

June, 2015  
MEC  
Conference  
Salla

## **How *parents* cope with media literacy: Good Practice and creative ideas from Switzerland**

Dr. Eveline Hipeli, Zurich University of Teacher Education (PHZH)

# + In the next 15 minutes:

- Situation and Idea
- «Medienkompetenz» / Media Literacy
- Good Practice examples from swiss parents
- Differences between laymen and experts



# + Situation and Idea

- Swiss households are very well equipped with media

(access, mobility)



- Parents do have a lot of questions about a «decent» media use
- Parents are often unsure about their media regulations
- Parents generally want their children to grow up under the best possible circumstances (which includes media too)

# Socioenvironmental areas

(Baacke)

## Center:

Family  
(Parents,  
Siblings,  
Relatives)

## Proximity:

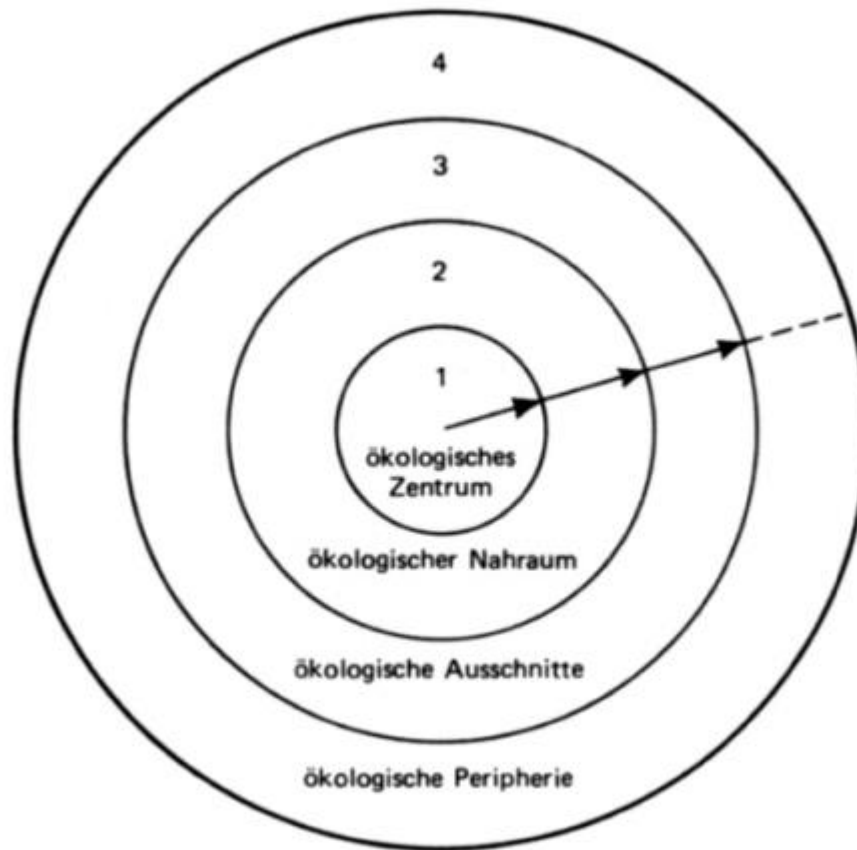
Nighbourhood  
(Colleagues,  
Friends)

## Farther

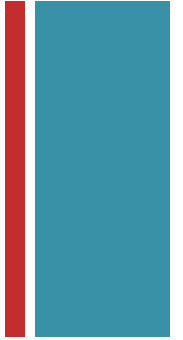
Sector:  
School etc.  
(Teachers/  
Peers)

## Periphery:

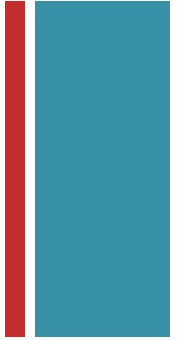
rather  
seldom  
contacts  
(on  
holidays  
etc.)



Schematische Darstellung der vier ökologischen Zonen



- Young children seek advice from their parents...
- ...while later in adolescence they will rather ask their peers for advice.
- Studies have shown, that girls would like to talk to their mothers even more often about their media-issues, but often they think their fathers might be more competent...



- Most surveys and guidebooks focus on **problematic media use**
- Usually parents manage to create very good rules and restrictions with media for their everyday life. But sometimes these rules do not correspond totally with recommendations given by media scientists/ pedagogists.
- Idea: Collection of «Good Practice» examples from real families ( > 50 , mostly qualitative interviews)

(Note: nonrepresentative sample)

- Interviews with parents without further media literacy knowledge **and** experts (media scientist/ media pedagogists who have children)

# + „Medienkompetenz“ (Baacke/ Tulodziecki)

- German term, has basically the same core meaning as the english term «media literacy»

*Media Literacy is a 21st century approach to education.*

*It provides a framework to access, analyze, evaluate and create messages in a variety of forms - from print to video to the Internet. Media literacy builds an understanding of the role of media in society as well as essential skills of inquiry and self-expression necessary for citizens of a democracy. (CML)*

- Close to the finnish definition of “medialukutaito”.



- Parents generally have a rather narrow idea of Medienkompetenz (focus on technical skills)...

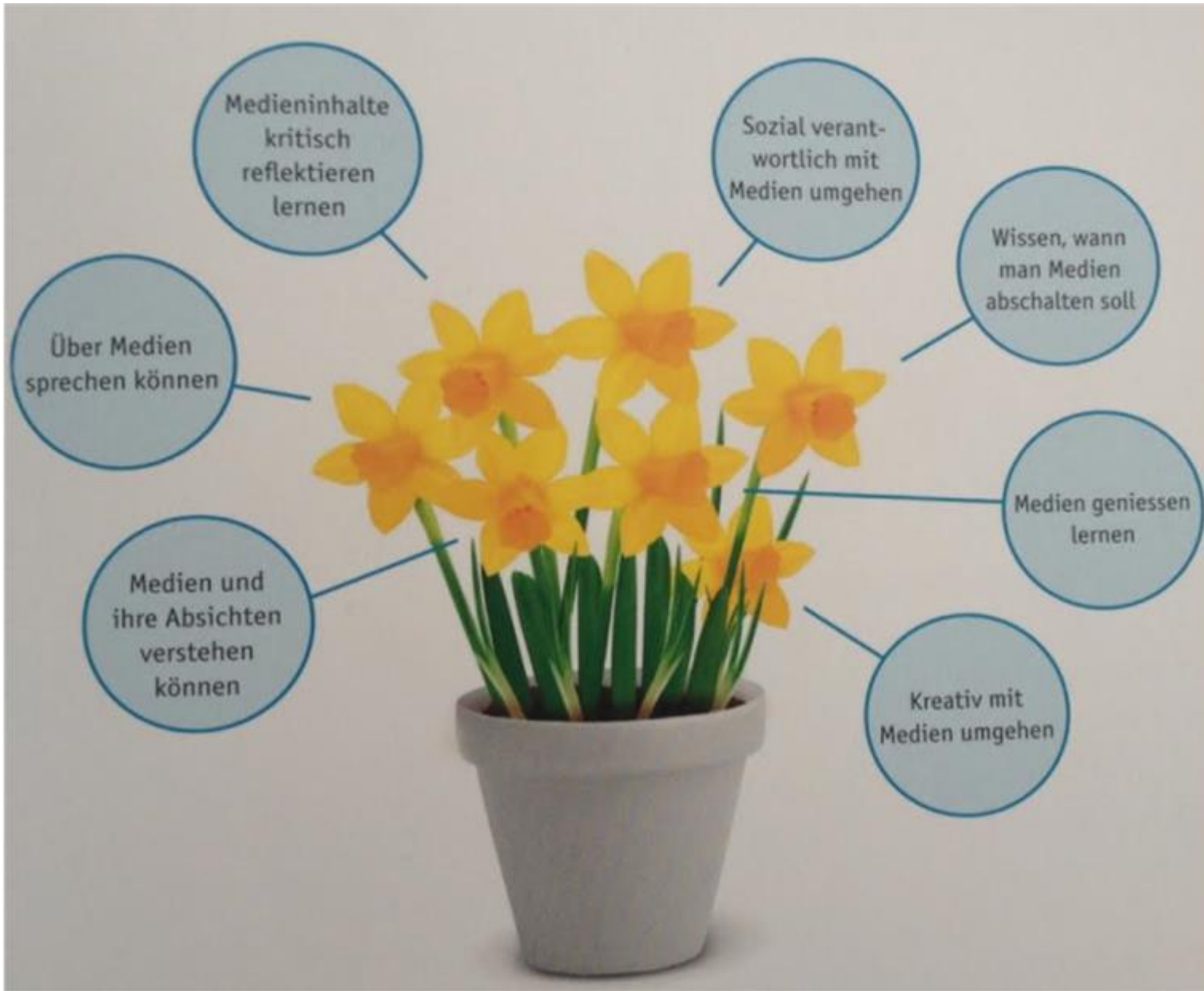


- ...and therefore they tend to think, that media literacy should rather be acquired at school (technical use, social media security etc.)
- **But: learning all the relevant skills for the “bundle” that media literacy consists of starts with the first contact with media (mostly with a book).**

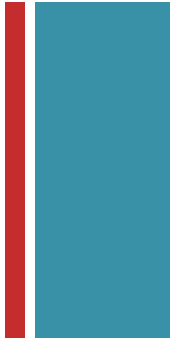




Source: Hipeli 2014

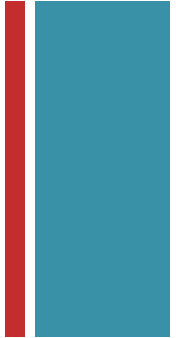


# + Quotes



*„I don't really have the opportunity to talk to many different parents about how they handle media and media content in their households. Sure I believe that we are doing it „right“ and that our children are doing fine. But I would like to know, how other parents enhance their childrens media literacy skills.“ (Father)*

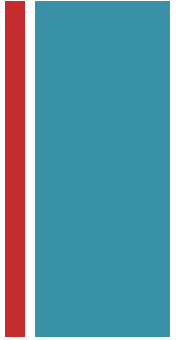
*„Since we have kids, my television habits have clearly changed. I try not to watch television now during daytime – my programme starts usually when the kids are asleep. I'm really trying to be something like a „rolemodel“.“ (Mother)*



*„I love reading, and I do it a lot. Sometimes I also watch TV, but when I do I choose something I really want to see. Of course I hope, that my children will use media in a similar way...“ (Father)*

*„We actually have simple rules: Our children can read as much as they want. The more the better. When it comes to digital media it's the other way around: as much as necessary.“ (Mutter)*

- Parents' attitude towards (digital) media affects their childrens experiences with media
- With some media (like books, TV...) parents feel comfortable and competent. With others (Social Media, Games...) they don't.



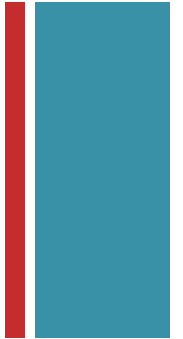
- Media literacy is not being increased by media use only.
- But children who aren't allowed to use certain media will not enhance their skills either.
- Medienkompetenz (media literacy) is not only one skill. It's a whole bunch of skills.
- Many children are good at some of those skills, but only very few are very good at all of them.
- The same thing is true for adults also 😊

# + Laymen parents versus experts: differences and similarities

Layman parents	Expert parents
„Media literacy should be taught at school“	„Media literacy is important at home and at school »
Start later with media literacy education (from TV on)	Start earlier with media literacy education (from print media on)
«Media must not harm my childs development“ (preventive approach)	«How can my child grow up under the best circumstances in a world, where media are a part of it?“ (holistic approach)
Age regulations : often followed strictly (the younger the child)	Age regulations: are being considered but the child is being looked at as an individual (exceptions)
Time regulations : very common, rather strict	Time regulations : yes, but more content oriented in general
Child’s influence : low	Child’s influence : rather high
Value of primary experiences : high	Value of primary experiences : high
Medienbegriff : narrow	Medienbegriff : wide
Intrafamiliar discussions about media and media content : rather seldom , except from risks.	Intrafamiliar discussions about media and media content : often
Co-Viewing/ Co-Playing : rather seldom	Co-Viewing/ Co-Playing : rather often



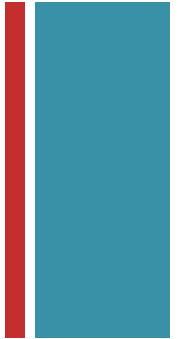
# Creative Ideas



- Some parents with children older than 7 let the siblings suggest «fair» media regulations and discussed those later.
- Some parents linked «reading time» with «digital media time» (proportionally)
- Some parents used «total screen time» (children could decide, whether they wanted to play videogames or watch tv etc.)
- Some parents let their children «earn» media time (little extra tasks in the household etc)
- Some parents showed their children their own childhood media memories and –heroes
- Most parents began to reflect their own media habits when discussing rules and regulations for their children...
- ...and some even tried to be «role models» (even though this did not always work)



## Quote



*«Parents are said to be role models when it comes to media use in the family. But I have learned that even if I am the «best possible» role model, my behaviour is not automatically adapted by my daughters. My older daughter loves reading, just like I do. But my younger daughter is not that fond of books. I have tried to increase her interest for reading via e-books also, but the spark has just not jumped over yet. I understand very well, that parents can have a hard time accepting, that their child prefers doing other things with media . And that it's also difficult to show interest in something the child likes – like videogames – if parents themselves have no experience with games or even dislike them...»*

Prof. Daniel Süß (media psychologist)



# «Good Practice»



- Parents should accompany their children, from their first contact with media
- Co-Viewing/ Co-Playing
- The child should be allowed to be the «expert» too (change of paradigm)
- Media diaries: responsibility and base for discussions
- Rules and consequences should be clear to every family member
- Parents should select media content for their children thoroughly (the younger the more)
- Media should not be a «special» topic of discussion (but discussing media in everyday situations without pressure or negativity is the key)
- The older the child, the more parents should involve their child in decision making about media use
- Mediapedagogical recommendations are good guidelines (but not to be taken 1:1)
- Every family needs to adapt and figure out its own best media solution
- Parents should try to stay interested and curious about further media development



# + Challenges and recommendations for parents

- Media education may sound complicated, but it's not
- It also means: learning to talk about media/ enjoying media together.



→ *Media education should start early and not only when certain problems with Social Media etc. arise.*

# + Project «Ulla» (early childhood media education) [www.ulladieeule.ch](http://www.ulladieeule.ch)



## Ulla aus dem Eulenwald

Medienpädagogische Kindergeschichten über Ulla die Eule und ihre Freunde Anna und Peter



Frühe Medienkompetenzförderung ganz leicht gemacht



ULLA

- ÜBER DAS PROJEKT
- ULLA, ANNA UND PETER
- NEUIGKEITEN
- ÜBER DIE AUTORIN...
- ZUSATZMATERIALIEN
- KONTAKT
- GÖNNER, HELFER UND REFERENZEN

+ Thank you...

...for your attention!

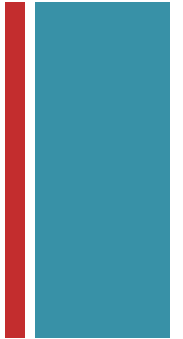


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# + Questions?

