



Sparkling Science >

Science linking with School
School linking with Science

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Youth@Risk

Perception of Risk of Adolescents

**Risks from a perspective of Adolescents,
Science and Media**

LEADING INSTITUTION

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SCHOOLS INVOLVED

Gymnasium der Abtei Schlierbach, Upper Austria
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Austrian Federal Ministry of
Science and Research

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The main research focus of this project is the investigation of risk perception of adolescents. The teenagers are directly integrated into the scientific process. Studies and papers concerning risk perception of adolescents do rarely exist. So the project Youth@Risk tries to fill this gap by identifying divergences between objectively observed and subjectively perceived risks and explaining whose background via cooperation of adolescents and researchers.

The kick-off of the project comprised a management game (students of gymnasium Schlierbach as well as of Gymnasium Bleicherode, Germany, were involved) to gain a collective understanding of the project theme and steps as well as to familiarise the students with the concept of risk. Many further methods and activities like brainstorming, focus groups, media monitoring, compilation of questionnaires etc. followed. The opportunity of an internship in research institutions was offered to the students. Particular topics have been discussed in workshops taking place at Gymnasium Schlierbach. During the term of the project the researchers, students and the faculty are in close contact. An active exchange of information takes place.

An understanding of research methods was given to the students by means of examples presented in workshops, a questionnaire was developed together with the adolescents and the students managed a part of the survey "risk perception of adolescents" on their own in several Upper-Austrian schools.

Students, who are directly involved in the project, regard the project as personal utility and as a **big chance for their own school**. 'For students, the project offers the opportunity to precociously get access to research institutions. They learn research methods and experience themselves **as equal partners within a huge project**', says the headmaster of Gymnasium Schlierbach, Father Martin.



'Bringing together research and schools is a great idea, especially when students are **not only objects of research but also subjects**. Therefore the 'system school' has to be prepared due to its narrow structural corset. Students will certainly appreciate that! The advantages of this project for adolescents are the same as for teachers and can be defined as follows: Students pay more attention to 'school external' people. They gain insights to scientific culture of discussion, which cannot be presented during classes. Additionally, helpful suggestions and supervision of academic demands are provided for composing research texts like exposés, media information texts, media diaries, letters of motivation, protocols etc. based on a **realistic background**', so the opinion of teachers.

'We provide our knowledge concerning contents and research methods, teachers their didactic competence and students their expertise relating to every-day-life and language of coeval adolescents. This fascinating cooperation beyond several boundaries enables manifold findings', so the voice of researchers.

The evaluation of the project, which is conducted isochronically to the project, comprises continuous presentation of intermediary results in the scope of project team meetings, within which the results are going to be communicatively validated. The research-education-cooperation was popularised beyond Austrian boundaries by integrating Gymnasium 'Friedrich Schiller' in Bleicherode, Germany, which is partly involved in the project.

The results of the project may contribute to gaining data of influence factors on the risk perception of adolescents in the long run. The cooperation of research and education highlights a great potential of synergy effects. The scientific results may be available to students during classes. On the one hand this might lead to timely implementation of preventive measures for reducing risk and on the other hand to another subjective perception of the outlined problem.





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