

**Title:**

Establishing an Inspiring, Inclusive, and Interdisciplinary Research Community Around Young People, Information, and Technology

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**Organizers:**

- Gitte Balling, Associate Professor, Department of Information Studies, University of Copenhagen
  - Katie Campana, Assistant Professor, Kent State School of Information
  - Kambiz Ghazinour, Assistant Professor, Director of the Advanced Information Security and Privacy (AISP) Lab, Department of Computer Science, Kent State University
  - Claudia Haines, Youth Services Librarian, Homer, Alaska (non-presenting)
  - Paweena Manotipya, Ph.D Student, Advanced Information Security and Privacy Lab, Department of Computer Science, Kent State University
  - Marianne Martens, Associate Professor, Kent State School of Information
  - J. Elizabeth Mills, Doctoral Candidate, University of Washington
  - Gretchen Caldwell Rinnert, Associate Professor, Visual Communication Design, Kent State
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**Abstract:**

The organizers of this workshop are interested in building a research community among scholars interested in the intersection of information, young people, and technology. Specifically, we are interested in addressing questions such as:

- What role can iSchools play in exploring relationships between information, young people, and technology?
- What methods are best for studying young people's digital practices around reading / writing / gaming, and their effects on how young people participate/engage?
- Which theoretical frameworks support this work?
- How do privacy issues complicate both how young people participate, and how we, as a scholarly community, study them?

While participants are not required to submit, organizers will put out a call for 500-word abstracts due January 15th, 2019. As an outcome of this workshop, organizers plan a special edition of a journal. Abstract authors may be asked to write full papers, which can be included in such journal.

**Keywords:**

Information, Young People, Technology, Privacy, Literacy and learning

**Description and Purpose:**

iSchools around the world have a long tradition of research in how people access, produce and share information. In our digital age, these topics have gained enormous importance. The digital development and the widespread use of mobile media among young people has created a situation in which information seeking, sharing and production takes place even between young people and often in non-educational or non-institutional environments. For young people, the internet provides an unlimited source of information, inspiration, and creative opportunity. For this population, technology provides the foundation and framework for both education and entertainment, connecting them in their creative and social activities.

The digital revolution has created a variety of new media formats and platforms, which serve to support an assortment of literacy, learning, and entertainment opportunities for all ages of youth. Literacy and reading are at the heart of numerous digital activities that engage young people in their everyday lives. While reading has traditionally been thought of as being related to works of fiction and non-fiction, the concept of reading has evolved and today we cannot imagine “being digital” without reading. Young people shift seamlessly between formats, reading text messages, reading (and writing) while playing online games, reading web pages, interacting with apps, and more. In addition to supporting literacy and reading, these digital activities support an array of skills and knowledge that young people need for their learning and development. In order to benefit from the affordances that technology can offer, young people have to understand how to use an assortment of digital platforms and devices. Given the necessity of technological fluency, the question of literacy and the ability to navigate and to evaluate the flow of information is of big importance. The concept of digital natives (Prensky, 2001), has not proven to be a reality. Digital skills are not innate, but instead are skills which have to be learned and developed. Many assume that young people know how to do tasks such as find information online, navigate a website, download from an e-Book platform, connect to wifi, code, create a blog/website--all the while being able to critically evaluate and understand not only online content, actions and interactions, but also related privacy implications. And this is generally not the case.

Many interesting and relevant research issues spring from the digital media environment surrounding the everyday life of young people. Questions we would like to address at the workshop include but are not limited to:

- What role can iSchools play in exploring relationships between information, young people, and technology? How does this research belong in an iSchool setting, and how should scholars affiliated with iSchools be studying this?
- What methods can best be used to study young people’s digital practices around reading / writing / gaming, and their effects on how young people participate/engage?
- What theoretical frameworks support this work?
- How do privacy issues complicate both how young people participate, and how we, as a scholarly community, study them?

**Audience:**

We aim to attract an interdisciplinary and international audience of researchers interested in young people, information, and technology.

**Proposed Format:**

The workshop will begin with a series of short presentations on the accepted abstracts. Following these presentations, the tentative schedule below describes how the half-day program will progress.

**Tentative Schedule:**

0-15 minutes	Introductions
15 min-1 hour 30 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of topic and workshop goals and schedule</li> <li>• Short presentations on the accepted abstracts. These abstracts will cover different examples and experiences of doing research with young people.</li> </ul>
1 hour 30 min – 2 hours 30 min	<p>Small Group Discussion: (participants will break out by research age group - young children, school-age children, teens)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion will be encouraged through the use of prompts that cover methodologies, theories, opportunities and challenges, and effective practices</li> </ul>
2 hours 15 min - 2 hours 30 min	<p>Large group discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report out from group discussions</li> </ul>
2 hours 30 min – 2 hours 45 minutes	Break
2 hours 45 minutes – 3 hours 45 minutes	<p>Small Group Discussion: (participants will break out by research topic - literacy, STEM, play, social lives)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion will be encouraged through the use of prompts that cover methodologies, theories, opportunities and challenges, and effective practices</li> </ul>
3 hours 30 minutes – 4 hours 15 minutes	<p>Large group discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report out from each breakout</li> <li>• Challenges and Opportunities</li> <li>• Sharing on any other topics related to Research with young people</li> <li>• Future Collaboration</li> </ul>

**Goals and Outcomes:**

The main goal of our workshop is to encourage and support a discussion around doing research with young people, particularly in the areas of methodology, theoretical foundations, and effective practices. A second goal of the workshop is to build a community amongst these researchers by providing time for interactive sharing, discussion, and problem-solving. It is anticipated that there will be multiple outcomes emerging from the workshop, but the primary outcome will be a special issue of a journal (to be determined) that includes full papers based on the abstracts that are submitted to the workshop.

**Relevance to the iConference:**

This workshop builds upon Digital Youth workshops held at previous iConferences. As this field of study matures, the iConference lends a unique opportunity for leading researchers from different fields to share more about methods and theories used to study young people, information, and digital participation.

**Duration:**

This workshop will be a half-day event.

**Attendance:**

This workshop can accommodate 30-40 participants.

**Special Requirements:**

We anticipate no special requirements at this time.

**References:**

Prensky, M. (2001). Digital natives digital immigrants. Retrieved from <http://www.marcprensky.com/writing/Prensky%20-%20Digital%20Natives,%20Digital%20Immigrants%20-%20Part1.pdf>