



JÖNKÖPING UNIVERSITY
School of Engineering

Why Privacy Matters

Qualitative Research on the Phenomenon Sharenting

PAPER WITHIN *Informatics*

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Abstract

Sharenting has become closely intertwined with common parenting practices. The term is produced from *sharing* and *parenting* and it refers to personal information of children published by the child's guardian on social media. The security of children's online privacy is threatened, not only by third parties but also by their parents' social media disclosures. This research studies the phenomenon sharenting from a perspective of informatics, focusing on parents' behaviors online. The aim is to further understand how Swedish parents use Photo Sharing Networking Services (PSNS) to perform sharenting, what consequences they are aware of and what measures they take to protect the safety and privacy of their children online. Using qualitative semi-structured interviews to find deep, empirical data and comparing it to a theoretical framework using a thematic analysis, this study contributes with an understanding of Swedish parents' reasoning, as well as their attitudes regarding the subject. In total eight interviews have been conducted and the result shows that parents share content of their children online with the intention to connect with others, collect memories and enhance their self-presentation. The considered consequences of sharenting found among parents are the danger of third-parties, and the risk of creating an inaccurate identity of their child. To protect their children online, parents use privacy settings and limit the content, but also ask for the child's consent before sharing. The results show that Swedish parents are aware of consequences and measures that can be used to protect the privacy of their children, but do not always consider them when sharenting. The contributions of this research consist of support for the development of future privacy guidelines and raising awareness on the topic.

Keywords

Sharenting, Online privacy, Parents, Children, Social media

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I Introduction

Sharenting is a relatively new phenomenon that describes the action of parents sharing personal information online, putting their children's long-term safety and their own parental connections at jeopardy (William-Ceci et al., 2021). The word is constructed from *sharing* and *parenting* and it refers to pictures, videos and other personal information of children published by the child's guardian on social media or the internet in general (Schildt Gillion, 2021).

Parents have always shared photos and information of their children to their family and friends, but in the past, this was done through photo albums at family gatherings and similar occasions. The topic is becoming increasingly discussed as people become more aware of the online environment. The information reaches a larger audience in less time when sharing online, compared to offline (Steinberg, 2017). In addition, content shared online is searchable and it is impossible to maintain the control – what once has been published will stay published. It becomes scalable and can possibly end up with an unintended audience. Another concern is context collapse, which refers to content that is taken out of its context and used for a different purpose than intended (James, 2014).

Social media has become the new photo album and according to Williams-Ceci et al. (2021) over 90% of parents post photos and information of their children online. Children who are too young to understand the consequences of social media or even know that it exists have a digital footprint, created by their parents. Children are unable to make their own decisions on whether they want to have a social media presence or not as well as what should be posted about them.

2 Background

The following section starts with a description of photo albums, focusing on how people have shared photos historically in relation to the changes of behavior that the smartphone has contributed to. Further, the impact that social media has had on photo sharing is described. An introduction to sharenting follows, which leads to the purpose statement and research questions of the study. Finally, limitations and outline are described.

2.1 Sharing photos

Photography allows people to visually capture themselves and stages of their life. Since the first photography was taken almost 200 years ago, it has spread widely throughout modern society. Walker (1989) investigated the psychological and social functions of photo albums and their value to scholars as documentations of social life. They describe the photo album as following:

“Albums are intensely personal; they create a relationship between the presenter and the viewer; the audience is small; the possessor plays an active role in the album's presentation; and there is an accompanying verbal narrative.”
(Walker, 1989, p. 155)

According to Walker (1989), sharing photos in photo albums is a relatively private art form, referring to the fact that the authors can choose when to share the photo album with the intended audience and are present while doing so, which gives them control over the photos shared. This leads to the author being able to participate actively in the presentation of the album to the intended audience. Further, a physical photo album can only be exposed to a small audience, compared to other art forms such as paintings in a gallery or a ballet show. Due to its format, about 4 to 5 people can view it at the same time. These features combined suggest that photo albums create an intimate and personal connection between the artist and the audience (Walker, 1989).

The development of mobile phones has made it easier for users to share and interact with other users online. Walking around with a camera in the pocket at all times allows users to always capture moments. Most phones today are also equipped with internet connection and bluetooth which enables the activity of sharing content with others online. According to Goh et al. (2009), the largest amount of photographs shared includes people. This is followed closely by photographs capturing places of interest, seasons/events and objects. Together, these four categories make up more than 50% of shared photos (Goh et al., 2009).

2.2 Social media

Social media is a collective name for a wide range of services and platforms online with a focus of sharing photos or links, creating posts, videos and other content. Ngai et al. (2015) has defined the term by dividing it into its two components; *social* and *media*, where social refers to the activities carried out by the user, and media refers to the internet-enabled technologies used to perform the activities. It is common for social media users to be involved in creating the content as well as taking part in each other's content, and it is a central part of many Swedish citizens' digital lives (Internetstiftelsen, 2020).

Social media tools provide people with various ways to interact and share information and knowledge with friends and the public, and the rapid growth of them have changed the way people communicate with each other. One can share information, join virtual groups and friend or unfriend a person in the global social media environment. Such social interactions were not possible before social media (Ngai et al., 2015).

Social media such as Instagram, Pinterest and Flickr, with photo-sharing as their main focus, can be labeled as *Photo Sharing Networking Services* (PSNS). The use of PSNS has during the last few years increased significantly. PSNS have been integrated into the daily social networking activities of many adults, since it offers a simple way of sharing content directly through mobile phones (Lee et al., 2015). One of the most popular PSNS is Instagram, which has existed since 2010. Instagram's rapid growth rate leveled off in 2019, when the usage on a daily basis increased by 41%. The increase mainly occurred in the 36-45 age range (Internetstiftelsen, 2019).

2.3 Sharenting

The term sharenting was first used as a merger of *over-sharing* and *parenting*, and came to prominence in the beginning of 2013. The initial focus of the conversation was not about parents' overall publishing, but rather the fact that they tended to share too much regarding their children on social media (Marasli et al. 2016). In 2013, the word "oversharenting" was announced as one of the words of the week in Time Magazine (Jones, 2013) and shortly after that, the Guardian (Meakin, 2013) published an article weighing the pros and cons of the phenomenon. The subject has exploded since then, and in 2016, Collins Dictionary named sharenting the English word of the year (Caarph, 2019). Yet, the concept of sharenting is relatively unknown to society at large, and it is common that people have never heard of the term. Sharenting has, despite this, become a natural phenomenon in our time, since the action itself is so common (Marasli et al. 2016). 92% of two-year-olds in the United States have an online presence and out of those children about one third has had that presence since they were just born. In nearly one-fourth of pregnancies babies have an online presence even before birth as an effect of parents sharing sonogram pictures online while being pregnant (Steinberg, 2017). However, the phenomenon is starting to get criticism from the public (Kravchuk, 2021).

2.4 Purpose and research questions

It is evident that the digital world influences the best interest of the child, children's privacy, and parents' right of free speech. As of now, the security of children's online privacy is threatened by their parents' social media disclosures. The children are not able to decide whether they want to have an online presence or not, and it is up to the parents to decide what is best for them. Using social media has become the norm, and the rules are unclear.

When searching for "sharenting" on Google Scholar, the search result shows that only 1410 articles cover this topic (2022-02-20). The three most cited works on the topic of sharenting states that it is difficult to balance parents' right to free speech against children's privacy interest (Steinberg, 2017), that children grow up with sensing that sharing personal information is common practice and nothing is private (Brosch, 2016), and that we still need to discover a way to share relational identities that is fair to both parents and children (Blum-Ross & Livingstone, 2017).

When adding "Sweden" to the search term, only 10 relevant studies were found of which none were within the area of informatics. Previous research within Sweden had been conducted on the perspective of the child (Waern & Wall, 2021; Dahlberg, 2018), parents who work with their social media and how they expose their children (Albinsson et al., 2018; Sjöholm & Lidenalv, 2020), within the area of law (Heintz, 2020; Lindström 2021), and social work (Benjaminsson & Magnusson, 20020). Furthermore, the research conducted from the parents point of view excluded fathers (Larsson & Renman, 2020; Ahlström, 2020). The relatively small amount of research made of sharenting in general, and the lack of Swedish research of the topic within the area of informatics in particular, indicates that there is a research gap in the field.

The purpose of this qualitative, thematic study is to understand how Swedish parents reason about online disclosures of their children, and how children's online privacy can be protected. In seeking to explore this, three research questions were developed:

- [1] Why do Swedish parents disclose photos of their children online?
- [2] How do Swedish parents reason about the consequences of online disclosure of their children?
- [3] What measures are Swedish parents using to protect their children online?

2.5 Limitations

This study focuses on the disclosure parents make of their children in terms of photos shared on PSNS. The research is limited to Swedish parents who have one or more children younger than twelve years old. The reason for this limitation is that Instagram, which is one of the most

popular photo-sharing platforms, was founded twelve years ago, in 2010. By limiting this research to parents with children under the age of twelve, we ensure that these parents have had the opportunity to use social media in a way that is of interest for this study. The purpose of the study is not to compare social media platforms, since all platforms are considered to be of interest when researching how parents use social media to share information about their children online. Analytical data was collected only from English and Swedish resources. Empirical data was gathered from eight in-depth, semi-structured qualitative interviews.

2.6 Outline

The report starts with presenting the theoretical framework, followed by the method and implementation. After that, the findings and analysis are presented. Finally comes the discussions and conclusions. References and appendix are attached at the end of the report.

3 Theoretical framework

Based on the background and problem statement, three research questions were developed, which steered the focus when searching for previous research for the theoretical framework. The theoretical framework covers three different perspectives of sharenting; reasons why parents sharent, what consequences sharenting can have and how security and privacy measures can be taken to protect children online. The terms originally used to find analytical data were “sharenting” and “sharenting AND Sweden”. Further, the search terms used expanded based on the findings from the analytical data, and search terms such as “connecting”, “consequences” and “privacy” were added. The following section presents the theoretical framework, which will help us analyze the findings by using the different themes.

3.1 Reasons why parents share online

For a variety of reasons people are progressively engaging in social media. It provides a common platform for users to exchange their ideas on different issues, it encourages users to share contents that they are interested in, as well as serving as a source of information for entertainment and meetings (Tahir & Husin, 2017). The frequent use of social media to share information about one's children commonly begins before birth, with the uploading of fetal ultrasound photographs, and has become closely intertwined to parenting practices (Steinberg, 2017). This practice became widespread because it provides parents with an opportunity of parental self-identity as well as social approval (Kravchuk, 2021).

3.1.1 Sharing online to connect

Most sharenting is conducted to get information and feedback from other parents, friends or family members. For these parents social media can also be used to build and maintain social relationships and to develop their identity as a parent. Having a child involves major changes not everyone can endure independently, such as emotional, practical, social and relationship changes (Kravchuk, 2021). When parents use social media to connect with people in similar situations, they feel less alone with their concerns (Davis, 2015), and according to Duggan et al. (2015), parents are more likely than others to receive support online as well as acknowledging good news from others by responding to such posts. From a survey conducted by Duggan et al. (2015), the results show that most parents that use Facebook are friends with members of their family that are not their own parents or children, as well as their current friends and friends from their past. Furthermore, Steinberg (2017) states that the most foremost reason that parents disclose information or photos of their children online is to connect with friends and family. When doing so, they often receive validating feedback which in return makes the parents feel supported in their decision to share (Steinberg, 2017). In cases where relatives and friends live far away, parents can use social media to stay in touch by sharing photos or anecdotes (Davis, 2015). By

sharing pictures of their children online, it is also possible for parents to collect their memories and archive the childhood of their children (Blum-Ross & Livingstone, 2017).

3.1.2 Sharing for self-presentation

Self-presentation, according to Goffman (1959), is critical for getting approval and achieving positive life results. Self-presentation can be described as the way individuals try to manage the way others perceive them, and includes expressing oneself and acting in ways that leave a positive impression on others (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007). Goffman (1963) goes on to say that parents sometimes treat their children like props, as if they were only there to improve the appearance of the parent. According to his studies, a child can also be utilized as an associate, and that the behavior of the child can be a mirror of its parents and a part of the parent's self-presentation.

The strongest motivator driving PSNS users to share photos is self-presentation. The filters and tools allow users to present their best photos on the platform, to manage and present their personas created online (Lee et al., 2015). A better self-presentation could also be the aim when parents share photos of their children online (Kumar & Schoenebeck, 2015), and Collett (2011) means that the appearance of the child is intentionally managed by their parents, in order for them to be considered “good parents”. The benefit in terms of receiving validation for being a “good parent”, can for some outweigh the fears of oversharing and creating a digital footprint for the child (Kumar & Schoenebeck, 2015).

3.1.3 Sharing online for health reasons

Parents of children that suffer from medical or health related issues can use social media as a way to receive personal support and feedback. Sharenting can also be a way to contribute to breaking down stereotypes. Raising money for medication, treatment or other fundraising to support research in the medical area can also be a reason to sharent (Kravchuk, 2021).

Sharing information and photos of their children online can be a good way for parents to feel less alone and to reach out and help each other. Having a sick child is not easy and this kind of community online might seem as a great solution to one of many problems, but in these circumstances it can be hard to determine what the best interest of the child is. Some children might grow up being grateful for their parents sharenting if it leads to them getting better, affording medication or gaining support from others. However, some children might not appreciate having their medical record on display for the whole world to see (Kravchuk, 2021).

This is validated by Steinberg (2017) who also describes how parents with medically fragile children are able to connect and seek support from other parents through social media. She argues that by sharing about illness online parents are able to deal with stereotypes, raise money and that the parents who choose to share often receive positive personal support from the communities they choose to share within (Steinberg, 2017).

3.2 Consequences of sharenting

Boyd (2007) argues that there are four properties that fundamentally distinguish online interactions from offline interactions: persistence, searchability, replicability, and invisible audiences. *Persistence* refers to content shared online being available for posterity. *Replicability* means that content online can be misinterpreted when being copied from its original context to another. An example of this are memes, which have been increasingly popular online and can be described as an image accompanied with a text, forming a message which is disconnected from its intended context to create humor and entertainment for the audience (Molina, 2020). *Searchability* means that online content can be searched for and discovered by anyone online. *Invisible audiences* means that it is virtually impossible to know which individuals get access to published content. In other words, all people globally at any given time could potentially be an audience. These properties complicate the interactions between people and change the fundamentals of social dynamics (boyd, 2007). Internet users tend to ignore some of the consequences while acting online, and consider the content online to be less real than actions in the offline, physical world. Content online is seen by some users as “just for fun” and the effect of this content is not taken into consideration (James, 2014).

3.2.1 Stranger danger

The one threat regarding sharenting that parents tend to consider and fear the most is the risk of “stranger danger” which refers to strangers claiming information with the intention to harm the child. One example could be a birthday post with a photo of the child with the caption “Happy birthday, Name!” that discloses the child's face, age, name and possibly location. When parents share this type of information publicly, strangers are given important facts about the child. These posts could be exploited by criminals local to the child or predators, or by an identity thief seeking to deduce the child's personally identifiable information (Minkus, 2015).

The fact that parents are concerned about “stranger danger” and commercial exploitation of their child's photographs show that they are aware of the risks associated with sharing information about their children online. In this study, parents have demonstrated some comprehension that they must consider their children's reactions once they are old enough to be aware of the photographs their parents have shared of them. The creation of new photographic practices that enable parents to display their children while maintaining some anonymity can be viewed as a strategy for addressing these issues. Although parents are aware that their children's privacy may be jeopardized by their internet activities and strive to manage them, the majority of them continue to “sharent” (Kravchuk, 2021).

Many adult users of Facebook today have 200 or more friends on the platform and the content that they publish to said friends are commonly less private than they realize (Minkus, 2015). Parents often share information online to more individuals than they would consider friends in the offline world (Steinberg, 2017). Even though media often portray child abductions of strangers, it is far more common that children are being kidnapped by someone within the

family's social circle (Minkus, 2015). A study conducted by the FBI in 1997 found that a majority of kidnappings and violent crimes against juveniles are perpetrated by relatives or acquaintances (Steinberg, 2017).

Another kind of “stranger danger” is data brokers, which are individuals or companies that specialize in collecting data to sell or license it to third parties such as advertisers, spammers, malware distributors, employment agencies and college admissions offices etc. In the United States alone the market for children's products amounts to hundreds of billions of dollars and it is not surprising that data brokers are already trying to compile files about children. The data brokers build profiles based on people's private data. When parents share information about their children online data brokers can start creating the individual's profile from a much earlier stage in life, which can be continuously improved over the course of the person's life (Minkus, 2015).

3.2.2 Invasion of children's integrity

A study directed by Matthew Davis, M.D. at Mott Children's Hospital for the University of Michigan, explored in what ways parents share content about their children online, it was found that 51% of the participants shared information that could lead to the identification of the child's location at a specific time. The study also showed that 56% of the involved participants shared potentially embarrassing information about their children online and that 27% shared potentially inappropriate photos. This type of disclosure is common, and could in some cases lead to bullying of said child not only by other children, but also by parents that share pictures in communities online to make fun of the children (Steinberg, 2017).

After conducting focus groups with adolescents between the ages of 12 to 14, Ouvrein and Verswijvel (2019) found that photos shared by parents oftentimes could be perceived as embarrassing by their children. The study also shows that the identity the children themselves want to profile online might conflict with the identity parents determine for their children by sharing photos of them. In the transitional phase between childhood and adulthood, individuals become especially conscious of the online world and their online identity, and adolescents mean that pictures of babies and small children are of less concern since they are sweet and not will be recognized from the pictures when they grow up (Ouvrein & Verswijvel, 2019),

Out of the parents who share personal information about their children online the majority do not intend to harm the child's well-being, future opportunities or development. These parents have no intention to be evil, but they have not taken into consideration the significance of the child's digital identity and thus intrude their privacy (Steinberg, 2017). When parents publish personal information and photos of their children online, they usually do so with good intentions and normally they are best suited to make decisions regarding their child's best interest. Although this is not always the case. Not all parents are fully aware of how their actions and the consequences of sharing things on social media can affect their child (Steinberg, 2017).

3.2.3 Security and privacy threats online

People are unknowingly being exposed to threats regarding their privacy and security online. Classic threats, modern threats, combined threats and threats specifically targeting children are the four main categories of threats according to Fire et al. (2014). The *classic threats* have been an issue since the internet's broad adoption and they include spam, attacks and phishing. These threats can use personal information to attack a user and their friends. *Modern threats* are typically unique to online social network environments and they usually specifically target a user's personal information which can include clickjacking, de-anonymization and identity clone attacks. *Combined threats* use both classic and modern methods to create a more sophisticated attack (Fire et al., 2014).

When parents disclose information regarding their children online, they may not take all risks into consideration nor understand the nature of risk posed online. Parents tend to worry more about the third-party danger, than the one they contribute to themselves. Conversations among parents as well as research conducted on parenting in a digital environment point out that parents wish to keep their children safe from harm. However they do not tend to consider the risk of their child's reputation, which they might be harming themselves (Kravchuk, 2021).

Besides the threats affecting everyone online, there are additional threats that intentionally and specifically target younger internet users (Fire et al., 2014). The threats targeting children are online predators, risky behavior and cyber bullying. Online predators are the greatest concern regarding children's personal information safety and it is divided into content, contact and conduct (Fire et al., 2014).

The content, contact, conduct was classified by Unicef in 2011 and it describes opportunities and risks for children online with the child as recipient (content), with the child as participant (contact) and with the child as actor (conduct). Within this context, the risk of content refers to a child's exposure to pornography or harmful sexual content, the risk of contact refers to a child who is contacted by an adult or another child for the purpose of sexual abuse and the risk of conduct refers to the child as an active initiator of abusive or risky behaviors (Unicef, 2011).

3.3 Privacy and security measures protecting children online

Children who might need privacy protection from their parents' online disclosures have little options in terms of guidance, prohibitions, or remedial measures within privacy regulations. Furthermore, these regulations are intended to protect information about children that is generated outside the family, primarily in schools and healthcare settings. The frameworks provided exclude social media sharing and do not consider a parent to be a potential source of harmful disclosure. Instead, parents are believed to be the most appropriate guardians to ensure the privacy of their children's personal information (Steinberg, 2017). The frameworks provide support to parents and not in the context of their obligation not to disclose information about

the child. This eliminates the possibility of seeing parents' online activity as possibly damaging to their children. It is, however, critical not just to empower parents, but also to give legal mechanisms to influence those who choose to disregard a child's right to privacy (Kravchuk, 2021). The following section covers what measurements are, and can be, taken to protect children online in means of privacy settings, copyright and children's rights.

3.3.1 Privacy settings

In the most common social media applications, such as Facebook or Instagram users have the option to adjust their privacy settings. The individual's personal privacy settings are the most popular tools regarding privacy-settings (Kravchuk, 2021). This determines to which audience their content should be shared. Many parents share content with their intended audience with little discretion, while trusting the privacy settings as a safety net (Steinberg, 2017). While there are parents that rely on privacy settings, another study conducted by Autenrieth (2018), shows that parents rarely rely on the privacy settings within the social media they are using and instead respond to the risks by limiting their content and/or their audiences. This is done by carefully deciding which friends to accept and/or add to their friends-list. These parents are concerned that the privacy settings are not reliable, and in response they do not trust that their content is limited to the intended target group. In fact, even if parents carefully consider privacy settings, friends-lists or in other ways limit their content or audiences online, the data that is being posted can be saved and reposted in other communities or alternate forums by anyone in the intended audience (Steinberg, 2017).

Misra and Such, (2016) divides privacy settings of mainstream social media into five categories; Binary groups, Predefined groups, Predefined groups + individuals, User-defined groups + individuals and Computer-supported groups. *Binary groups* only allow users to have one type of "friends", preventing them to distinguish the relationship type, not reflecting on social relations in real-life. *Predefined groups* can help a user to organize contacts and create groups for example "friends" or "family", and they can treat these groups differently. In addition, predefined groups + *individuals* enable users to treat individuals separately from predefined groups. *User-defined groups* + *individuals* allows the user to create their own groups and manage their own network per individual. *Computer supported groups* are only available on Facebook, and it allows users to construct lists based on features such as location and workplace (Misra & Such, 2016).

3.3.2 Sharing permissions online

As previously mentioned, the identity of a child that a parent creates by sharing photos of them online, might conflict with the identity the child wants to profile online (Ouvrein & Verswijvel, 2019). Steinberg (2017) means that a child has to have the possibility to create their own identity to thrive. Parents' disclosures are in many cases forming the child's identity before they can even walk. Furthermore, published content is constantly stored, meaning that shared photos can follow the child into their adult life and create a kind of biography which tells the life of that individual. Children of this generation are the first to grow up in a digital world, and the

individuals who are responsible for protecting the children's privacy online are the same individuals that share the information, the parents. When parents share photos of their children, they might do so without their children's consent (Steinberg, 2017). If a parent would be asked to picture a future in which their child confronts them about their sharing habits, it's assumed that they've shared information that belongs to someone else (Blum-Ross & Livingstone, 2017). Steinberg (2017) explains that it is not necessary for parents to stop sharing photos of their children online to protect their privacy, but rather for them to gain education and knowledge of how to use social media in a responsible way. Further, after asking young children to answer a survey of how they want parents to act, Sakardi et al. (2020) concluded that the children were very clear in that they want to be asked for permission before they are posted on social media.

Who legally owns the photo is regulated by copyright, which restricts people from copying and communicating work to the public, without the permission of the creator. The rapid pace of technical advancement, as well as the ability to share content online, have made it difficult for the copyright regulation to keep up (Bosher et al, 2019).

Social media platforms have terms and conditions to accept when creating an account. However these are often overlooked by the user, hence they are hard to read and understand according to Bosher et al. (2019). As an example, Instagram has been accused of having particularly ambiguous content within their agreement. When creating an account on Instagram, users have to agree to grant the platform a non-exclusive, fully paid and royalty free, transferable, sub-licensable, worldwide license to use their published content. With this being said, Instagram does not claim ownership over the content, but they can edit, copy and share the content published on the platform to the public (Bosher et al, 2019).

3.3.3 Children's rights online

An examination of the legal remedies available to children who object to the internet dissemination of their personal information reveals that they are frequently insensitive to children's needs and necessitate the engagement of state officials to help children in filing successful cases. Furthermore, the child does not automatically take precedence over his or her parents in a conflict between child privacy rights and their parents' freedom of expression or right to family life. For authorities to recognize the importance of child privacy while adjudicating conflicts, it is vital to read child privacy not just as a right, but also as one of the child's best interests (Kravchuk, 2021).

The right to privacy has always existed, and its significance has grown in the setting of modern technologies. Privacy protection in such a complicated context has become a requirement for ensuring online child safety and, as a result, has begun to form an independent, though interconnected, pillar within many online child safety initiatives (Kravchuk, 2021). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) became Swedish law January 1, 2020. The UNCRC is founded on the conviction that childhood is a particularly vulnerable time in a person's life when they require the care and protection of others. The convention states that

every decision regarding a child should consider the child's best interest. It also states that every child has the right to privacy (SFS 2018:1197). In the General comment No. 25 (2021) on children's rights in relation to the digital environment, the UN states that a child's privacy is vital for their agency, dignity and safety. The threats can come from public institutions or organizations, but also from the activities of themselves, their family or friends. The general comment covers that data includes children's identities, activities, location, communication, emotions, health and relationships (United Nations, 2021).

The current laws regarding the protection of children's integrity are written from the parents' point of view. They are based on the tradition that parents know what is best for their child and that they are best suited to make decisions regarding disclosures of the child's personal information. These laws do not take into consideration the fact that the disclosures of parents on social media can be harmful and embarrassing to the child (Steinberg, 2017). However, even when a court acknowledges a child's reasonable expectation of privacy, the court frequently prioritizes the interests of the parent, family, and state while exercising authority over a minor child. For a variety of reasons, children have little to no remedy when it comes to parental oversharing. For starters, children are expected to follow their parents' wishes. Second, children may be deprived of the opportunity to express their contempt or other negative emotions such as shame, humiliation, anger, or pain. Finally, children may be unaware of the consequences of their parents' internet behavior (Steinberg, 2017).

4 Method and implementation

A qualitative research approach was used to understand the parent's beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behavior, and interactions regarding sharenting. Further, qualitative interviews were used as a method, to provide the participants within this study with a voice (Vibha et al., 2013). Qualitative methods seek to understand and interpret meanings. In contrast, quantitative methods use numbers as data to explain or predict relationships between variables (Braun & Clarke, 2013). To maintain the focus on the research and stay aligned with the research questions, a deductive approach was used to generate themes. A deductive approach means to apply theory to data to test the theory (Bingham & Witkowski, 2022). Presented in the following sections is the method, selection of participants, execution of data collection and method of data analysis.

4.1 Qualitative interviews

Using qualitative interviews as a method helped our purpose by understanding how our participants reason, and what their opinions are about sharenting. Further, interviews give the possibility to start a dialog and develop the conversation to get in-depth answers. This is of importance to understand opinions and reflections of the phenomenon of sharenting. By using in-depth interviews as the research method, one can find out how people think and feel about a specific topic and better understand opinions, and thoughts (Alvehus, 2013).

An interview guide was used to help answer the study's research questions. The guide was based on the research questions of the study, and associated questions were constructed to each central question. The guide was used to keep all interviews coherent and to ask relevant questions to all interviewees. Further, it helped us as interviewers to listen more carefully and ask relevant follow-up questions (Alvehus, 2013). The book "Den kvalitativa forskningsintervjun" was used to form the interview questions and further to conduct the interviews to get relevant data (Kvale & Brinkmann 2014). The main questions stated here were asked to all participants to compare similarities or differences in the following analysis. Follow-up questions were asked when needed, and could differ among the interviews. The majority of the interviews proceeded for 40-50 minutes while some lasted up to one hour. This provided us with deep knowledge and understanding for each participant. Furthermore the duration of the interviews gave us the possibility to ask all of our central questions, followed by discussions and associated questions. This generated enough data to answer the research questions and draw conclusions.

The qualitative methods we considered were focus groups, surveys and interviews. When deciding which of these to use, we considered that the study covers a topic which can be sensitive to talk about. Focus groups require mutual self-disclosure, and are therefore not a suitable method when discussing sensitive topics (Morgan, 1996). Furthermore, focus groups can have an impact on participants' attitudes and opinions (Morgan, 1996) and therefore, we chose not to use focus groups as a method. Another important aspect taken into consideration was that we wanted to gather depth in our data. Surveys are efficient when gathering broad data, but are

inflexible in the means that they leave little room to ask supplementary questions. The lack of complex answers leads to a lack of depth (Mauldin, 2020). Thus, semi-structured qualitative interviews were decided to be the best fit for this study.

4.1.1 Selection of participants

Participants were selected with the criteria that they were social media users. However, what platforms they use were not taken into consideration since this is not the focus of the study. In total, eight interviews were conducted, all with parents of children under the age of twelve. The participants were not selected based on gender, since that is not of importance for our study.

When searching for potential participants, we reached out to parents within our network of contacts. Interviewing people in your pre-existing network, also called acquaintance interviews (Garton & Copland, 2010), raises some ethical dilemmas which have been taken into consideration. This includes keeping the information revealed during the interview confidential unless the contact brings it up again later. Furthermore, only data collected during recording has been used. Information known to the authors beforehand has not been part of the study. Possible hierarchical relationships have also been considered, and a professional attitude has helped avoid potential position differences between the parties.

When looking for participants for the interviews, the gender of the participants was not taken into consideration. However, the results may differ depending on how the different genders answer. The focus of this study is not to separate the genders and therefore an equal number of females and males were asked to participate. However, more mothers than fathers showed interest in taking part in the study. This led to a majority of female interviewees, which may affect the result since the opinions between men and women could differ.

All participants were raised and still live in or in connection to middle sized cities in Sweden. Therefore, this study only reflects results of a certain ethnical group. If ethnic and cultural differences had been covered, the result may have turned out differently. With this said, this study is not valid to draw general conclusions. This study will therefore not be applicable to the entire target group. Instead, it strives to gain a deeper understanding of the selection of participants, which can give insight to their view of sharenting.

The participants' own age was not taken into consideration as the only criteria for participation was to be a social media user and have children under the age of twelve. The age difference of the interviewees may influence the result, since social media usage and perspectives on sharenting potentially could differ between generations. However, when analyzing the data, no tendencies regarding their difference in experience and usage of social media in relation to their age could be confirmed.

Participants of the interviews consist of eight parents and will be referred to as Interview Participant (IP), followed by a number such as: IP1, IP2, IP3, IP4, IP5, IP6, IP7 and IP8.

IP1: Woman, 31 years old, Jönköping. Has one child aged 2,5 (+expecting). Interview duration: 50 minutes.

IP2: Woman, 40 years old, Huskvarna. Two children aged 7 and 10. Interview duration: 45 minutes.

IP3: Woman, 37 years old, Kalmar. Two children aged 6 and 9. Interview duration: 55 minutes.

IP4: Woman, 34 years old, Jönköping. One child aged 7. Interview duration: 58 minutes.

IP5: Woman, 37 years old, Jönköping. Two children aged 9 and 12. Interview duration: 47 minutes.

IP6: Man, 41 years old, Jönköping. Two children aged 7 and 10. Interview duration: 48 minutes.

IP7: Man, 30 years old, Borås. Has one child aged 1 (+expecting). Interview duration: 40 minutes.

IP8: Man, 43 years old, Jönköping. Two children aged 3 and 6. Interview duration: 45 minutes.

* The interviews were conducted during week 13 - 15 year 2022.

4.1.2 Interview execution

When informing participants before the interview they were asked to not prepare in any way since that could influence and moderate their opinions and feelings. This study is examining how aware parents are of consequences, had they been preparing they would be more aware, and the study would not be realistic.

Participants were given a brief explanation on the topic and how the interviews would be conducted when being invited. Participants were also asked to not prepare for the interview in any way, to provide as realistic and honest answers as possible. Approximately one day before the interview would take place, a message was sent to the interviewee to remind them what time was agreed on, as well as to provide some information on how the interview would be conducted. When meeting up for the interview, breaking the ice was the first mission, to make the participant feel secure and confident. Once settled down and comfortable, we thanked the interviewee for taking part in our study and the agenda of the interview was presented.

When the interviewees agreed to take part in this study, we asked them to decide a time and place, for them to be as comfortable as possible, as Kvale and Brinkmann (2014) recommends in their guidelines for ethical interviewing. Some of the participants choose to meet with us in person, while some choose to have the interview by video call. When interviewing it is of importance to remain in a quiet place, which failed during one of the interviews. The participant chose to meet up in the home environment, where noise from children and other disturbing moments occurred. This could potentially have affected the participants' answers, as it might have interrupted the conversation or created stress. Another interview was interrupted on a few occasions due to insufficient internet connection. This might also have affected the conversation forcing the interviewee to repeat some of the answers. Furthermore, the abruptness also caused stress for the interviewer, since the focus partly was moved away from the topic. These interruptions could potentially affect the result of the study.

Before the interviews were initiated, the interviewees were informed about the purpose and goal of the interview and gave their consent to record. Participants were also made aware that they had the right to cancel the interview at any time and that they would be anonymous in the final study. The interview began with some demographic questions, followed by broad questions regarding their social media usage to warm up the interviewee. Deeper questions regarding their thoughts and opinions regarding the phenomenon of sharenting followed, using the interview guide to steer the conversation to the right direction. The estimated time for each interview was 45 minutes, which the participant was informed about in advance. To close the interview, the participants were asked to add anything they felt was of importance, and if they had any final questions. Finally, we once again thanked them for their participation and asked if they agreed to end the interview and turn off the recording.

4.2 Thematic analysis

A deductive thematic analysis was used to analyze the findings, using the theoretical framework as themes. This analysis method helped us identify patterns within the data, and understand what findings were of importance in relation to the research questions. Thematic analysis is a great method for those who are new to qualitative methods and is suggested to be used in student research. Furthermore, this method is flexible and can be used to analyze most kinds of data. (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

To implement the thematic analysis the following steps named in Successful qualitative research by Braun and Clarke (2013) were followed. The first step was to manually transcribe the recorded interviews, making the data ready for analysis and choosing how to translate what was said into written text. Although there are transcription services that can help the researcher to save time, it is recommended that the researcher does the transcription and gets intimately familiar with the data (Sutton & Austin, 2015). All sounds and words were written down to create a complete rendering of what was said and meant. Nothing was deleted, corrected or changed as this could manipulate the result and decrease the validity of the study (Kvale & Brinkmann 2014). After the transcription was complete the material was read actively and critically several times to understand what the data mean as well as get familiar with the data and find items of potential interest. To identify aspects of the data that relates to the research question, a coding of patterns was conducted. Coding can be described as identifying similarities and differences in the data (Sutton & Austin, 2015). This study used selective coding, meaning to have the existing theory in mind when creating codes (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The fourth step according to Braun and Clarke (2013) is to reassemble the codes to create themes. Themes were identified by reviewing the codes and the theoretical framework, to find similarities and overlaps. Once the themes were identified it was time to review and select which ones were of most importance for the study as a quality control. The final step was to make sense of the patterns and draw conclusions, to tell the story of each theme to the reader. The analysis of the data will explain what is interesting to this study and why.

5 Findings and analysis

In this chapter, the results of the collected material is structured according to the themes of the research questions; reasons why parents share online (theme 1), consequences of sharenting (theme 2), and privacy and security measures protecting children online (theme 3).

5.1 Theme 1: Reasons why parents share online

When asked for the reason why they share pictures of their children, IP3, IP6 and IP2 first stated that they did not have a clear reason for sharing, but rather that it is something done “automatically” and without any specific motive. IP2 said that her children are a part of her life, and that it is hard to exclude them from her social media posts. IP2 proves this further, by mentioning that one always has to be prepared for ending up on a photo online at social occasions.

“No, I do not see it as a big problem... / / ...No, there are a lot of pictures on them. I have not thought much about it.” - IP3

“I probably don’t think of the child’s best or my best, or that someone should feel good about it, it’s probably just an automatic thing almost .. / / I don’t have any deeper thought when I upload a picture actually.” - IP6

“...because at the same time if I share photos and I’m personal, it will also be difficult to completely exclude the children because they are a part of my life as well.” - IP2

“...but at the same time no one reacts to whether a camera or a mobile phone is brought up anymore, you did that much more before... / / ... Now it’s like, yes, we are going to meet grandma, yes, maybe you should brush your hair at least since you can end up on Facebook... / / ... now it feels so obvious that you end up in pictures and so on in a different way” - IP1

IP6 and IP5 also reflected about other parents who posted a lot of photos of their children, and how they should think more about how much they share. They expressed that the extent of sharing could be excessive.

“But I think you should think a little before posting things... / / ... no, but you might think that some parents should think a little... / / ... because I know a mother who shares an incredible amount, she has five children and there are like ten pictures a day of her children.” - IP5

“...people who expose their children extremely much, you think it’s a bit .. no but that it becomes a bit exaggerated. It almost becomes ‘come and see my pretty child’, ‘see how nice we have it’ ..” - IP6

When asking further for reasons as to why the participants choose to share content of their children online, all interviewees mentioned the purpose to connect with family and friends. Some

participants stated that this was to nurture the relationships, and others to keep long distance relatives updated about the child. IP4 and IP7 said that the reason for the connection also is to show the development of the child and the daily life of the family.

"...my parents, my relatives in Norway, and an old friend might want to see, it's probably more that perspective I have when I post a picture." - IP6

"And in my mind, I share pictures mainly because, yes, maybe so that friends far away get some insight into my life and what me and my daughter do during the days." - IP4

"... you share because it's fun to show your life to the friends you have, who may not always see. So that's a positive consequence, that you somehow can update friends who may be interested. 'This is what my family looks like, my daughter has grown...' "- IP7

When discussing sharing pictures to connect with friends, the participants had some different reasons for why. IP8 expressed that he did it to amuse his friends who shared his music interest, by sharing a picture of his child playing in the studio. IP6 stated that it could be a way to influence friends and share ideas of activities. Further, IP1 was unique in her reasoning about finding new friends on social media to connect with. She expressed that social media makes it easier to find like-minded people in a similar life-situation, which she might not meet otherwise.

"So if my kids are down in the studio here, for example, and playing and stuff like that, it may well be an Instagram story, because then I know that many of my friends think it's fun to watch and stuff." - IP8

"... At the same time as you want to share, because others share and then you are somehow involved in the feed and I have many colleagues who have children, there we always write and such 'yes you have been there, how fun '... // ... that's why it's called social media, and that's why you are there, it's because you want to share and take part in other people's social life...' "- IP6

"... Potential followers, I think a little, that you can find like-minded people... // ... So really people in sort of the same life situation. Then I think mainly of other mothers... // ... which you may have things in common with and which you would not meet otherwise... // ... kind of connect with the outside world a bit. " - IP1

Another popular way to connect by showing the development of the child is to post pictures on their birthday. This was mentioned by IP5 and IP2. They stated that the reason for posting such images was both for their own and the child's sake, in terms of getting feedback and support. The parent feels proud when the child is growing, and the child can get love and greetings which can establish a sense of affirmation.

"... if someone writes congratulations... I think he appreciates it. I can feel proud that I have a son who is twelve years old... // ... praise him a little, and I do it both for my sake, his sake and for the sake of those who want to congratulate him..." - IP5

"...if you get many likes on your birthday and can show it to the child, like 'see here how many people send birthday greetings'... // ... if you have always posted a photo of the children on their birthday, you see it historically on Facebook and then you can kinda see like 'oh look how they have developed', but it's for my own sake. " - IP2

In the same way as birthday greetings could establish, maintain and nurture social relationships for the child, IP6 argued that other accomplishments of the child could be posted for the same reasons. If the child has achieved a specific task or skill, posting it on social media could contribute to positive feedback and possibly establish new connections with other like-minded children, as IP8 mentions.

"...so if they do something, it could at the same time happen that they get nice comments that 'how awesome you are at doing that' or 'how good you are at doing that dance'" - IP6

"I think that through the parents they can find like-minded people, and things they are interested in...// ... 'oh, your children are doing that, so are mine', and they can get a lot of praise, sometimes you can show it to them. " - IP8

While IP7 agreed that connecting to family and friends was an important reason for sharing, he also reasoned that people who were interested enough would visit his family in real life. This was a reason for him to not share a large amount of content of his child online.

"But we post very very little, I may have posted three pictures since she was born. Not because I don't want to but more because I... if people want to see my daughter, they can visit me, that's how I think. Those who are actually interested, they also take the time to meet." - IP7

Some parents share photos online as a way to create memories for the future. They implied that social media was a safer place to save photos, compared to for instance a harddrive or USB memory, as they were afraid the photos would get lost. Generally, cloud environments such as iCloud and Dropbox scared the participants as an option for photo storage. The idea of losing photos even gave some of the participants anxiety. This type of sharing was also done to help the parents sort the memories in a timeline, where they easily could get access to specific moments.

"I know, before I was very good at uploading pictures to my hard drives, then all this with clouds came and everything had to be uploaded and I lost complete control of everything...// ... So this gives me quite a lot of anxiety, I think. I kind of want to preserve it ... " - IP1

Other parents also describe how sharing photos on social media makes it easier for them to look back at and remember moments together with their children. They expressed that it is a way for them to collect memories in a timeline.

"...he may think it's fun to see me post and take part of our nice moments together, and at the same time it becomes a thing that is saved there as well, that you can look back at." - IP6

“..so it’s like a way to collect pictures for myself too, me and my daughter can sit and go through old pictures, then it is easy to sift and see dates, and see that this date we did this...” - IP4

One of the participants, IP3, explained how she had created a new, private Instagram account only to use as her personal photo album. This was to save the images in a safe place and get easy access to them.

“And then I have an account... // ... it’s my account where I upload a lot of pictures of the family, mostly because I have it a bit like, well, my own photo album... // ... So then I use instagram a bit like a photo book... // ... there I have no followers, zero followers and it is private.” - IP3

Another reason found in the data was that the participants shared photos for self-presentation. Parents expressed that they were proud of their child and wanted their followers to see their accomplishments. IP3 communicated that she to some extent could feel guilty for this, and that the content she posted of her children was not always for the best of them, but instead for the best of herself. IP5 expressed that she could ease her bad conscience from working and being away from home, by sharing photos of her children, to convey that she is a good mother. Some parents expressed that they preferred to share photos where their kids looked cute. Other participants said that they share photos of their children as a way to vent their creativity, and mentioned reasons such as enjoying photography or creating content.

“I mean the one who owns the account and posts it, it’s probably about the reward system basically, that I want a reaction here now, how nice they are and how cute they are and.. Yeah, it’s probably about that really. And it’s awful actually. Because it does not benefit the children.” - IP3

“...no but show, like, if you are on holiday with the family and I think my... Like, sort of bad conscience that I work a lot with the company and such and maybe want to show that I am a good mother too (baba).” - IP5

IP1 created a new account when she became a parent, to be able to get an outlet for her creativity.

“So when I had a child... // ... I had in mind that I would, like, get a little creative outlet and so I started following a lot of other mom-accounts and stuff... // ... That was the purpose of it. I even started a new account when my daughter was born.” - IP1

5.2 Theme 2: Consequences of sharenting

Regarding the consequences of sharing pictures of their children online, the interviewees had thought about what could happen, but some expressed that they were somewhat unaware of what the consequences could be.

“There is very little information about what happens when you upload photos and how it affects and what it can have consequences.” - IP3

The fear of content ending up in the wrong hands was mentioned by IP4, IP5, IP2 and IP3. IP3 said that she believed that social media actors such as Instagram and Facebook had access and ownership to pictures that had been posted on their platforms, and could use them for their own purpose.

“No, as I said, I don’t know what rights Facebook and Instagram have, you’ve only heard once in a while that yes, Facebook can use your pictures for anything. They can sell the pictures, or you approve it, it’s probably in the agreement somewhere. So in some way you still have some knowledge that these pictures could be used or displayed in other ways, I don’t know exactly how but yes it is negative of course.” - IP3

IP5 was worried that the content could end up in the wrong hands, and be used in a way that was not intended, mentioning the possibility of pedophiles using images of her children which made her feel unsafe.

“...I kind of think that they can use the material in the wrong way. No, but I probably think a lot, like this pedophilia, and like... Maybe not that they would hang them out, but that they themselves would use the pictures. I haven’t really thought it all through, it just doesn’t feel safe.” - IP5

Furthermore, the result showed that all participants had thought about the possibility that a picture that they had shared of their child could have negative effects in the means that it could be used against them in the real world, for instance by bullies. IP6, who has children aged 6 and 10, meant that this could have a direct effect and affect the child in the near future after the picture had been shared. IP7, whose child is younger, stated that he had thought about this as a possible future problem where pictures that were shared now could affect the child as it grew older.

“Like I mentioned before that they might be teased and ‘oh were you in that childish place it’s just for kids’, so there can be comments, and then.. They have friends who can see my posts so it could be that they get teased or... / ...be used against them in some way.... / / ... so that can be negative, teased, bullied ..“ - IP6

“Like, I try to think like this, that when my daughter, when she’s 18.. will she appreciate that I posted this picture, or will she not ... / / .. so she has no idea what happens, no idea what I post, and so on, so right now no negative consequences but in the future maybe, depending on what it is and what she thinks.” - IP7

IP2 brought up the potential issue of social media content spreading to a large audience. She argued that children being exposed in popular videos online could lead to bullying when friends or classmates get access to the material.

“...and you think that, when that child then starts school and that clip has like 200,000 views, it’s obvious that some classmate will always pick it up and that it could be a hot topic and that you can be bullied for it.” - IP2

Replicability is something that IP8 also reflected about, when being asked about the consequences of sharenting. He considered the risk of a funny video or image being used as a meme, and expressed that this would affect the child negatively.

“If you have a really funny picture, it can become a meme. And it can be connected and be used, I mean it’s not that fun to be a meme child.” - IP8

Many interviewees expressed a concern of showing only the “good side” of life on social media, and that this could affect both themselves and their children.

“You feel that you are sharing a false picture of reality, as it often is on Instagram. That the children are happy and all is in order kind of.” - IP4

One consequence that this could have for the parent, was according to IP7 and IP8 that people could accuse them of not being honest about their reality. IP7 argued that this could be referred to as the “social media disease”, while IP8 thought of it as protecting the integrity of his children. IP4’s reflection was that sharing only perfect images could give parents a misrepresented view of parenthood which creates pressure.

“... for example that other people think like ‘he just shares such perfect pictures of his life’ and ‘wow how wonderful it looks’ and yes you know all this social media, so to speak, disease.” - IP7

“Maybe what some would think then is that you show a facade, so to speak. I understand that it may seem so, but it is also a matter of privacy for my children, that I do not really think I have the right to display them in too negative situations.” - IP8

“...it gives a distorted picture of parenthood, that everything is great all the time. that the children are happy, and that the children are so cute all the time... / / ... Yeah, that you feel pressure on yourself, or yeah, parenthood as well.” - IP4

Sharing only nice or perfect images of their children, was also argued as a negative consequence of sharenting among the participants. IP4 meant that this could lead to children feeling pressure of living up to these ideals of always being happy and talented, while IP1 argued that this type of sharenting might form a false identity of the child, which might conflict with their real identity.

“Yes, but it certainly also gives the children a distorted picture of reality, of just seeing, well, happy children... / / ...that they also want to be cute and talented and perfect.” - IP4

“... we might form the children into a person that they are not...” - IP1

The issue with creating an identity for the child, but also the previous consequences that have been found in the data, increases the older the child gets according to IP3, IP5, IP6, IP2. They all reason that infants and young children are not as affected from sharenting as children in school-age and upwards. IP3 expressed that she reflects more about the consequences her sharing can have for her older child. IP5 stated that she is more careful about what she is posting of her children the older they get, and that she considers their personality and integrity. This was also mentioned by IP2.

“I think, with my youngest child I don’t think so much about it, but with my older child I know somewhere that yes, this can affect her, she can be teased at school or so on, so then maybe you think in a different way.” - IP3

“Yeah but I’m probably pretty careful about what I post ... / / ... it’s like.. their personality.. I mean you think about your children as children for quite a long time but then when they start to grow up they are closer to us adults, and it’s their personality and their integrity.” - IP5

“Now the children are more aware, so that if I ask them, they say no many times, that “no, I do not want you to post.” - IP2

IP6 argued that a younger child is less aware of the consequences and therefore not as affected from sharenting.

“A child is often more innocent and not as conscious... / / ... and does not understand the negative consequences of it while a seventeen-year-old may still understand the consequences... / / ... a child who is five years old does not do that in the same way.” - IP6

5.3 Theme 3: Privacy and security measures protecting children online

In terms of taking measures to protect themselves and their children online, six out of eight interviewees had enabled privacy settings to limit their audience by having a closed account where only people they had accepted were allowed to follow them and see their content. Two participants said that they had an open account on social media, meaning that anyone can view their content without getting permission. None of the interviewees expressed that they were sure and knew exactly who each and every follower was.

Some participants who had privacy settings that gave them the possibility to choose who has access to their content stated that this was to protect the integrity of themselves and their kids. IP5 expressed that the main reason she had a closed account was the photos of her children, and that she actually would prefer to have an open account.

“Yes, it’s probably mainly because I have pictures of my children. Otherwise I would probably not have it actually, private. And I’m wondering if I should open it up... ” - IP5

IP3 expressed that she would like to limit her audience even more, to feel confident to share more personal content. As for now she is limiting her content, not sharing everything that she would like to. This also applies to IP8, whose reasons for audience limitations was to avoid strong opinions and potential debate regarding one of his children's appearances, which is deviating from the norm. He expressed that he did not want to stop sharing pictures of his child for this reason. Instead, he limited his audience to people he trusted.

"..no I don't have many followers, but I don't really have, I wish there were fewer followers there... But now I realize that, I mean I don't know some of... No, some of them I would have to remove to dare to upload pictures and so on." - IP3

"So really, I do not want to post anything that can invite people to start having some kind of political debate under pictures of my children, but in our case, I don't really have a choice, because otherwise it would mean that I, so to speak, hid my son and I really don't want to do that." - IP8

The discussion about whether to share content of your child or not was something that some participants had experienced. IP3 had had the discussion among her friends, and expressed that there are two groups - one who thinks that it is okay to share content of your children online and one who would not do it. IP7 had had the discussion with his wife, and together they had agreed to how they felt about sharenting, without setting any rules of how to act online.

"I, who have children, spend a lot of time with other mothers and then it's a topic of discussion now and then, whether you should do it or not. And most people do it, I mean you don't think it's strange or so, but some are very restrictive and would never post their children on social media." - IP3

"I mean I've talked about this with my wife. mostly before we had children I think, but even in the beginning of our child's early childhood... / / ... so those conversations have been a lot like this, yes but 'what do we think', so me and my wife have never said, like, decided fully that 'we are not going to post any pictures of our daughter', and we have not set any rules or anything like that." - IP7

Many participants being interviewed argued that one way to protect their child from the consequence of creating an identity that the child can not decide themselves, would be to ask them for consent before posting a photo of them online. IP3 and IPJ compared it to themselves wanting to be asked for permission before anyone posted a picture of them, and that this gave them more control of how they were perceived online.

*"So basically, it's more about just respect or something. To ask, 'do you think you look good in this photo?'. I mean, you can only go to yourself, yeah well then I want to see it first. So, instead of someone just, *click*, 'is it okay if I post this on Instagram?', I mean then you say 'no, then I want to see what it looks like first'." - IP3*

"...because it's still their pictures... or I would like someone to ask me 'can I post this picture of you when you do that?'. That I approve it, and then I also think that the children have the right to choose whether they should be in the picture or not." - IP6

Further, IP3 meant that asking the child for consent also could lead to a discussion between the parent and the child, regarding what consequences posting an image online could have.

"Then it can also be a good idea, so that when you ask... / / ... I was thinking about posting this on Instagram, is that okay with you?' Then she would say 'Yeah okay, what do you mean by that, what does it mean?'. Yeah, well then it will also be a good discussion that, yes, but 'Instagram is this and when I post this, they see it here and it becomes public sort of'." - IP3

When asking the participants about their children's consent the interviewees had some different opinions. IP7 and IP1 stated that they would listen to their children's will if they expressed that they did not want to be disclosed on social media.

"So here, in best case scenario, I think we would have asked about her ... what to say, 'do you think Dad should post this?'" - IP7

"So if she did not want me to post pictures of her, I would not do it." - IP1

Other participants said that they would not delete a photo if the child expressed that they wanted them to do so. IP4 stated that she would save the photo but abstain from publishing it online, while IP2 explained that even though her child did not agree to an already published photo, she did not delete it from her social media.

"No, I probably would not have listened to her then. But then I have it in my mobile so I do not share it." - IP4

"I don't think I have posted anything against his will, but I have probably posted something that I have not asked about... / / ... we checked my Instagram a while ago and he found a picture of him as a three-year-old, and then he was like "what is this picture, why did you upload it"... / / ... it is a very difficult situation, but then I have not removed that picture." - IP2

At the end of each interview, we asked the participants if there was anything they would like to change when it comes to sharenting. IPA, IP3 and IP4 expressed that more guidelines for parents are needed. IPA had a suggestion that new parents should receive a folder with information about the consequences of sharenting. IP3 and IP4 discussed the possibility of a technical feature within PSNS, that helps parents to think twice before publishing and reminds them of the consequences of sharing before posting a photo containing children. No parent did however express that they would want more regulations regarding sharing photos of children. IP8 did instead argue that such regulations should be established with caution, since it is a sensitive subject and it is hard to decide what content could be offensive.

"You have to be very careful with laws like this... / / ... it is difficult to make them clear, when you have crossed a line as well. Should someone decide that? Is there a law that says that pictures of children who are sad ... who decides when the child is sad? No, I have quite a lot of opinions about it and I may

think that some people are acting wrong, but I do not think it should be legislated.../ ...But you can definitely use a restrictive attitude, there are very good arguments for that " - IP8

"That could be a thing, if you post a picture, that there is some kind of warning that 'this child is younger', but as I said, that technology does not exist yet. Or that it just said something like, 'does this picture contain a child under the age of 13, if so think about this, this and this'." - IP3

"It might have been good if there was some kind of blockage or that Instagram can recognize that this is not you in the picture or something like that. That it should be approved then." - IP4

"Maybe one can conduct some research and give a small folder or something at the maternity care center or child care center and say something like... // ... 'think about what you post on social media'." - IP7

6 Discussion and conclusions

The following section will discuss the findings compared to the theoretical framework. Finally the conclusions and suggestions for further research are presented.

6.1 Discussion of findings

The findings are discussed and compared to the previous research from the background and the theoretical framework. The themes are used to structure the discussion to facilitate reading.

6.1.1 Theme 1 - Reasons why parents share online

The data showed that Swedish parents sometimes share content online, without reflecting on the motive. These types of shares were described as automatic. This could be an effect of everyday social media usage which has become the norm in Swedish society (Internetstiftelsen, 2020). Further, the obvious possibility of ending up on photos online when participating in social occasions was mentioned. As Goh et al. (2009) stated, the phone is nowadays always in the pocket and can be used at any time.

Connecting with family and friends, as a reason for sharing online, was mentioned by all participants. This is the main reason for sharenting, stated in the previous research of Steinberg (2017). This type of sharenting was used to nurture the relationships, keep long distance relatives updated, showing the development of the child, and showing the daily life of the family. When living far apart, social media becomes a substitute or complement to physical meetings. This is an example of how people's interactions among each other has changed due to the rapid growth of social media, as stated in the background (Ngai et al., 2015).

Social media provides a common platform for users to exchange ideas and it encourages users to share contents of their interest (Tahir & Husin, 2017). This was seen in the data as participants expressed that social media makes it easier to find like-minded people in a similar life-situation. Further, amusing, influencing and sharing ideas for activities were reasons mentioned for sharenting to connect with friends.

Self-presentation is a strong motivator for sharing content online according to Kumar and Schoenebeck (2015), and this was also found in the findings of this study. Parents expressed that they wanted to share their parental accomplishments to feel good about themselves, and to manage the impression others have on them. One parent explained that she wanted to be perceived as a “good mother”, which can be connected to Collett (2011) who argues that parents share certain photos of their children to be considered “good parents”.

Another reason to share found in the data was persistence (boyd, 2007). Saving photos as memories were rather done on social media than on harddrive, USB memory, or cloud based storage options such as iCloud or Dropbox due to fear and anxiety of losing the photos. Further, social media was used to sort the memories in a timeline.

Our empirical data did not show any tendencies for parents that sharent for health reasons, as is mentioned in the research by Kravchuk (2021) and Steinberg (2017). This is most probably due to the children of the specific parents researched not being in a situation where their child has been or is seriously ill. However, the fact that medical treatment is covered and free in Sweden might also be a reason why it is not as common to share content to raise money for medical treatment.

6.1.2 Theme 2 - Consequences of sharenting

The findings of this study shows that one consequence of sharenting that parents consider, is content ending up in the wrong hands, for instance in the hands of pedophiles. This could lead to misuse of images of the child. Another way parents are concerned about their content ending up in the wrong hands, according to our data, is due to confusion regarding what rights media actors, such as Facebook and Instagram, possess regarding ownership of the content. Some parents expressed that they thought their images were owned by the social media actors and could be reused and spread by them to gain their purposes. According to the study of Boshier et al. (2019), these parents are both right and wrong. As Boshier et al. (2019) states, Instagram does not claim ownership over users' content, but their terms and agreements grant them free use of it, meaning they can edit, copy and share the content published on the platform to the public (Boshier et al 2019).

Consequences regarding the child's integrity, in terms of parents' online disclosures being used against the child, were found in the data. Findings by Ouvrein and Verswijvel (2019) show that photos shared by parents oftentimes could be perceived as embarrassing by their children. Embarrassing and inappropriate disclosures by parents is common, and can in some cases lead to consequences such as bullying of the child, not only by other children but also by other parents (Steinberg, 2017).

Findings show that the consequence parents reasoned about regarding content spreading to a larger audience than intended, such as memes, was bullying of the child. This can be connected to the four properties of online interactions (boyd, 2007). Parents reasoned that replicability, persistence and invisible audience combined with searchability could lead to offline consequences such as bullying in school, as a result of friends, classmates and other people finding the content and making fun of the child.

Ouvrein and Verswijvel (2019) state that the online identity the parent creates for its child might differ from how the child wants to profile itself online. Findings show that sharing only nice or perfect images of their children was considered a negative consequence among Swedish parents, as it could lead to children feeling pressure of living up to these ideals of always being happy and

talented. Further, the parents reasoned that this type of sharenting could form a false identity of the child, which might conflict with their real identity.

Further, parents reasoned that the consequences from sharenting increase as the child gets older. Ouvrein and Verswijvel (2019) argues that individuals get more conscious about how they are profiled online during adolescence. Our findings show that parents reason that infants and young children are not as affected from sharenting as children in school-age and upwards. Parents in this study consider the consequences sharenting has on the child's personality and integrity to a wider extent as the child gets older.

6.1.3 Theme 3 - Privacy and security measures protecting children online

Regarding the measures taken to protect children online, our findings show that many parents consider limiting their audience through privacy settings as a solution for not sharing information and photos to individuals they do not know, who could possibly harm their child. However, no parent in this research expressed that they used, or had deeper knowledge about, mechanisms for privacy settings, such as predefined groups or user-defined groups (Misra, 2016), that enable social media users to separate followers into groups, for instance “friends” from “close friends” or “family”, to reflect their real-life relations.

Autenrieth (2018), stated in her research that some parents rely solely on the privacy settings, whereas others limit their content as well, to feel more secure. This was found in our data as one of the parents interviewed limited her content, due to not feeling safe to share personal information and photos within her chosen audience. Further another interviewee expressed a restraint in his sharenting to avoid strong opinions and potential debate related to a child of his deviating from the norm.

According to our findings, many parents ask, or consider asking, their children for consent before posting a photo online, and compared it to themselves wanting to be asked for permission before someone else shared a photo of them. By asking the children for consent, some parents argued that they could avoid creating a made-up identity for their child. As previously mentioned, the identity of a child that a parent creates by sharing photos of them online, might conflict with the identity the child wants to profile online (Ouvrein & Verswijvel, 2019). Many parents participating in the study considered the importance of asking for consent to increase as the child gets older, which is confirmed in the study of Ouvrein and Verswijvel (2019) where the result shows that adolescents are more conscious of their online identity than younger children.

Our data showed that most parents expressed a lack of knowledge and information on how sharenting could affect their children, and suggestions on further implementations to help parents protect their children online were discussed. Informing parents about the consequences could lead to less sharenting?

6.2 Conclusions

Sharenting is something that most parents engage in, and it has become a natural phenomenon of our time due to the increased usage of social media. With this study, we show that most parents are aware that there are consequences of sharing content of their children online, however the extent of the impacts on the child are not common knowledge among parents. To make sure that the best interest of the child is of centrum, parents need to understand the extent of the consequences and take measures to protect the privacy of their children online.

Sharenting might occur without reflection, but is most often done to connect with friends, family and other parents. Further reasons for sharenting among Swedish parents are to save photos as memories and to enhance their self-presentation. When sharing content of children online, parents need to shift the focus from their own winning and reflect on the effects it has for the child. We find that Swedish parents are concerned of third party danger, the risk of creating a made-up identity for the child, and that the consequences increase as the child grows older. However, these consequences are not considered to be harmful enough to avoid sharing. Privacy settings, content limitations and asking for consent are measures Swedish parents take to protect children online. However, we recognize that even though parents are aware of some privacy protecting measures, they do not always implement this.

Parents are responsible to act according to what is in the best interest of the child, but online, what is best is not always clear. Social media comes with many great benefits, but should be used responsibly in terms of protecting childrens' privacy. We argue that parents need to gain more knowledge of how their actions online affect their children.

We aim to contribute to the debate of sharenting in society among parents using social media to share information and photos about their children. Further, this study can contribute to future development of privacy guidelines, as well as raising the question regarding what responsibility social media actors have to mediate these on their platforms.

6.3 Further research

In relevance with the limitations of the study which were presented in the second chapter, suggestions for further research include the following points:

1. Since the sample of this study was limited, further research can conduct more interviews of Swedish parents. This could contribute to a broader understanding of how parents reason about sharenting and how to protect children's online privacy.
2. The sample only included parents with children under the age of twelve. By conducting research on parents with children in other age ranges, further research could find out if the age of the child has an impact on parents' reasoning about sharenting.

3. This study does not cover the perspective of children, but rather the perspective of parents. Thus, research on children's own disclosures online, and the right to be forgotten could be of interest to further research.
4. Finally, using a content analysis method to observe what types of content parents share could contribute to research, by comparing the parent's statements of how they protect their children online to what they share.

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Appendices

Attached here are the two appendices connected to the paper. Appendix 1 consists of the interview guide used in the method. Appendix 2 consists of the translations of the citations in Findings and analysis.

Appendix I - Interview guide

[1] Why do Swedish parents disclose information about their children online?

Can you tell us about how you use social media?

Kan du berätta om hur du använder sociala medier?

How do you use different social platforms?

På vilket sätt använder du olika sociala plattformar?

What do you think is the reason for parents sharing photos of their children?

Vad tror du är anledningen till att föräldrar delar bilder på sina barn?

How do you see your own way of sharing content about your children?

Hur ser du på ditt eget sätt att dela innehåll om dina barn?

[2] How do Swedish parents reason about the consequences of online disclosure of their children?

Can you describe what comes to mind when you hear the word sharenting?

Kan du beskriva vad du tänker på när du hör ordet sharenting?

Have you ever noticed discussions on the subject in society?

Har du någon gång uppmärksammat diskussioner om ämnet i samhället?

Can you give an example of when you have shared a picture of your / your children?

Kan du ge ett exempel på när du har delat en bild på ditt/dina barn?

What positive consequences can you see that there are from sharing photos of their children online?

Vilka positiva konsekvenser kan du se att det finns av att dela bilder på sina barn online?

What negative consequences can you see that there are from sharing photos of their children online?

Vilka negativa konsekvenser kan du se att det finns av att dela bilder på sina barn online?

Have you ever wanted to share a picture of your children but then abstain?

Har du någon gång velat dela en bild på ditt/dina barn men sedan avstått?

Do you think that children are affected by being exposed online?

Tror du att barn påverkas av att bli exponerade online?

[3] What measures are parents using to protect their children online?

Which followers do you mainly think of when you share?

Vilka följare tänker du främst på när du delar?

Do you use social media today in the same way you have always done?

Använder du sociala medier idag på samma sätt som du alltid har gjort?

Do you use any privacy settings for your social media accounts? Why?

Använder du några sekretessinställningar för dina sociala mediekonton? Varför?

How do you think about the best interests of the child when you share photos?

Hur tänker du kring barnets bästa när du delar bilder?

Is there anything you would like to change when it comes to how parents share content about their children?

Finns det någonting som du skulle vilja ändrades när det kommer till hur föräldrar delar innehåll om sina barn?

Appendix 2 - Citations in Swedish

The citations are divided into the different participants, and are placed in the order of which they were used in the findings chapter.

Interview Person 1

“men samtidigt så är det ingen som reagerar på om det kommer fram en kamera eller en mobil längre, det gjorde man mycket mer förr...//... Nu är det så här, ja vi ska träffa mormor ja man kanske ska borsta håret iallafall för man kan hamna på Facebook...//...nu så känns det som så självklart att man kommer med på bilder och så på ett annat sätt” - IP1

“... potentiella följare tänker jag väl lite, att man kan hitta typ likasinnade...//... Alltså egentligen folk i lite samma livssituation. Då tänker jag framförallt på andra mammor...//...som man kanske har saker gemensamt med och som man inte skulle stöta på annars...//...typ connecta med omvärlden lite.” - IP1

“Jag vet, förr så var jag jätteduktig på att lägga över bilder på mina hårddiskar, sen så kom allt det här med moln och allt skulle läggas upp och jag tappade fullständigt kontroll på allt... Alltså det ger mig rätt mycket ångest det här tror jag. Jag vill liksom bevara det...” - IP1

“Så när jag fick barn...//... så hade jag lite i åtanke liksom att jag skulle få lite såhär kreativt utlopp och så började jag följa massa andra mamma-konton och sånt...//...Det var syftet med det. Jag startade till och med ett nytt konto när dottern föddes.” - IP1

“...vi kanske bygger upp barnen som en person som dom inte är....” - IP1

“Alltså om hon inte vill att jag lägger upp bilder på henne så hade jag inte gjort det.” - IP1

Interview Person 2

“...för att samtidigt så om jag delar bilder och är personlig, så blir ju det också svårt att helt utesluta barnen för dom är ju en del av mitt liv liksom.” - IP2

“... får man många likes på sin födelsedag och kan visa det för barnet att “se här vad många som skickar födelsedagshälsningar...//...om man alltid har lagt upp ett kort på barnen när dom fyller år så får man ju upp det historiskt på Facebook och då liksom kan man ju se så här ‘åh vad dom har utvecklats’, men det är ju för min egna skull.” - IP2

“...och man tänker att, när det barnet sen börjar skolan och det klippet har liksom 200000 visningar så är det klart att, alltid någon klasskompis kommer plocka upp det och att det blir en snackis och att man kan bli mobbad för det.” - IP2

Nu är barnen mer medvetna, så att om jag frågar dom så säger dom ju nej många gånger att “nej den där vill jag inte att du lägger ut.” - IP2

“Jag har nog inte lagt ut nånting mot hans vilja, men jag har säkert lagt ut nånting som jag inte har frågat om...//...vi kollade igenom min Instagram för ett tag sen och han hittade någon bild på honom som treåring, och då han var så här “vad är det här för bild, varför du lagt upp den” ...//...det är en jättesvår situation, men då har ju inte jag tagit bort den bilden.” - IP2

Interview Person 3

“Nej jag ser ju inte det som något stort problem alltså...//... Nej, jättemycket bilder är det på dom. Jag har inte tänkt så mycket på det.” - IP3

“Och sen så har jag ett konto ...//... det är ju mitt konto som jag lägger upp massa bilder på familjen, mest för att jag har det lite som, alltså, mitt egna fotoalbum ...//... Så då använder jag ju instagram lite som en fotobok...//... där har jag ju inga följare, noll följare och det är privat.” - IP3

“Ja alltså den som äger kontot och lägger ut det, det handlar nog om belöningssystemet i grund och botten att jag vill ha en reaktion här nu, vad fina dom är och vad söta dom är och.. ja. det handlar nog om det faktiskt. och det är ju hemskt faktiskt. för det kommer ju inte till barnens vinning.” - IP3

“Det är väldigt lite information om vad som händer när du lägger upp bilder och hur det påverkar och vad det kan få för konsekvenser.” - IP3

“Nej som sagt, jag har ju inte koll på vilka rättigheter facebook och instagram har, man bara har hört nån gång ibland att ja men facebook kan ju använda dina bilder till vad som helst dom kan sälja dom bilderna eller man godkänner ju det, det står säkert i avtalet nånstans, så någonstans har man ju ändå lite vetskap om att dom här bilderna skulle ju kunna användas eller synas på andra sätt, exakt hur vet jag inte men ja det är ju negativt såklart.” - IP3

“Jag tänker, med mitt yngsta barn så man tänker jag inte mycket på, men med mitt äldre barn så vet jag det någonstans att ja, det här kan drabba henna, hon kan blir retad i skolan eller så, så då kanske man tänker efter på ett annat sätt.” - IP3

“..nej jag har inte mycket följare, men jag har egentligen inte, jag önskar att det var färre följare där... Men nu inser jag att, alltså jag känner ju inte en del av, nä en del skulle jag behöva ta bort för att våga lägga upp bilder och sådär,” - IP3

” Jag som själv har barn umgås ju mycket med andra mammor och då är ju det ett diskussionsämne titt som tätt, om man ska göra det eller inte. Och dom flesta gör det, alltså man tycker inte det är konstigt eller så, men en del är ju väldigt restriktiva och skulle aldrig lägga ut sina barn på sociala medier.” - IP3

“Alltså i grund i botten handlar det väl mer bara om respekt eller så. Att fråga, ‘tycker du att du blev bra på det här kortet?’. Alltså man kan ju bara gå till sig själv att, ja då vill ju jag se det först. Alltså, istället för att nån bara, *klick*, ‘är det okej om jag lägger upp det här på Instagram?’, alltså då säger man ju själv ‘nej då vill jag se hur det ser ut först’.” - IP3

“Sen kan det ju också va en bra idé, alltså att när man frågar...//... ‘jag tänkte lägga upp det här på instagram, är det okej för dig?’. Då skulle hon ju säga ‘ja vadå, vad menar du med det, vad innebär det?’. Ja då blir det också en bra diskussion att, ja men ‘Instagram är detta och när jag lägger ut det här så ser dom här det och, det blir liksom offentligt.’” - IP3

“det skulle kunna va en grej, om man lägger upp en bild, att det kommer upp nån typ varning att ‘det här barnet är under...’ men som sagt den tekniken finns ju inte än nu då. Eller att det bara kom upp så här, ‘innehåller denna bilden ett barn under 13 år, så tänk på detta, detta och detta’.” - IP3

Interview Person 4

“Och så som jag tänker så delar jag ju bilder främst för att, ja men kanske vänner långt ifrån ska få lite inblick i mitt liv och vad jag och min dotter gör på dagarna.” - IP4

“..alltså det blir ju ett sätt att samla bilder för sig själv också, jag och min dotter kan ju sitta och gå igenom gamla bilder, då är det lätt att sälla och se datum, och se att det här datumet gjorde vi det här...” - IP4

“Man känner att man delar en falsk bild av verkligheten, som det ofta är på instagram. Att barnen är glada och allt är frid och fröjd liksom.” - IP4

“...det ger en förvrängd bild av föräldrskapet, att allting är jättebra hela tiden. att barnen är glada, och att barnen är så gulliga hela tiden...//...Ja, att man får press på sig själv, eller ja föräldrskapet liksom.” - IP4

“Ja men det ger ju säkert barnen också en förvrängd bild av verkligheten, av att bara se, alltså glada barn...//...att dom också vill va gulliga och duktiga och perfekta.” - IP4

“Nej, jag hade nog inte lyssnat på henne då. Men då har ju jag den i min mobil så jag delar ju den inte.” - IP4

“Det kanske hade varit bra om det fanns nån slags blockering eller att instagram känner av att det här är inte du på bilden eller nånting sånt. att det ska godkännas då.” - IP4

Interview Person 5

“men det här med att lägga upp saker tycker jag att man ska tänka till lite innan...//...nej men man kan ju tycka att en del föräldrar ska tänka efter lite...//.... för jag har en mamma som delar otroligt mycket, hon har fem barn och det är ju alltså tio bilder om dagen på sina barn.” - IP5

“...om nån skriver grattis ... Jag tror att han uppskattar det. Jag kan ju känna mig stolt över att jag har en son som är tolv år...//... hylla honom lite, och det gör jag väl både för min skull, hans skull och dom som vill gratta hans skull...” - IP5

“...nej men visa liksom att man är på semester med familjen och jag tror att mitt... Lite sådär dåligt samvete att jag jobbar jättemycket med företaget och sådär och vill visa lite kanske att jag är en bra mamma med (haha).” - IP5

“Nej men det vet jag ju inte egentligen, jag tänker ju liksom mer att dom kan använda materialet på fel sätt. Nej men jag tänker nog mycket så här pedofili och liksom att, kanske inte att dom skulle hänga ut dom, men att dom själva skulle använda bilderna. jag har nog inte tänkt riktigt hela vägen, det bara känns inte tryggt, så.” - IP5

“Ja men jag är nog ganska noga med det jag lägger ut...//...det är ju liksom.. deras personlighet.. alltså man tänker sina barn som barn ganska länge men sen när dom börjar bli stora så är ju dom närmare oss vuxna, och det är deras personlighet och deras integritet.” - IP5

“Ja det är nog främst för att jag har bilder på mina barn. Annars skulle jag nog inte ha det faktiskt, privat. Och jag funderar på om jag ska öppna upp det...” - IP5

Interview Person 6

“...tänker nog inte på barnets bästa eller på mitt bästa, eller att någon ska må bra av det utan det är nog bara en automatisk grej nästan...//...jag har inte nån sån djupare tanke när jag lägger upp en bild egentligen.” - IP6

“...folk som exponerar sina barn extremt mycket tycker man väl är lite.. nej men att det blir lite överdrivet. Det blir nästan ‘kom och se mitt fina barn, titta vad bra vi har det’...” - IP6

“mina föräldrar kanske vill se, min släkt i norge där och nån gammal kompis där, det är nog mer det perspektivet jag har när jag lägger upp en bild.” - IP6

“...samtidigt som man vill dela med sig, för att andra delar med sig och då är man på nåt sätt med där i flödet och jag har många kollegor som har barn, där skriver vi alltid och sådär ‘ja ni har varit där, vad kul’ ...//...det är därför det heter sociala medier, och det är därför man är med där, det är för att man vill dela och ta del av andras sociala liv...” - IP6

“alltså gör dom något så skulle det ju också samtidigt kunna komma att dom får bra kommentarer att “ vad grym du är på att göra det” eller ‘vad duktigt du är på att göra den dansen’ ” - IP6

“...han kanske tycker det är kul att se att jag lägger upp och tar del av våra fina stunder tillsammans, och samtidigt blir det en grej som ligger sparad där liksom som man kan gå tillbaka och titta på.” - IP6

“lite som jag berörde innan att dom kanske kan bli retade och “jaha var ni på det barnsliga stället det är ju bara för”, alltså det kan bli kommentarer, och då.. dom har vänner som kan se mina inlägg så skulle det ju kunna bli att dom blir retade eller...//...användas mot dom på något sätt...//...det negativa kan väl vara det då, retad, mobbad..” - IP6

“Ett barn är väl ofta mer oskyldigt och inte lika medvetet...//...och förstår inte den negativa konsekvensen av det medans en sjuttonåring kanske ändå förstår konsekvensen ...//...det gör inte ett barn som är fem år på samma sätt.” - IP6

“...för det är ändå deras bilder.. eller jag skulle vilja att nån skulle fråga mig om ‘får jag lägga upp den här bilden på dig när du gör det?’ till exempel. Att jag godkänner det, och då tycker jag även att barnen har rätt att få välja om dom ska va med på bild eller ej.” - IP6

Interview Person 7

“...man delar ju för att det är kul att visa sitt liv för dom vännerna man har, som kanske inte alltid ser. så det är väl en positiv konsekvens, att man på nått sätt får uppdatera vänner som kanske är intresserade. ‘såhär ser min familj ut, min dotter har vuxit...’ ” - IP7

“Men vi lägger upp väldigt väldigt lite, jag kanske har lagt upp tre bilder sen hon föddes. inte för att jag inte vill utan mer för att jag.. om folk vill liksom se min dotter så får dom väl besöka mig, så tänker jag. Att dom som faktiskt är intresserade liksom, dom tar sig också tid att umgås.” - IP7

“Liksom, jag försöker tänka så här, att när min dotter, när hon är 18 år.. uppskattar hon att jag har lagt upp den här bilden, eller gör hon inte det...//..alltså hon har ju ingen aning om vad som händer, ingen aning om vad det är jag lägger upp, och så, så just nu inga negativa konsekvenser men framöver kanske, beroende på vad det är och vad hon tycker.” - IP7

“...till exempel att andra människor tycker liksom att ‘han delar bara såhär perfekta bilder på sitt liv’ och ‘wow vad underbart det ser ut’ och ja ni vet hela den här sociala medier, så att säga, sjukan.” - IP7

“Alltså jag har ju pratat om detta med min fru. innan vi fick barn framförallt skulle jag tro, men även i början av småbarnstiden...//... alltså dom samtalen har varit mycker såhär, ja men “vad tycker vi”, alltså jag och min fru har aldrig sagt såhär, bestämt fullt ut att “vi ska inte lägga upp några bilder på vår dotter”, och vi har liksom inte satt några regler eller nåt sånt där.” - IP7

“Så här, i bästa fall så tror jag vi hade frågat om hennes.. vad ska man säga, ‘tycker du pappa ska lägga upp denna?’” - IP7

“Man kanske kan ta fram lite forskning och ge en liten folder eller någonting på sådär mödravårdscentralen eller barnavårdscentralen och säga liksom att...//...’tänk på vad du lägger upp på sociala medier’.” - IP7

Interview Person 8

“så om mina barn är nere i studion här till exempel och håller på och leker och sådär, så kan det gärna bli en Instagram story sådär, för då vet jag att många av mina kompisar tycker det är roligt att se och sådär.” - IP8

“...jag tänker att dom genom föräldrarna kan hitta likasinnade, och saker de är intresserade av...//... ‘jaha håller dina barn på med det, det det gör mina också’, och kan dom ju få väldigt mycket beröm, ibland kan man ju visa det för dom.” - IP8

“Har man en riktigt rolig bild så kan ju den bli en meme. Och det kan ju kopplas och börja användas, det är ju inte så kul att blir ett meme-barn liksom.” - IP8

“Kanske det som en del skulle tycka då är att man visar en fasad så att säga. jag förstår att det kan framstå så, men det är också en integritetsfråga för mina barn, att jag tycker inte riktigt att jag har rätt att visa dom i för negativa situationer.” - IP8

“Så egentligen så vill jag inte lägga upp nåt som kan inbjuda till att folk börjar ha någon slags politisk debatt under bilder på mina barn, men i vårt fall så har jag ju inte riktigt något val, för annars skulle det innebära att jag så att säga dolde min son och det har jag verkligen ingen lust att göra.” - IP8

“man får vara väldigt försiktigt med såna här lagar...//...det är ju svårt att göra dom tydliga, när man har gått över en gräns liksom. Ska någon sitta och avgöra det? Är det då en lag som säger att bilder på barn som är ledsna.. vem bestämmer när barnet är det? Nej jag har ganska mycket åsikter om det och jag kan tycka att en del gör fel, men jag tycker inte att det ska lagstiftas...//...Men man kan absolut ha en restriktiv hållning, det finns väldigt goda argument för det” - IP8