



**Vilnius  
University**

---

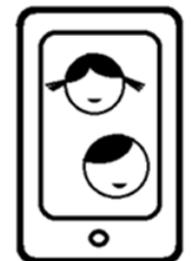
# **Internet use in young school-aged children: do parents really know about their kids?\***

Roma Jusienė, Ilona Laurinaitytė, Vilmantė Pakalniškienė  
*Institute of Psychology, Faculty of Philosophy, Vilnius University*

\* Research and presentation is funded by Research Council of Lithuania,  
agreement no. S-LLT-18-3

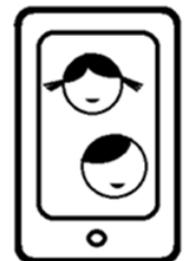
# Internet use in children

- **More** children in **younger** age are using Internet **extensively**
- Intensified or problematic Internet use is associated with numerous adverse (bidirectional / interactional?) effects:
- amount of time spend in online gaming is an important risk factor for the development of Internet addiction (Ko et al., 2007)
- associations with a wide range of indices of mental health, including lowered self-esteem, loneliness, depression, anxiety and social phobia (Park, Hong, Park, Ha, & Yoo, 2012; Selfhout, Branje, Delsing, Bogt, & Meeus, 2009)
- suicidal behaviors, depression, anxiety, conduct problems and hyperactivity/inattention were significant and independent predictors of PIU (Kaess et al., 2014)
- A lot of studies with adolescents – *very few with younger school-aged children*



# Internet use in children

- Internet addiction, Internet addiction disorder, problematic Internet use, pathological Internet use, and compulsive Internet use (Ciarrochi et al., 2016)
- Inability to exert control over one's use of the Internet, with subsequent negative consequences for meaningful daily activities, and with similar symptoms to other addictive disorders, such as preoccupation, uncontrolled impulse, withdrawal phenomena, tolerance, excessive time and effort devoted to the Internet and negative social repercussions (Ko et al., 2007; Pies, 2009).
- Early risks for *compulsive Internet use*

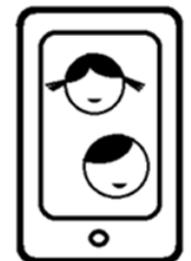


# Research questions

- Researchers rely on parents reports when researching pre-schoolers
- And on children's self-reports when researching adolescents
- Young school-aged children are under researched
- No agreement on whom – children's themselves and / or parents – to rely
- Can we rely on children's reports when measuring Internet use?
- Maybe parents know and report much better about their child?
- *Analyse the agreement between children aged 8 to 9 years and their parents on reporting children's Internet use*
- *Child and parental agreement on child Compulsive Internet use*
- *Relations to some demographics, parental control / monitoring, rules*

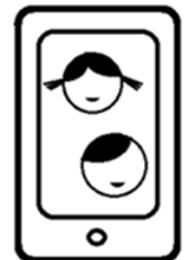
# Sample

- **239 dyads:** children and their parent (89% mothers)
- **Children:** 2nd and 3rd graders from four schools in Vilnius; mean age 8.46, range 7 to 10 years, sd – 0,54; 49.4% girls
- **Parents:** mean age 38.4 years (range 27 to 52); 65% - high university education; 78.2% living in marriage
- This study is part of the project „School-aged Children’s Internet Use in Relation to Socioemotional Development and Parenting Practices in Latvia, Lithuania and Taiwan: A Longitudinal Study”
- Project is supported by Mutual Funds between the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Latvia and the Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST) of the Republic of China (Taiwan)



# Measures

- Compulsive Internet Use Scale, CIUS (Meerkerk et al., 2009) – for child's intensified, compulsive Internet use, 14 items (e.g. „*difficult to stop using the Internet*“, „*short of sleep because of the Internet*“, „*feel restless, frustrated, or irritated when he/she cannot use the Internet*“)
- Scale reliability was very good both for parental (Cronbach alpha .92) and children's (Cronbach alpha .87) reports
- Amount of child's Internet use on weekdays and weekends, in hours
- Rules regarding Internet / screen use at school and at home
- Parental control and monitoring

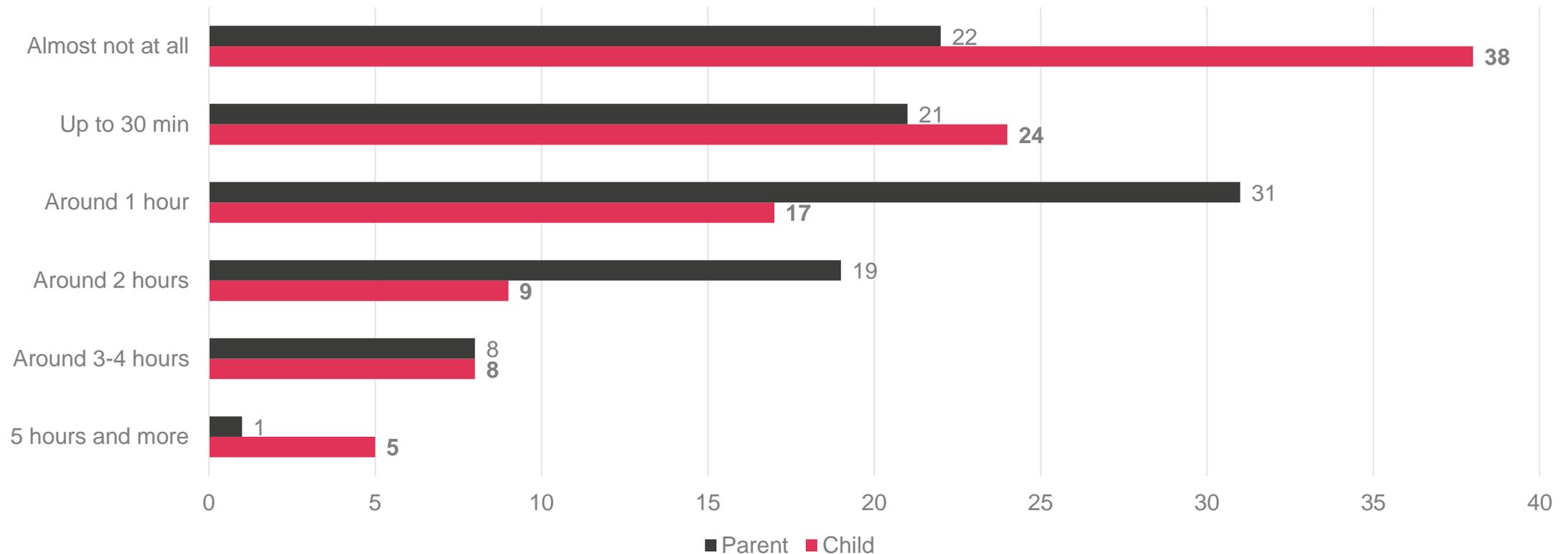


---

# RESULTS

# Amount of Internet use (I)

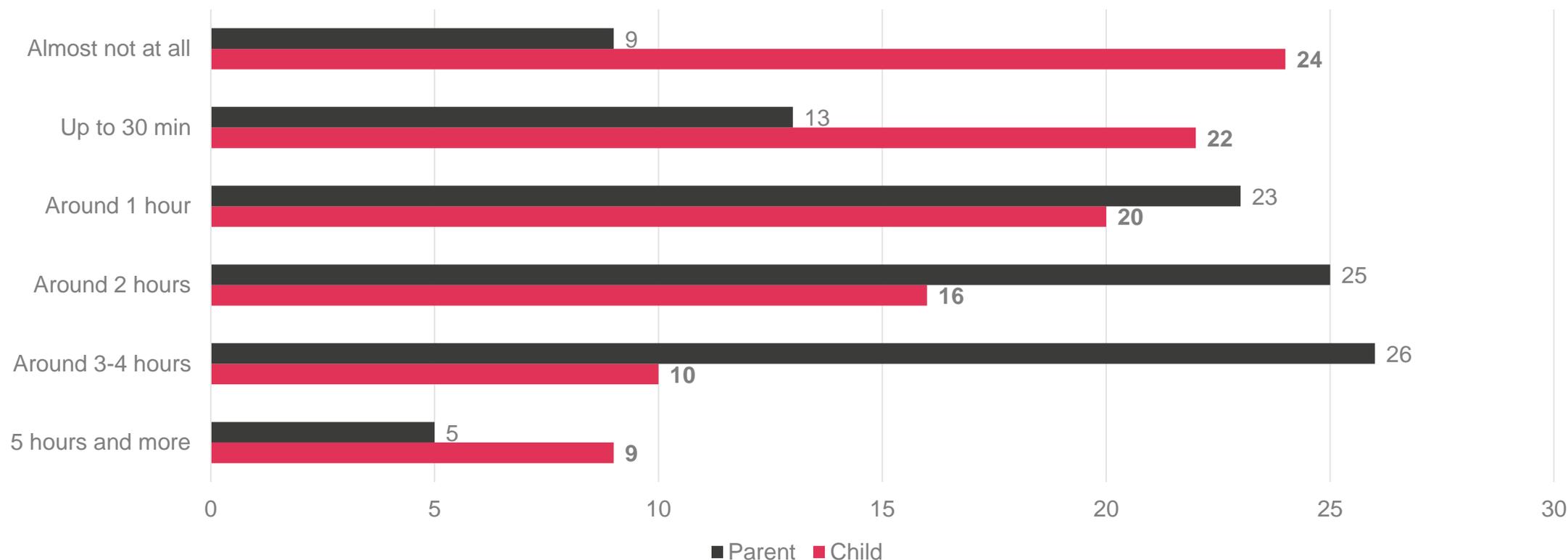
Children and parental reports in % for schooldays



Cross informant agreement is low, paired sample correlation  $r=.118$ ; although parent and child report similar hours, paired-sample  $t=1.725$ ;  $p>.05$

# Amount of Internet use (II)

Children and parental reports in % for weekends



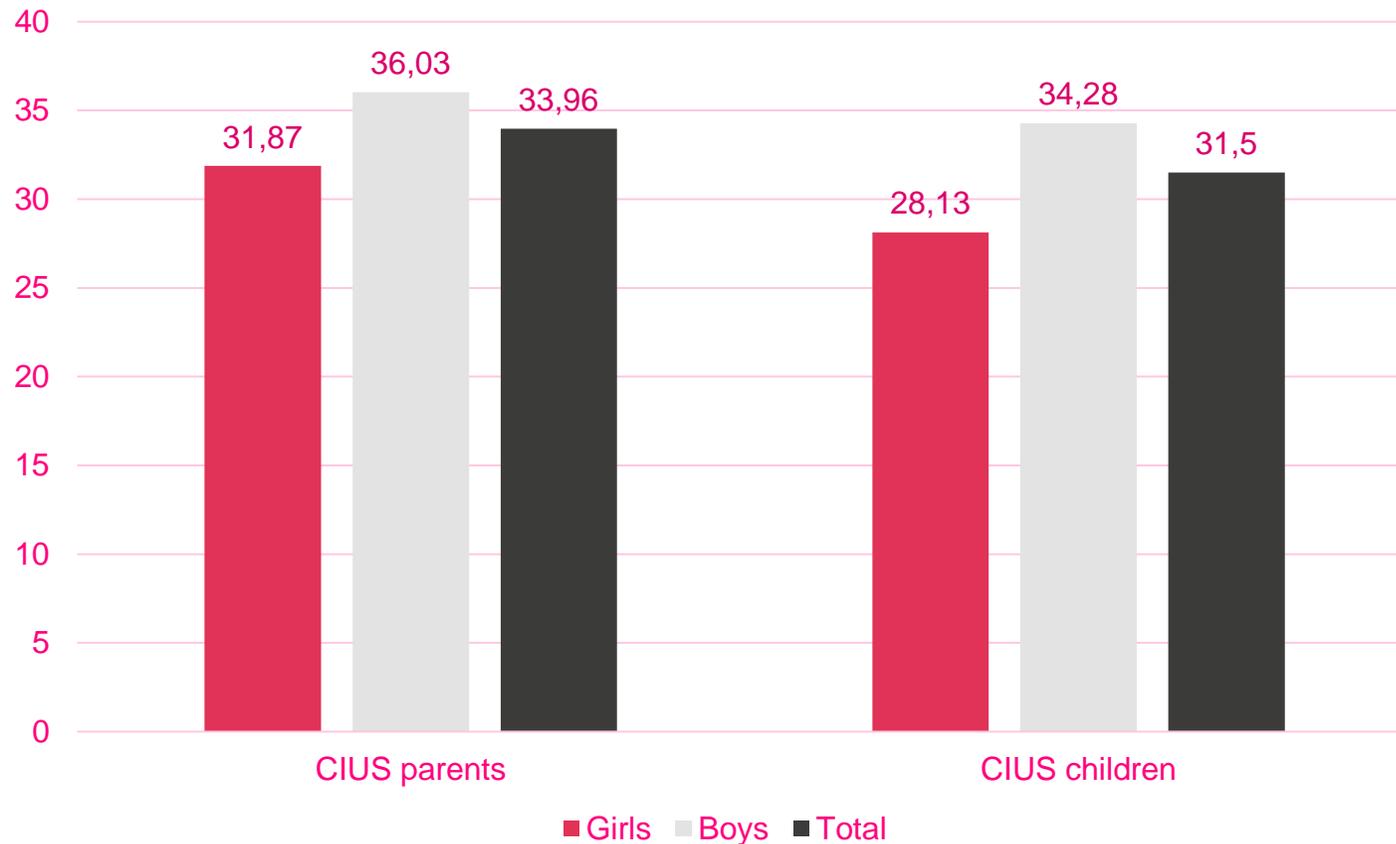
Cross-informant agreement is moderate,  $r=.273$ ; although parents report much longer duration paired-sample  $t=3.675$ ,  $p<.001$

# Amount of Internet use (III)

- Parental education was related negatively only with parental reported Internet use on weekends;  $p < .05$
- Parent with higher education report less hours of Internet use on weekends
- No gender differences when comparing parental reports
- Significant differences when comparing children's reports
- Girls report less amount of Internet use than boys

# Compulsive Internet use

Mean scores of CIUS



- Parental reported CIU mean scores are higher than children reported
- Parental and children reported CIU mean scores for Boys are higher than Girls'
- Cross-informant agreement for CIU is significant although moderate,  $r=.286$ ,  $p<.001$
- CIU was not related to parental education

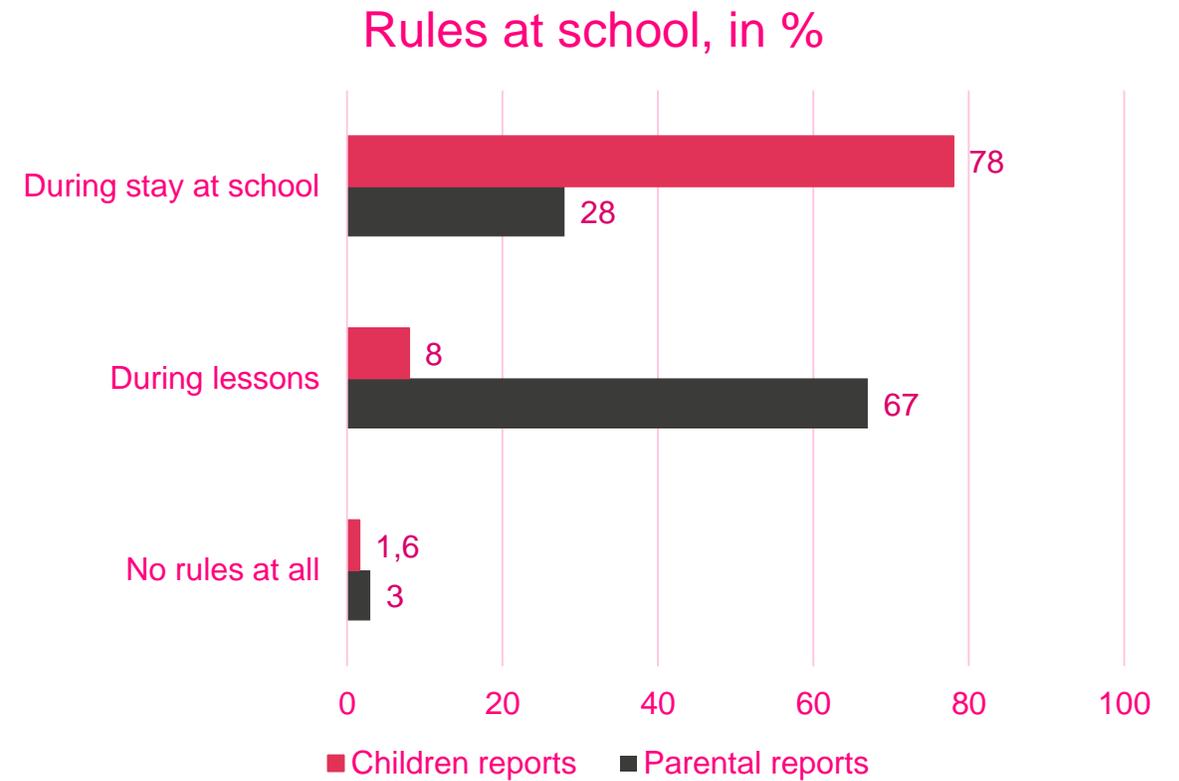
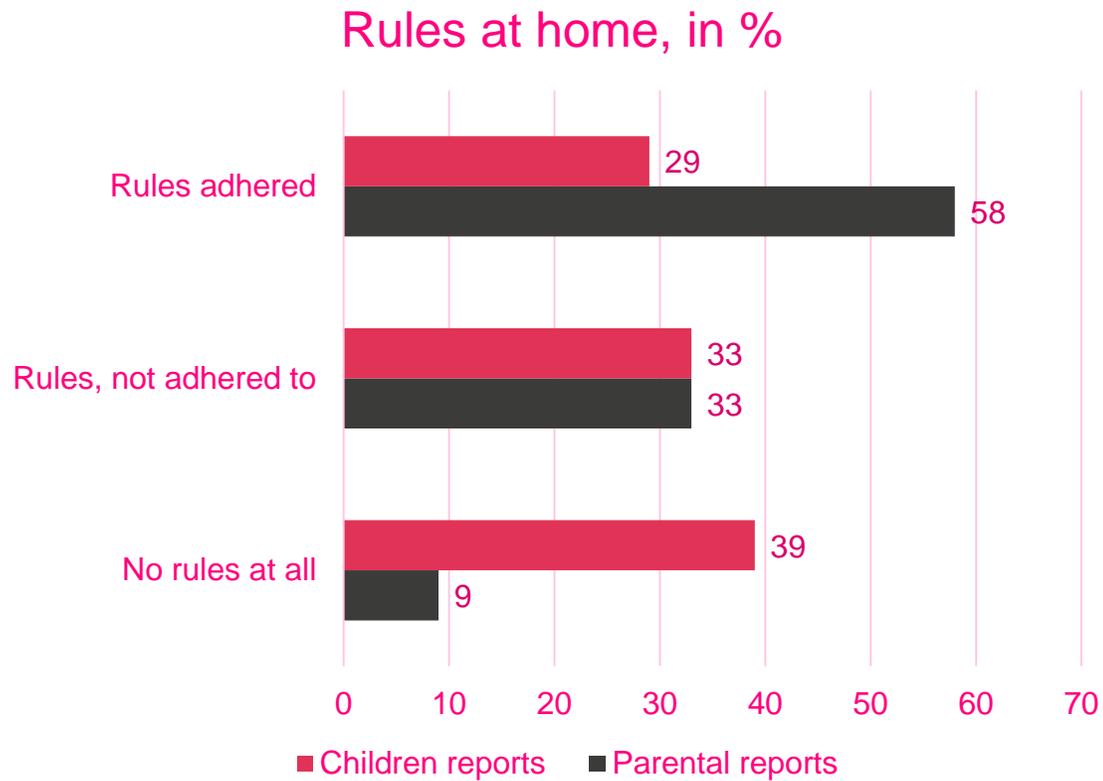
# Correlations between CIU and amount of Internet use

		Child reported CIU	Parent reported CIU
Child reported	Internet use schooldays	.376***	.153*
	Internet use weekdays	.415***	.168*
Parent reported	Internet use schooldays	.220**	.342***
	Internet use weekdays	.237**	.386***

Children reported CIU could be predicted by children reported Internet use (regular schooldays and weekends) and by parental reported Internet use on weekends;  $R^2 = .21$ ,  $p < .000$

However, parental reported CIU could be predicted only by parental reported Internet use on weekends;  $R^2 = .12$ ,  $p < .01$

# Rules regulating Internet use

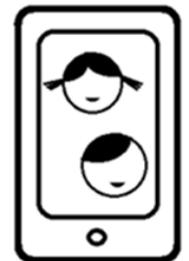


# Keeping on rules and parental control and monitoring as related to CIU

		Child reported CIU	Parent reported CIU
		Anova F	
Child reported	Rules at home	.651	1.525
	Rules at school	3.420*	2.091
Parent reported	Rules at home	2.980*	10.611***
	Rules at school	2.112	2.180
		Correlation r	
Parent reported	Internet use control	.122	.199**
	Internet use monitoring	-.001	.007

# Conclusions

- *Do parents really know about child's Internet use?*
- Probably *Yes* - about weekends and home background
- Probably *No* – about regular school days and school context
- *Who – a child or a parent - is more reliable?*
- Both, children (aged 8-9 years old) and parents are reliable informants about child's compulsive Internet use
- Rely on young school-aged children when measuring her / his Internet use
- Higher parental education and child's female gender tend to go with more favorable and (or) socially appropriate answers while reporting amounts of Internet use





**Vilnius  
University**



---

# THANK YOU

[www.mediavaikai.lt](http://www.mediavaikai.lt)

[mediavaikai@gmail.com](mailto:mediavaikai@gmail.com)

[roma.jusiene@fsf.vu.lt](mailto:roma.jusiene@fsf.vu.lt)