



CALL FOR PAPERS FOR A SPECIAL ISSUE ON

Smartphones in families, schools, and across generations: Theories, methods and good practices

The ubiquity of handheld devices, above all *smartphones*, has transformed the ways in which individuals learn and communicate; build, maintain, negotiate, and interrupt their relationships, in their everyday life and throughout the life-span. The implications of these transformations are still under exploration and far from having reached definitive conclusions. As extensively discussed by Vincent and Haddon in their recent publication, 'Smartphone Cultures' (2018), smartphones present strengths for their versatility, their 'mobility and range of capabilities' (p.190), which allow social actors for the support and amplification of their individual and social practices across time and spaces; however, their usage has raised progressive concerns. Smartphones' dark side has been associated with overuse, distraction, lack of memory and attention, namely a set of behavioural problems which, in some cases, have been labelled with the misleading term of *addiction* (Griffiths, 2000; Livingstone & Smith, 2014). Public debates and some scientific literature has framed this phenomenon in terms of a 'generational issue' mainly pertaining to younger generations and their lack of capacities/immaturity in *dis-connecting* from screen devices. Accordingly, most governmental and educational institutions have embraced the logic of restriction banning the usage of smartphones in schools. Parents, as role models and 'safety mediators', show ambivalent perceptions and mediation practices towards the regulation of smartphones usage, being torn between the concern for smartphones' impact on their children's health and the urge to rely themselves on smartphones usage for their own needs and goals.

This special issue builds upon the proceedings of a conference held in Parma on the 3rd June 2017 at the conclusion of a two-year research project funded by the European Commission under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions, titled *Adolescents, parents, digital media: Looking for the pattern that dis/connects*. The conference invited sociologists, psychologists, educators, parents and adolescents to contribute to an open debate on the role of mobile digital devices, especially smartphones, in their everyday lives. Four main questions, which we intend to address in this special issues, emerged at the conclusion of the conference:

- a) What are the *continuities and changes* smartphones brought about in families and schools?
- b) What *methods* can be used to better understand the process of incorporation of digital devices in everyday life routines and tasks?
- c) What *new theoretical frameworks* can be embraced to leverage insights on the role of smartphones across different settings and contexts?
- d) What *good practices* can be put into place to harness the potential of smartphones for identity, learning, and communication?



Papers should be aimed at addressing one or more of these questions with particular attention to *educational and relational contexts* (e.g., families and schools) as well as *individual and social practices* across generations.

The Italian Journal «Media Education: Studi, Ricerche, Buone Pratiche» is structured in two sections, one including scientific papers (length: 8,000 words) and the other focusing on good practices (length: 3,500 words).

Papers are expected in English.

Editorial norms are available at: <http://riviste.erickson.it/med/en/>

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Important dates

31st January 2019: Submission of manuscripts

28th February 2019: Notification to authors

15th March 2019: Final versions due

31st March 2019: Manuscripts go to publisher for copy editing and typesetting

May 2019: Special issue published

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