



Participation · *Beteiligung*

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Have your Say? Young People's Response to the Invitation to Participate Online

Given increasing calls for children and young people to participate via the internet in civic and political activities), this presentation examines how far, and with what success, such participation is occurring among UK teenagers. Findings from a national survey conducted by the 'UK Children Go Online' project show that young people are using the internet for a wide range of activities that could be considered 'participation', but that the degree of their participation is uneven, narrow or frustrating in key respects, particularly in relation to the take up of interactive opportunities. To understand these limitations, the paper draws on qualitative interviews with teens as they interact with government-produced websites intended to invite them to 'have their say', contrasting these with interviews with the website producers. Following in the audience reception or reader-response tradition, the paper will identify a series of challenges for the design (or encoding) of websites that emerge from young people's response to (or decoding of) these sites.