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Helping today's children
become tomorrow's digital citizens

Digital skills for young children

October 2018

NO BULLY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Children are online almost from birth. They are able to access entertainment and information and to connect with others to an extent unparalleled by any previous generation. From their earliest moments they are witnesses to, and participants in, a wide range of increasingly digital practices. The rapid increase in Internet activity by young children is due to the easy access enabled by touchscreen internet-enabled tablet and smartphone technologies.

Many young children seemingly know how to use digital devices with almost no adult guidance but they don't truly understand their purpose and power. At its best, the power of online activity lies in its inclusivity, creativity and world citizenship. At its darkest, the interconnectivity of the Internet is a platform for the spread of bullying and hate.

Power of Zero is a collaborative campaign developed and led by No Bully. Our focus is to prepare young children for digital citizenship by teaching them good digital behaviors from an early age. Power of Zero skills are 21st century life-skills, critical for navigating the complexity of the online and offline world, now inextricably intertwined. Our challenge is to help young children, and the adults who care for them, learn to use digital technology well and develop the voice, compassion and inclusivity that are the heart of digital citizenship. This is a largely neglected area of learning for children as they begin independently to navigate technology. It begins with their first devices, and continues as they enter preschool and the early primary grades.

The campaign's initial focus is on young children (five through eight-year olds). In most cases these are children in preschool and the first years of school. This paper reviews the reality of the digital world that these children experience and sets out the skills that they will need to

1) Harness the opportunities of the digital world for play, creativity, expression and connection
2) Keep safe and respond effectively to the risks and challenges of the online world
3) Develop a commitment to zero bullying
4) Use their online power for good

Our intention in writing this paper is to bring the best thinking from the research on young children's digital lives to those who are developing games, apps and learning materials. Our hope is that the framework proposed by this paper will shape and become the intelligence within the learning materials and games that parents and educators use with young children to support them in becoming digital citizens who use their power for good.

This paper comprises the following sections:

- **Part One**: Introduction to the Power of Zero

- **Part Two**: The Powers

- **Appendix One**: Sources

1 INTRODUCTION TO THE POWER OF ZERO

Power of Zero is a collaborative campaign developed and led by No Bully that grew from a recognition that global action was needed to halt the growing health hazard caused by bullying through inoculating children before it begins. Our initial focus is to better prepare young children for digital citizenry by teaching them habits and behaviors that support their safety and success from an early age.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the campaign's founding partners: UNESCO, Hasbro, Microsoft and Facebook. Their commitment to children and families inspires our efforts; and their expertise in building global collaboratives and businesses informs and strengthens us.

We want to credit the thought leaders and experts who reviewed this paper and gave us guidance on what young children most need to succeed in the digital world. These were
- Jacqueline Beauchere, Chief Safety Office, Microsoft
- CAPT Stephanie Bryn, MPH, U.S. Public Health Service (Ret.), Public Health and Safety Consultant
- Merle Froschl , Director Educational Equity, School and Community Services, FHI 360
- Ed Greene, Vice President, Children, Youth and Media initiatives. HITN (Hispanic Information and Telecommunications Network)
- Dr. Sameer Hinduja, Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Florida Atlantic University
- Professor Jackie Marsh, BA (Hons), PGCE, MEd, PhD, FAcSS, FRSA, Professor of Education, The University of Sheffield
- Janice Richardson, International Advisor, literacy, rights & democracy

The power and potential of this campaign comes from the interactions and relationships forged among our collaborative's members – and across geographies, cultures and institutions. With No Bully as the administrative hub, the community that guides this work includes the founding members and steering committee; along with leaders in the technology industry, child development, early childhood education, social emotional learning, media research and media production fields.

WHY POWER OF ZERO?

In reviewing the skills that young children need for digital citizenship it became clear that we were setting a crucial foundation for how children would develop their voice and connect successfully with others through their tween and teen years and then into their adult relationships. Developmental psychologists frame this developmental task with words such as agency, mastery and autonomy[1]. However in defining this campaign we preferred to talk in simpler terms: how can we teach children to use their power well?

Next, we asked ourselves this question: what does it mean for a person to use their power well? We looked at some of the great exemplars of power – Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Malala Yousafzai – who showed through their lives how to use power well - with a commitment to zero violence, zero hate and zero bullying. As children enter the tween and teen year they are increasingly exposed to societal forces of hate and marginalization. We saw that true power, the sort of power we want children and adolescents to develop both online and offline, arises when you restrain the impulse to dominate or hurt others in the interests of self. After much discussion we arrived upon a name that speaks to this commitment: Power of Zero.

WHY POWERS?

In developing the Power of Zero skills we began by reviewing our Theory of Change, thinking about our audiences, strategies and outcomes. Then we found ourselves shuffling the skills almost like playing cards, looking for the royal flush – the skills that define the Power of Zero. As we worked, we realized that those skills were actually 'powers' in and of themselves; our own Powers of Zero! And how much more engaging for young children to gain powers, rather than learn skills.

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[1] Agency and mastery are central concepts in Erik Erikson's third and fourth stages of development.
- Stage 3: Initiative vs. Guilt (Play Age: 3 – 5 years) when children begin to assert their power and control over the world through directing play and other social interaction
- Stage 4: Industry vs. Inferiority (School Age: 6 – 12 years) when children develop a sense of self-worth and identity from their accomplishments and the connections they make.

WHERE DID THE POWERS COME FROM?

We stand on the shoulders of giants who have given many years of their lives and their best thinking to the young child space. Some outstanding work has been done in this area, but the field is segmented. In defining the core skills that comprise Power of Zero, we brought together the best of

- Digital Citizenship

- Global Citizenship

- Social and emotional learning

- Critical thinking

- Early Childhood Education

- Bullying Prevention and Non-Violence Studies

The first iterations of digital citizenship curriculum focused on child safety and protection in the digital environment. Jacqueline Beauchere at Microsoft, a Power of Zero founding partner, has strongly advocated that "digital civility" be included in how we raise children in the digital world. She provides an elegant articulation of the values and attitudes that are comprised in digital citizenship.

In many regions of the world (e.g. the European Union) the focus now is a positive one of supporting children to harness the opportunities of the online world and increasingly to participate as citizens while building resilience to potential harms. Inspired by Janice Richardson's final report on her ENABLE curriculum, our aim was to outline skills that parents, educators and media/education content creators need to develop in young children as protective factors against bullying, and as proactive factors to develop digital citizenship. As with many of the skills that we teach young children, we do not expect a young child to be able to articulate the skill they have learnt with the level of articulation in this document.

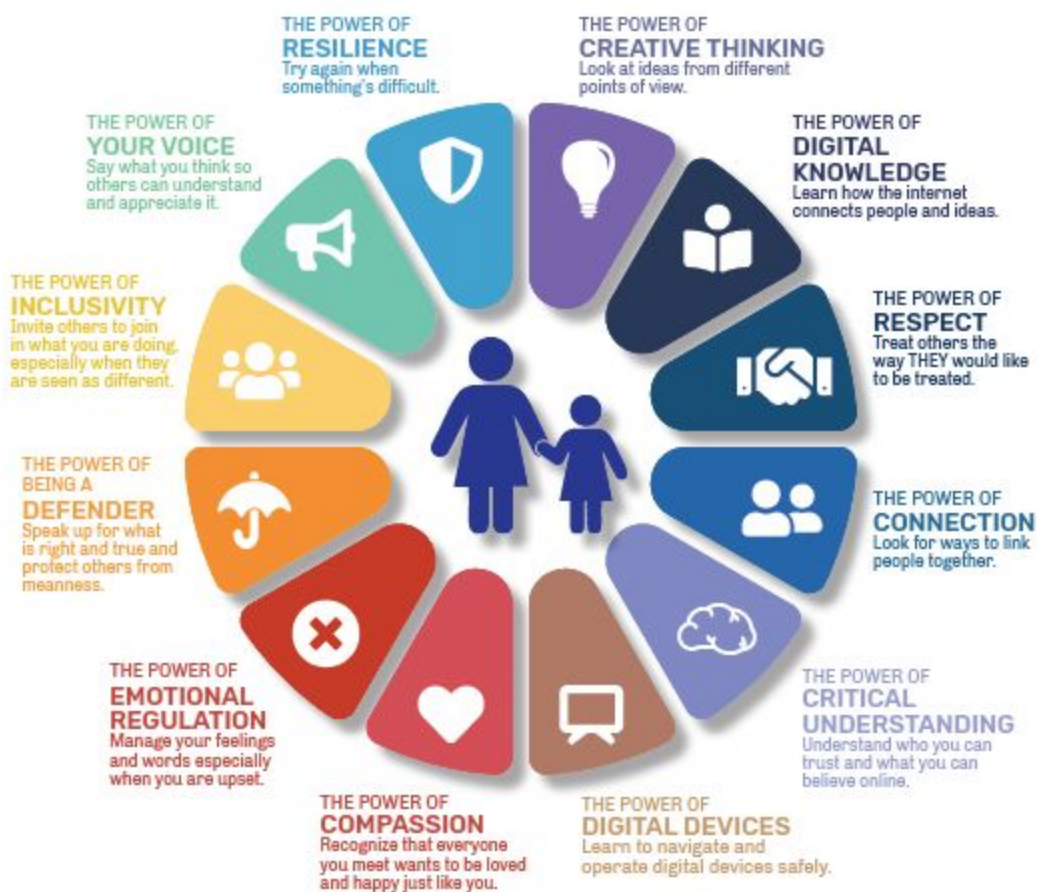In defining the powers we used the four verticals that the EU proposed in its "Competences for a Democratic Culture[2]"

1) Values
2) Attitudes
3) Skills
4) Knowledge & critical understanding.

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[2] www.coe.int/dce

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WAYS CHILDREN CAN BE SAFE AND SUCCESSFUL ONLINE

THE POWER OF
RESILIENCE
Try again when
something's difficult.

THE POWER OF
CREATIVE THINKING
Look at ideas from different
points of view.

THE POWER OF
YOUR VOICE
Say what you think so
others can understand
and appreciate it.

THE POWER OF
**DIGITAL
KNOWLEDGE**
Learn how the internet
connects people and ideas.

THE POWER OF
INCLUSIVITY
Invite others to join
in what you are doing,
especially when they
are seen as different.

THE POWER OF
RESPECT
Treat others the
way THEY would like
to be treated.

THE POWER OF
**BEING A
DEFENDER**
Speak up for what
is right and true and
protect others from
meanness.

THE POWER OF
CONNECTION
Look for ways to link
people together.

THE POWER OF
**EMOTIONAL
REGULATION**
Manage your feelings
and words especially
when you are upset.

THE POWER OF
**CRITICAL
UNDERSTANDING**
Understand who you can
trust and what you can
believe online.

THE POWER OF
COMPASSION
Recognize that everyone
you meet wants to be loved
and happy just like you.

THE POWER OF
DIGITAL DEVICES
Learn to navigate and
operate digital devices safely.

Young children have access to tablets and smartphones from their earliest years. But without guidance,
it's hard for them to develop skills they need for a life of connectivity. Power of Zero worked with experts
from around the world to identify the life skills or 'powers' that children need to be safe and successful,
both online and offline. As parents, caregivers and educators we can all show our children how to use
their "online voices," in the same way we help them learn to use their inside and outside voices.
Together we can raise a generation to use their digital powers for good.

POWER OF ZERO
www.Powerof0.org

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APPENDIX ONE: SOURCES

In framing the digital competencies that young children need we are indebted to researchers around the world who have conducted qualitative and quantitative studies of the reality of young children's engagement with digital devices. Some of the key studies that we drew from are listed below.

The State of the World's Children: UNICEF 2017

The Common Sense Census: Media use by kids age zero to eight. V Rideout - Robb, M., Ed, 2017

Exploring Play and Creativity in Pre-Schoolers' Use of Apps: Final Project Report. Marsh, J., Plowman, L., Yamada-Rice, D., Bishop, J.C., Lahmar, J., Scott, F., Davenport, A., Davis, S., French, K., Piras, M., Thornhill, S., Robinson, P. and Winter, P. (2015) Accessed at: www.techandplay.org.

Young Children (0-8) and Digital Technology. EU report. 2015 Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg by Chaudron, S, Plowman, L, Beutel, ME, ernikova, M, Donoso Navarette, V, Dreier, M, Fletcher-Watson, B, Heikkilä, A-S, Kontríková, V, Korkeamäki, R-L, Livingstone, S, Marsh, J, Mascheroni, G, Micheli, M, Milesi, D, Müller, KW, Myllylä-Nygård, T, Niska, M, Olkina, O, Ottovordemgentschenfelde, S, Ribbens, W, Richardson, J, Schaack, C, Shlyapnikov, V, Šmahel, D, Soldatova, G & Wölfling, K

Young children (0-8) and digital technology, a qualitative study across Europe. 2018. Chaudron S., Di Gioia R. , Gemo M.

Young children's everyday concepts of the internet: A platform for cyber-safety education in the early years by Susan Edwards et al (2016)

RIght From the Start in the Digital Age. An FHI 360 National Initiative Accessed at https://www.fhi360.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/right-from-the-start-10-26.pdf