

Analysis and Conclusion

I interviewed kindergarten teachers because as a group we agreed that young children will be the most difficult age group for our challenge. Since we ourselves do not have children yet, it is difficult to get a feeling of what we have to pay attention to. With the help of trained educators, we can get important information about the younger age groups from experts who have a trained understanding of the child's psyche and immense experience in dealing with younger children on a daily basis.

The interview showed that transparency is one of the most important forms of communication. Children need to be explained why rules exist and why it is important that children follow them. This must be done in a way that is appropriate for children. Especially with very young children we have to make sure that the rules are not only mentioned once, but are repeated often. This could be done by pop-ups with a mascot which reminds them in certain situations.

Especially with very young children, in our challenge about 6-8, the application must generate a lasting interest in order for them to continue using it. In the interaction between technology and children, there are a number of things to consider, such as short waiting times. When a page/function loads, a smiley face or charging circle must be displayed so that they understand that something is happening and they only have to wait a short time. If this is not the case, it can lead to the child repeatedly pressing the button out of impatience or incomprehension.

From the interviews, it could be determined with a significant majority that children cannot simply be pushed into certain age groups to assess their maturity. There are children who prefer a more childlike setup (gamification, tokens, medals to collect, mascots) at around 8 years of age, and there are 8 year olds who would rather be repulsed by something like this ("That's for small children, but not for me."), because they would prefer a setup like older children. A possible solution would be to make two versions. A "Munich City District Youth Association" app and a "Munich City District Youth Association for Kids" app. Then the children, together with their parents, can decide which version is better for them.

Younger children should be more protected when using the app/website. For example, there might be no chat function or only a limited one with strong moderation. Teenagers must be careful not to misuse usernames and comment functions for inappropriate names or statements, there must be clear rules that are enforced. For example, someone who is conspicuous several times may be blocked from chatting for a while, or all messages from that person must be authorized by a moderator, for a certain period of time, before they can be seen publicly in the comment section.

When asked which framework would be better to use for children, the majority felt that an app would be superior to a website. Apps provide a framework that can be limited and it will offer fewer opportunities for accidentally changing the website to something not child appropriate, as would be the case with a website, by clicking around.

For parents, a lot of information should be available, such as "What can the child see. What can the child do/not do". There must be clear transparency about data protection and security.

Overall, there is much more that has been learned from these interviews with educators that will have an important role and influence later in the process of brainstorming ideas and creating one or more prototypes.