 2021, p. 24.

[26] Deslandes S, Coutinho T: *Prevention of "dangerous games" on the Internet: the experience of the DimiCuida Institute line of action in digital environments*, "Saúde Soc São Paulo" 2022, No. 31, pp. 1–12.

[27] Miranda LMF, Miranda LL, *Risco-espetáculo: novas modalidades do risco na era digital*, "Revista de Psicologia, Fortaleza" 2021, No. 12, pp. 141–155.

[28] S. Dupo, *Parent's Guide to Gaming. Keeping gaming fun and safe*, Manningham YMCA Institute of Games, https://instituteofgames.com › uploads 2021.

[29] R. Trojanowski, *Challange*, Publ. Zielona Sowa, Warszawa 2019.

5. Criterion of Purpose

In social sciences, human actions aim to satisfy personal or impersonal needs. Personal needs prioritize one's own expectations and interests, while impersonal needs relate to activities benefiting others[30]. Based on this criterion, actions are classified as prosocial, varying in risk level depending on participants' roles in task execution.

6. Pro-social Challenges

In altruistic actions, challenges can be effective tools for achieving charitable goals and supporting causes. The voluntary nature of participation determines the level of engagement and influences the game's popularity. Personal involvement of celebrities, actors, or business figures energizes other potential participants. Their presence raises interest in the topic and shapes their personal image. Such advocacy typically addresses issues like environmental protection, education, health promotion, and aid to those in need. Several notable examples can be identified.

TrashTag Challenge was initiated in 2015 by Steven Reinhold, who committed to collecting 100 pieces of trash during an upcoming car trip[31]. Inspired by Steven's actions, people worldwide turned it into a global movement—from Mount Everest to the ocean floor. Shared photos and videos online confirmed the need for grassroots efforts to reduce, for example, the "world's largest garbage patch" and to clean the ocean depths. The visual material served both as proof of cleanup and as a viral incentive for other initiatives[32]. Another popular example is the Cold Bucket Challenge or ALS Ice Bucket Challenge, which involved pouring cold water or ice cubes over participants. Among many participants were B. Gates[33], Elon Musk[34], Taylor Swift, and Oprah Winfrey. The effective-

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[30] A. Maslow, *Theory of Human Motivation*. Www.Bnpublishing.Com, 2017.

[31] Zob Strona internetowa #TRASHTAG", https://www.trashtag.org/what-we-do#:~:text=zobowi [accessed:. 4.05.2025].

[32] https://www.trashtag.org/what-we-do#:~:text=zobowi%C4%85za%C5%82%20si%C4%99%20 zebra%C4%87%20100%20sztuk%20%C5%9Bmieci%20podczas%20nadchodz%C4%85cej%20 podr%C3%B3%C5%BCy%20samochodem.%20Pomys%C5%82 [accessed: 4.05.2025].

[33] *Bill Gates ALS Ice Bucket Challenge*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XS6ysDFTbLU (accessed: 4.05.2025].

[34] *Kids Dump Ice Water On Elon Musk For ALS Challenge*, Video, Youtube, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kBNWp1HaiwQ [accessed:. 4.05.2025].

ness of the cause was likely overshadowed only by the surprise caused by the cold water. Although not all nominees accepted the challenge, the campaign achieved measurable results.

In 2014, a promotional campaign called #RzadkieChoroby was conducted, where participants recorded videos on the Facebook profile fb.com/DzienChorobRzadkich. The campaign received support from various figures, including blogger Natalia Hatalska[35]. Another example is the #hot16challenge organized with the Siepomaga.pl foundation during the COVID-19 pandemic. This initiative involved nominated musicians and singers, such as D. Podsiadło[36] (nominated by Taco Hemingway and Quebonafide), M. Szpak[37], and R. Węgiel[38]. Participants were tasked with composing and performing 16 bars of rap to be shared within 72 hours on the campaign page[39]. Although not all nominees participated[40], the campaign attracted significant attention, involving about 95,060 people. According to the organizer, "Polski Hiphop," the campaign was a financial success, raising approximately 3,681,884 PLN for COVID-19 relief efforts[41].

7. Risk-Based Games

The term "risk" is associated with a state of uncertainty. The Polish language dictionary defines it as "the possibility that something will fail; also, an undertaking with an uncertain outcome," "daring to face such danger," and "the probability of damage affecting a harmed person regardless of their fault, unless another party is legally obliged to compensate"[42]. Consequently, outcomes are difficult to predict, though the

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[35] M. Gyzikowska, A*kcja Ice Bucket Challenge dla chorób rzadkich - oblej się wodą i wspieraj chorych, (Ice Bucket Challenge for rare diseases - pour water on yourself and support the sick) 2014.08.29,*„ Poradnik zdrowie", mhttps://www.poradnikzdrowie.pl/aktualnosci/akcja-ice-bucket-challenge-dla-chorob-rzadkich-oblej-sie-woda-aa-uQBM-eZGN-rBX1.html [accessed: 23.04.2025].

[36] Dawid Podsiadlo #hot16challenge2 Youtube [accessed: 23.04.2025].

[37] Szpaku #Hot16Challenge2, Youtub [accessed: 23.04.2025].

[38] R, Węgiel #Hot16Challenge2 (prod. Deemz) Youtube [accessed: 23.04.2025].

[39] See: https://genius.com/Rap-genius-polska-hot16challenge2-artysci-nominacje-drzewko-artists-nominations-chart-annotated [accessed: 23.04.2025].

[40] See: https://genius.com/Rap-genius-polska-hot16challenge2-artysci-nominacje-drzewko-artists-nominations-chart-annotated [accessed: 23.04.2025].

[41] Strona internatowa siepomaga, https://www.siepomaga.pl/hot16challenge [accessed: 23.04.2025].

[42] Słownik języka polskiego PWN (*PWN Polish Dictionar*y online) https://sjp.pwn.pl/slowniki/ryzyko.html [accessed: 5.06.2025].

possibility of occurrence can be assumed. In decision-making processes of children and adolescents, risk analysis regarding consequences is often shallow. Peer pressure or impulses largely determine a child's participation in challenges, which may threaten highly valued assets: the participant's health and life[43]. The varying threat levels form the basis for classifying challenges as risk-free, low-risk, or high-risk. The first category includes games aimed at eliciting positive emotions and effects. Challenges with entertaining, educational, or prosocial purposes are generally free of risks to participants. For example, challenges by Mi Nastya and Artem, targeting children and youth, involve activities such as cooking lessons and learning traffic safety rules [44].

Low-risk challenges are games where participants, due to lack of skills or refusal to complete the task, risk losing authority or popularity. An example is the "48 Hours Challenge," where participants run away from home, expecting their relatives to start a search; the number of people involved determines the points awarded. Notably, even children as young as nine may succumb to peer pressure and run away for several days[45].

The desire to impress peers leads children to participate in games risking their greatest assets: life and health. For example, the "Momo Challenge," spread on platforms like YouTube and YouTube Kids, features a doll with bulging eyes and a bird-like body that seemingly presents a children's show but actually urges dangerous tasks. Threats and blackmail are used to prevent the child from revealing the challenge to parents or relatives. "Momo's commands are self-destructive, leading to self-harm. The game manipulates emotionally unstable individuals, mostly adolescents experiencing teenage rebellion" [46]. Targeted mainly at young children, the "Fire Fairy" instructs kids to open gas knobs on a stove at midnight and inhale the gas throughout the night, supposedly becoming a "true fire fairy"[47].

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[43] B Roguska, *Deklarowane wartości i cele życiowe młodych Polaków.(Declared values and life goals of young Polends),* Komunikat z badan CBOS, Warszawa 2005, No. 54.

[44] *Zabawne wyzwania Mii Nastyi i Artem*, (*Fun challenges from Mii Nastya and Artem*) https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLIcN67V-sS1EFgDkQVxlB5eDDkhcuHFpy [accessed: 1.06.2025].

[45] In France, a 9-year-old girl disappeared without a trace for 3 days. After that, as if nothing had happened, she went back home.

[46] StronaBrzezinyInfo,6października mi2018, https://www.facebook.com/brzezinyinfo/photos/a.632149220281477/1126817627481298/?locale=pl_PL [accessed 25.05.2025].

[47] G. Burtan, „*Wróżka Ognia" zabija! Nie daj się podpuścić głupiemu żartowi i nie siej paranoi*, („*Fire Fairy" kills! Don't fall for a stupid joke and don't spread paranoia*) 16 sierpnia 2017,https://tech.wp.pl/wrozka-ognia-zabija-nie-daj-sie-podpuscic-glupiemu-zartowi-i-nie-siej-paranoi,6155853391243393a [accessed: 13.05.2025].

The so-called "Blackout Challenge" encourages participants to perform rapid squats, take short breaths, and then place their thumb in their mouth while holding their breath. This behavior restricts the flow of oxygen to the brain, potentially resulting in loss of consciousness[48]. The "Skin Stitching" or "Skin Swing" challenge encourages participants to embroider patterns directly onto their skin using a needle and thread"[49]. In 2021, the "Blue Whale Challenge" gained popularity. The game "The Guardian" assigns participants tasks of varying levels of difficulty over a period of 50 days. As time progresses, the tasks become more extreme and dangerous, Participants were instructed to engage in self-harming behaviors such as cutting their skin with razor blades, avoiding sleep, and watching horror films — ultimately culminating in the expectation that the "winner" would commit suicide.[50]. The "Tide Pod Challenge" encourages individuals to consume laundry detergent pods or other harmful substances, leading to serious damage to the throat and gastrointestinal tract[51]. Similar effects are produced by the "Cinnamon Challenge," which involves attempting to swallow a large spoonful of cinnamon within 60 seconds without drinking any liquids. Another example is the "Benadryl Challenge." The "Bird Box Challenge" consists of staring at rapidly changing visual stimuli for prolonged periods, which may lead to vision damage[52]. „Milk crate challenge" [53] encourages individuals to climb unstable stacks of milk crates,. „Blue Whale Challenge". required participants to engage in self-harming behaviors over a period of 50 days. Several suicide cases among

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[48] HNM, *Przerażające wyzwanie na TikToku. Wstrzymaj oddech, aż utracisz przytomność. 10-latka nie żyje (A terrifying TikTok challenge. Hold your breath until you lose consciousness. 10-year-old is dead)*, 12.28.2021, https://www.o2.pl/kobieta/przerazajace-wyzwanie-na-tiktoku-wstrzymaj-oddech-az-utracisz-przytomnosc-jest-ofiara-6720396529683296a [accessed: 5.05.2025].

[49] P. Tukker, *Cultural lineage: Reclaiming the Indigenous art of skin stitching,* CBC News · Posted: 07.09., 2016, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/gwitchin-tattoo-skin-stitching-first-nations-1.3796606 [accessed: 5.05 2025].

[50] *Niebezpieczna dla dzieci gra o nazwie „niebieski wieloryb" dotarła do Polski*, (*A dangerous game called „Blue Whale" has reached Poland*),Strona intenrtowa Prokuratury krajowej, 03.17.2025.https://www.gov.pl/web/prokuratura-krajowa/niebezpieczna-dla-dzieci-gra-o-nazwie-niebieski-wieloryb-dotarla-do-polski [accessed: 5.05 2025].

[51] D. Seder, *What is the Tide Pod Challenge*.02.19.2018, https://www.vumc.org/poison-control/toxicology-question-week/feb-19-2018-what-tide-pod-challenge [accessed: 5.05 2025].

[52] K. Burzec, *Netflix ostrzega przed Bird Box Challenge. Nie próbujcie tego w domu*, (*Netflix warns against the Bird Box Challenge. Don't try this at home)*,01.04.2019, https://www.polityka.pl/tygodnikpolityka/ludziei-style/1777416,1,netflix-ostrzega-przed-bird-box-challenge-nie-probujcie-tego-w-domu.read [accessed: 5.06.2025].

[53] M. Yang, *Milk crate challenge has doctors warning it's 'worse than falling from a ladder'*,06.26.2021, ttps://www.theguardian.com/technology/2021/aug/25/milk-crate-challenge-tiktok-doctors [accessed: 5.06.2025].

participants have been reported worldwide[54]. In the „Eraser challenge"? the participant is instructed to rub an eraser against their skin while simultaneously performing another task. The goal is to determine who can endure the pain the longest, with the extent of the wounds serving as a marker of endurance or success.

Another example of a high-risk challenge is the "Kiki Challenge," which involves exiting a moving vehicle to perform dance moves on a busy road while the car continues to move without a driver. Such behavior endangers not only the participant but also other road users.

8. Criterion of Number of Participants

Participation in challenges typically involves two main parties: the challenger and the challenged. In practice, there is usually a single entity issuing the challenge, while the number of respondents may vary significantly. Based on the number of participants, challenges can be classified into: individual and group challenges. Individual challenges are defined by the participation of a single person performing the task in the presence of internet users or by posting a video confirming the completion of the task. Group challenges involve several people with the same intention, taking part in the execution of the task. An example is the "Skullbreaker Challenge," which involves kicking someone who jumps into the air[55].

9. Criterion of Participant Roles in Task Execution

In individual challenges, the player is personally responsible for providing the necessary materials and tools required to complete the task, while the method and technique of execution are defined by the rules of the game. In team challenges, not all participants are required to perform the same task, which results in a division of roles. For this reason, challenges can be classified as authentic or staged.

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[54] B. Wojciechowski, *Internetowe zabawy, kotre poszly za daleko*, (*Online games that went too far*) .07.22. 2023 17:00 https://antyweb.pl/przez-te-challenge-gineli-ludzie [accessed: 5.05.2025].

[55] M. Blandyna Lewkowicz, *Jak TikTok chroni dzieci?(How does TikTok protect children?*), We checked 06.09.20224,https://cyberdefence24.pl/social-media/jak-tiktok-chroni-dzieci-sprawdzilismy [accessed 25.05.2025].

10. Authentic challenges

Each participant is aware of the set of tasks assigned to them and performs them knowingly, bearing all consequences resulting from failure to complete or improper execution of the task

11. Staged challenges

"Apparentness," according to the Great Dictionary of the Polish Language, means "a discrepancy between an action and the actor's true intention, which is conscious, revealed to the addressee, and accepted by them"[56]. In some challenges, participants have varying levels of understanding regarding the rules and assigned roles. The element of surprise during the game is crucial to achieving the intended goal. An example is the "Skull Breaker Challenge," which supposedly involves learning a dance, but in fact the person performing a move - e.g., jumping - is thrown off balance, for instance by having their leg kicked, likely causing them to fall[57] .

12. Factors Determining Participation in Challenges

Children as media users - often uncritically - consume disseminated content and co-create the reality that surrounds us[58]. Unfortunately, the choices made by the youngest users do not always lead to positive outcomes. The proposed typology, along with the examples cited, confirms the strong involvement of children in challenge-based games. The identified scale of risks associated with participation in challenges raises questions about the underlying reasons for such behavior. Among the many contributing factors, cultural, psychological, social, and legal aspects can be distinguished.

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[56] The term: „pozorność" Wielkiego słownika języka polskiego, https://wsjp.pl/haslo/podglad/95309/pozornosc/5235400/oswiadczenia-woli [accessed: 1.06.2025].

[57] „The term: pozorność" Wielkiego słownika języka polskiego.

[58] J. Szymanowska, *Obraz świata przekazywany w reklamie – zagrożeniem współczesnego dzieciństwa*,(*The image of the world conveyed in advertising – a threat to modern childhood*) [in:] *Media elektroniczne w życiu dziecka w kontekście wartości wychowawczych oraz zagrożeń*,(*Electronic media in a child's life in the context of educational values and threats*), J. Izdebska (ed.), Trans Humana Wydawnictwo Uniwerszteckie, Białystok 2008, issue 1, p. 18.

Culture is a multifaceted concept, making it impossible to define unambiguously. It is most often understood as the entirety of human activity, both material and immaterial, including patterns of behavior and thought[59]. In the context of children and adolescents, one can speak of e-culture - emerging from youth-created structures characterized by openness to digital change, where autonomous and anonymous individuals co-create "a stage on which events typical of the social world of children unfold"[60]. Engagement with digital content shapes lifestyle. The term itself is broad, making it difficult to establish a single, universally accepted definition. A person's lifestyle consists of standard reactions and behavior patterns (actions, activities, practices) shaped in the process of socialization (interactions with parents, family members, peers, schooling, and media)[61]. Using computers and the internet changes mentalities and relationships, as young people increasingly glorify online friendships through social media.[62]. Children and adolescents spend approximately 6 hours and 40 minutes online each day. Among them, 87% of girls aged 9–12 and 80% of those aged 13–15 play at least one computer game. For boys, this figure reaches 93%[63]. According to data published in 2025, among children aged 7–12, one in three (760,000, or 32%) has regular access to the TikTok platform, 24% (580,000) to Facebook, and 12% (290,000) to Instagram. Active TikTok users spend an average of 2 hours and 11 minutes on the app daily, typically opening it dozens of times throughout the day. It is estimated that more than 300,000 children spend over two hours a day on TikTok[64]. Older children (aged 7–14) most often use the internet to play games and listen to music - activities engaged in by 95% of young internet users[65]. The creation of digital culture does not require physical activity. Participation occurs through, among other

[59] A. Kłoskowska *Socjologia kultury*, (*Sociology of culture*), Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 1981, issue 1.

[60] J. Zwiernik, *Dziecięca codzienność w przestrzeni podwórka*.(*Children's daily life in the yard*) [in:] *Pedagogika wczesnoszkolna – dyskursy, problemy, rozwiązania*, (*Early childhood education – discourses, problems, solutions*) (ed) D. Klus-Stańska, M. Szczep-ska-Pustkowska, Wydawnictwo Akademickie i Profesjonalne, Warszawa 2008, issue 1, p. .411.

[61] D. Ponczek, I. Olszowy, *Styl życia młodzieży i jego wpływ na zdrowie*, (*The lifestyle of young people and its impact on health*) „Problemy Higieny i Epidemiologii" 2012, No. 93(2), p. 263.

[62] *Youth in Europe. European Commission: Eurostat 2009*, pp. 137, 144.

[63] M. Borowski, C. Kulesza, K. Szarzyński, P. Wlodarski, P. Rodzinska –Szary, *Polish Gamers Kids* PurrMedia, Warszawa 2022, issue 1, p. 10.

[64] M. Bigaj, K. Ciesiołkiewicz, K. Mikulski, A. Miotk, J. Przewłocka, M. Rosa, A. Załęska, *Internet dzieci. Raport z monitoringu obecności dzieci i młodzieży w Internecie*, (*Children's Internet. Report on monitoring the presence of children and youth on the Internet*), Państwowa Komisja do spraw przeciwdziałania wykorzystaniu seksualnemu małoletnich poniżej lat 15, Warszawa 2025, issue 1, p. 24.

[65] M. Bigaj, K. Ciesiołkiewicz, K. Mikulski, A. Miotk, J. Przewłocka, M. Rosa, A. Załęska „*Internet dzieci…*

things, the exchange of information, education, or involvement in games. Online platforms are a space "[...] where teenagers can experiment with different versions of themselves, showcase their achievements, interests, and challenges. This is especially valuable during adolescence, when young people are intensely searching for their identity. Unfortunately, these same platforms often promote unrealistic and one-sided standards of beauty, success, and behavior, which can lead to problems with self-acceptance and lowered self-esteem"[66]. Children generate a wide range of playful and text-based games, which take on various forms. The storylines of many challenges often replicate elements of computer games familiar to children and adolescents. Characters do not die or suffer consequences; instead, they often succeed - replicating their behaviors may create a sense of invincibility and foster heroic attitudes among peers.

"Young people [...] engage in dangerous challenges largely due to a need for social acceptance and peer recognition. Social media, which promote competition, likes, and subscriptions, may intensify this pressure. Additionally, the lack of a fully developed ability to assess risk, combined with the desire to attract attention, often leads teenagers to underestimate the seriousness of their actions"[67]. Children in the digital environment are characterized by a high level of trust, which significantly reduces their ability to critically analyze the content they encounter online.[68] Similarly, a clear distinction should be made between content addressed to children, adolescents, and adults. "The overload of information reaching children makes them unable to distinguish fiction from reality. Watching scenes of aggression or violence may, in the future, lead to the development of emotional disorders or aggressive behavior"[69]. Exposure to content depicting murder, harm to others, or plotting schemes may contribute to desensitization which" […] refers

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[66] A. Pawiłowicz-Janczys, *W jaki sposób na życie naszych nastolatków wpływają media społecznościowe?*, (*How social media affects the lives of our teenagers*), "Kurier wileński", 05.20.2024, https://kurierwilenski.lt/2024/05/20/w-jaki-sposob-na-zycie-naszych-nastolatkow-wplywaja-media-spolecznosciowe/ [accessed: 5.05.2025].

[67] *Internetowy challenge coraz bardziej niebezpieczny dla dzieci*, (*Online challenge increasingly dangerous for children*) 09.18,2024, "Gazeta Bytomska", https://zyciebytomskie.pl/pl/757_styl-zycia/27304_internetowy-challenge-coraz-bardziej-niebezpieczny-dla-dzieci.html [accessed: 6.05.2025].

[68] J. Pyżalski, A. Zdrodowska, Ł. Tomczyk, K. Abramczuk, *Polskie badanie EU Kids Online 2018. Najważniejsze wyniki i wnioski*, (*Polish EU Kids Online 2018 study. Key findings and conclusions*), Poznań 2019, accessed: online: https://fundacja.orange.pl/files/user_files/EU_Kids_Online_2019_v2.pdf [accessed: 17.01.2025].

[69] B. Krzesińska-Żach, *Edukacja medialna dziecka w rodzinie – wybrane aspekty.*(*Child's media education in the family – selected aspects*) [in:] *Dziecko i media elektroniczne – nowy wymiar dzieciństwa*, (*Children and electronic media – a new dimension of childhood*),(ed) J.Izdebska, T. Sosnowski,Wydawnictwo Uniwersyteckie Trans Humana, Białystok 2005, issue 1.

to the reduction of sensitivity to violent scenes as a result of habituation, leading to a kind of "numbing effect" that may stimulate negative behaviors or the repetition of harmful patterns[70]. Cognitive immaturity, limited risk assessment skills, and lack of life experience make them particularly vulnerable to manipulation and exposure to harmful content[71]. "An important basis for such behavior is emotional immaturity and brain development - particularly in children and adolescents, the prefrontal cortex, responsible for rational decision-making, is not yet fully developed. Added to this is the impulsiveness typical of young people, the need for adrenaline, and the desire for instant gratification, which is reinforced by reach, likes, and comments on social media platforms"[72]. Understanding the complex media world requires—above all—the provision of an appropriate external environment[73]. Anonymity on the Internet creates a perspective for seeking answers to the questions posed every day. The digitalization[74] results in children and adolescents being unable to build relationships with parents or peers. "Media affect child development, family functioning, parent–child relationships, and leisure time. Excessive use worsens communication, reduces active time, and hinders parents from noticing developmental issues"[75]. Lack of emotional bonds leads to seeking support from digital authorities, as online advice replaces the need to consult close ones. "The presence of children and younger adolescents in unsafe areas of digital space is also linked to low adult awareness of digital hygiene - that is, health-protective behaviors related to the use of information and communication technologies"[76].

Irrational media use by children and lack of parental involvement may lead to family tragedies. Viral asphyxiation was identified as the cause of death of 13-year-old Maia Walsh (October 2022) and 14-year-old Juliana "Jools" (April 2022). Watching videos related to the "Blackout Challenge" for up to 20 hours had fatal consequences: 8-year-old Lalani Erika

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[70] C. Carson, James N. Butcher, Susan Mineka: *Psychologia zaburzeń*, Gdańsk 2003, p. 1095.

[71] S. Livingstone, A. Third, „*Children and young people's rights in the digital age: An emerging agenda*", "New Media & Society" 2017, t. 19, nr 5, p. 657-670, https://eprints.lse.ac.uk/68759/7/Livingstone_Children%20and%20young%20peoples%20rights_2017_author%20LSERO.pdf [accessed: 17 .01.2025].

[72] Online *challenge*.…

[73] A. Birch, T. Malim, *Developmental Psychology: From Infancy to Adulthood*, Palgrave, Bristol, 1997, issue 2.

[74] The term used for Noreene Hertz.

[75] M. Lew icka, *Media – wartości – rodzina. Możliwości pedagogicznego wsparcia.(Media – values – family. Possibilities of pedagogical support)* „Przegląd Pedagogiczny" 2005, No. 1, pp. 73–90.

[76] M. Bigaj, M. Woynarowska, K. Ciesiołkiewicz, M. Klimowicz, M. Panczyk,(ed) *Higiena cyfrowa dorosłych użytkowniczek i użytkowników internetu w Polsce*,(*Digital hygiene of adult internet users in Poland*), Publ. Newsline, Warszawa 2023, p. 10.

Walton hanged herself with a rope, and 9-year-old Arriani Jaileen Arroyo with a leash[77]. A 14-year-old boy, James Boyd-Gergely from Southern Tablelands in New South Wales, died in 2020, as did a 10-year-old child[78] from Italy[79]. Similar tragedies have occurred in Poland. A 15-year-old Michał from Warsaw died due to self-strangulation while three teenagers from Pyrzyce County (West Pomeranian Voivodeship) self-harmed by carving the symbol "F50" into their arms with a sharp object. Parents often blame the media. TikTok was accused of causing the deaths of 8-year-old Lalani Erika Walton and 9-year-old Arriani Jaileen Arroyo, both linked to the Blackout Challenge. The lawsuit stated, among other things: "(...) TikTok's algorithms exploit users under the age of 18, whose brains are not fully developed to control their impulses and emotions. Despite being aware of the dangerous Blackout Challenge, the company failed to take reasonable and appropriate steps - such as blocking or removing videos - to prevent children from viewing such content"[80]. Similar allegations were made by the families of Isaac Kenevan (13), Archie Battersbee (12), Juliana "Jools" Sweeney (14), and Maia Walsh (13), who filed a lawsuit in the Delaware Supreme Court, claiming their children died as a result of the so-called "Blackout Challenge," promoted by TikTok's algorithms" [81]. Media responsibility for published content should be considered from two perspectives: the subjective - focused on the user - and the objective - concerning, among other things, the content itself. Subjectively, the issue fits into the discourse on the child's right to freely seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of borders and through any media [82], versus the regulation of information freedom due to the public interest and the child's welfare, as determinants of child safety policy in cyberspace (objective perspective).

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[77] M. Bigaj, M. Woynarowska, K. Ciesiołkiewicz, M. Klimowicz, M. Panczyk,(ed) *Higiena cyfrowa*, p. 10.

[78] AFP, *Italy probes 'TikTok challenge' death of 10-year-old girl*, 22/01/2021 https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20210122-italy-probes-tiktok-challenge-death-of-10-year-old-girl [accessed: 4.05.20256].

[79] C. Porterfield, *TikTok Will Bar Users Aged 13 And Under In Italy After 10-Year-Old Girl's Death*, Feb Forbes, 03, 2021, https://www.forbes.com/sites/carlieporterfield/2021/02/03/tiktok-will-bar-users-aged-13-and-under-in-italy-after-10-year-old-girls-death/?sh=1140313fe5c8 [accessed: 2.05.2025].

[80] P. Maretycz, *TikTok blackout challenge – serwis oskarżony o śmierć dzieci, (TikTok blackout challenge – service accused of children's death*) Page adnroid, 07.04 2022 r., https://android.com.pl/news/496848-tiktok-blackout-challenge/ [accessed: 4.05.2025].

[81] L. McMahon,G.Frase, *TikTok sued by parents of UK teens after alleged challenge deaths* 07.02.2025, https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c0lz2x60w46o [accessed: 5.05.2025].

[82] Art. 13 Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1989, Journal of Laws 1991 No. 120, item 526.

According to the law, a "child" is any person under the age of 18[83]. A person who is at least 13 years old, under the Act of 23 April 1964 – Civil Code, has limited legal capacity[84] and is therefore entitled to independently make decisions and declarations of intent[85], including those related to the choice of information media and published content. The issue discussed is part of the broader framework of the child's right to privacy. The concept of privacy evolves alongside changes in social and cultural contexts. The "right to be let alone[86]" is not absolute. As H. Nissenbaum observes, "modern privacy standards are closely linked to dynamic and varied socio-technical conditions, where the boundaries between public and private spheres are continually renegotiated"[87]. According to Westin[88] and DeCew[89], privacy encompasses three key aspects: the sphere of intimacy, individual decision-making autonomy, and control over personal information. "Decision-making autonomy, as the second pillar of privacy, emphasizes the individual's ability to make independent choices regarding their personal and social life" [90]. On a personal level, it provides space for self-expression, allowing individuals to freely express their thoughts, emotions, and values, and to shape their identity and image without external pressure. As a result, it equips individuals with the competence to define the boundaries of sharing personal information in terms of both content and form. However, this right is not absolute[91].

Concern for the safety of children using media access has long been a basis for media law, including restrictions on media freedom. For 40 years - starting with the Council Directive of 10 September 1984 on the approximation of laws regarding misleading advertising[92]- child protection has always been a priority in media law regulations. The European Parliament and Council Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 of 19 October 2022

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[83] Art. 1 Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1989.

[84] Art. 15 Civil Code, Act of 23 April 1964, consolidated text: Journal of Laws 2024, item 1061 ustawy z dnia 23 kwietnia 1964 r. Kodeks cywilny (t.j. Dz. U.z 2024 r. poz. 1061).

[85] Art. 95 Family and Guardianship Code, Act of 25 February 1964, consolidated text: Journal of Laws 2023, item 2809.

[86] S. D. Warren,L. D. Brandeis, *The Right to Privacy*, "Harvard Law Review" 1989, No 5(5), pp. 193-220

[87] Nissenbaum, H., *Privacy as Contextual Integrity*, "Washington Law Review" 2004, No. 79, pp. 101–139.

[88]   A. F. Westin, *Privacy and Freedom*, 25 Wash. & Lee L. Rev. 166 New York, issue1,1968.

[89] J. W. DeCew, *In Pursuit of Privacy: Law, Ethics, and the Rise of Technology*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press 1997.

[90] D. J. Solove, *Understanding Privacy*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009.

[91] Judgment of the Constitutional Tribunal of 27 January 1999, case no. K 1/98, *Judgments of the Constitutional Tribunal* (OTK) 1999, No. 1, item 3.

[92] *OJ L 250 z 19.9.1984, p. 17–20.*

on the Digital Services Act (known as the "Internet Constitution") established systems to verify children's access to content. It sets age 13 as the minimum for independent use of online platforms. Platform policies include measures to suspend accounts of users under 13 or restrict access to inappropriate content. Users provide their birthdate upon registration, which explains why many minors have accounts, e.g., on TikTok[93]. Having an account does not grant access to all content[94]. Providers are responsible for content moderation, timely removal of illegal material, transparency of algorithms, privacy protection, and cooperation with regulatory bodies. While providers must implement systemic solutions ensuring safe internet use, parental control tools such as "Recommended Parental Control"[95] or "Family Pairing"[96] are also deployed to monitor children's online activities."

The effectiveness of the law depends on institutional mechanisms enforcing the existing legal framework and the active involvement of parents. Parenthood requires continuous attention to the child, building relationships based on partnership and appropriate to the child's age. Setting boundaries on free internet access is often misunderstood by children and adolescents, who see it as limiting their right to information freedom. "The essence of the digital hygiene approach is not to deprive children and youth of contact with new technologies but to offer those that are safe and age-appropriate, while teaching healthy digital habits"[97]. A vigilant parent observes and supports the child's self-realization while maintaining oversight of their actions and decisions, even after the child turns 13. This approach aligns with principles of responsible parenting. "Parental authority should be exercised as required by the child's welfare and social interest"[98], addressing both material and immaterial needs[99].

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[93] Zasady społeczności TikTok'a z dnia 7 maja 2024 r.(TikTok Community Guidelines as of May 7, 2024) https://support.tiktok.com/pl/safety-hc/account-and-user-safety/user-safety [accessed: 5.05.2025].

[94] TikTok Community Guidelines … .

[95] This is a collection of applications that allow you to control your child's online activities.

[96] "Family Pairing in TikTok allows parents, guardians, and teenagers to adjust safety settings to individual needs", PageTikTok, https://support.tiktok.com/en/safety-hc/account-and-user-safety/family-pairing [accessed 6.06.2025].

[97] M. Bigaj, *Internet dzieci. Raport z monitoringu obecności dzieci i młodzieży w internecie (Children's Internet. Report on monitoring the presence of children and youth on the Internet)*, p. 11.

[98] § 3 art. 95 Family and Guardianship Code.

[99] See: Oddział 2 Family and Guardianship Code.

According to M. Hoghugh[100], good parenting is characterized by love, care, and engagement; control; consistent limit-setting; and facilitation of development[101].

13. Conclusions

For several years, challenges popular among children and adolescents have lacked comprehensive study. Despite efforts by various institutions[102] to clarify the concept, rules, and procedures, parental knowledge remains insufficient. Challenges are often mistakenly identified as computer games, leading to limited awareness among parents. Interest typically arises from discussing sensationalized cases within peer groups, which do not cover the full spectrum of risks related to participation or refusal to participate. Parents often do not realize that children join challenges out of fear of bullying, blackmail, or social exclusion. As A.. Andrzejewska rightly notes, "Teenage victims rarely report acts of violence to adults" [103]. A lonely child is more vulnerable to negative influences from the digital world and peers. A disengaged parent is unable to flexibly respond to changes affecting the child and themselves[104]. Without observing the child, the parent fails to notice that the child, "to kill time" or seek attention, takes part in challenges risking their health or life[105].

Therefore, systemic solutions to improve parental educational competence should be adopted. Coherent actions must synchronize at least two factors: regulatory policies (general and internal laws) and parental involvement. Media not only inform but also educate. Content providers should improve systems verifying users' age, regulate content accessible to minors, and implement audience labeling—especially for materials

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[100] See: B. Kromolicka, *Jakość współczesnego rodzicielstwa*,(*Quality of modern parenthood*) [in:], *Rodzicielstwo w kontekście współczesnych przemian społecznych*,(ed) J. Bragiel, B. Górniacka, Publ. Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, Opole 2012,issue1, p. 39.

[101] M. Hoghughi, *Good enough parenting for all children – a strategy for a healthier society,* „Archives of Disease in Childhood" 1998, No.78, pp. 293-300.

[102] Zob. *Niebezpieczne internetowe challenge*,(*Dangerous online challenges*), 04.27.2023, https://www.gov.pl/web/cyfryzacja/niebezpieczne-internetowe-challenge [accessed: 4.04.2025].

[103] A. Andrzejewska, *Dzieci i młodzież w sieci zagrożeń realnych i wirtualnych*, (*Children and youth in the network of real and virtual threats*), Publ. Difin,Warszawa 2022, issue1, p. 110.

[104] See: S. Stiffelman, *Parenting with Presence: Practices for Raising Conscious, Confident, Caring Kids*, Publ. New World Library, Bristol, 2015.

[105] See:. A. Ogonowska, *Psychologia mediów i komunikowania. Wprowadzenie*, (*Media Psychology and Communication. Introduction*),Publ. Impuls, Kraków 2018, issue 1, p. 172.

potentially harmful to children. Warnings and instructions should be more frequent and clearly marked to attract users' attention. However, current efforts are insufficient. Many online warnings and instructions on preventing access to harmful content are difficult to identify, and practical application poses challenges. Consequently, parents lack a comprehensive resource on technological solutions. Ongoing media education for families[106], including continuous parental training on safe use of social media - especially the Internet - is a vital part of upbringing. It is important that parents maintain contact with their children and avoid passivity that creates emotional distance and loneliness. Parental liberalism is not always an effective educational method. Increasing threats require parents to constantly observe their children. Families should establish Internet usage rules with children, including enabling software that monitors content of interest. Responsible parenting demands enhancing skills and using digital tools as guarantees of attentive care. Although balancing freedom and setting boundaries grows more difficult due to media's growing role in shaping children's values and lifestyles, parents remain fully responsible for their child's upbringing.

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[106] See: M. Bereźnicka, M. Klepka, *Pedagogizacja medialna rodziny w społeczeństwie informacyjnym*, (*Media education of the family in the information society*), 03.12.2020, https://vademecumbezpieczenstwainformacyjnego. uken.krakow.pl/2020/03/12/pedagogizacja-medialna-rodziny-w-spoleczenstwie-informacyjnym/ (accessed: 1.06.2025).

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3. Directive 2001/29/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2001 on the harmonisation of certain aspects of copyright and related rights in the information society, OJ L 167, 22.6.2001, p. 10–19

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