

BRIS' webbased support services for children and young people

Thomas Jonsland
BRIS
(Children's Rights in Society)
Sweden

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BRIS

- The presentation is based on the report: **The Children, BRIS and it 2010**
- The report is a part of the “Young Internet” project, which is partially funded by the European Union and run by the Swedish Media Council in cooperation with BRIS
- The report also includes a description of what children and young people tell BRIS about their daily lives with the Internet, computers and mobile phones.

- **BRIS is an Non government organisation** (NGO) build on volunteer work and financial support.
- The goal of BRIS is to strengthen the rights of children and young people and improve their living conditions, which is done with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as a guide.
- BRIS works to influence public opinion and decision makers.
- BRIS provide opportunities for children and young people to have a dialogue with adults through the support services; the phone BRIS 116 111, the BRIS-mail and the BRIS-chat.
- BRIS provide opportunities for children and young people to express themselves and get support from other young people through BRIS Forum.
- BRIS also have support services for adults; the phone *BRIS Adult Helpline – about children* and the web *Barnperspektivet.se* (thechildperspective.se).

- In 2009, BRIS had approximately **40,000 web-based contacts** with children and young people in The BRIS-mail, the BRIS-chat and BRIS Forum.

I just want to thank all the wonderful people on this website. logging in is uplifting and you realise you're not alone with your problems. it feels so good. everyone's nice to everyone, and cares. at the same time that you get help yourself you can give something back. thanks to everyone who cares you're wonderful :)

Main submission to the Discussion Forum by a girl

- The contacts are primarily handled by **volunteer BRIS workers**.
- One must be at least 25 years of age and have some form of training/experience with young people and about psycho-social matters.
- Once approved after a personal interview, volunteers attend an internal training programme approximately 40 hours long.
- A group of a volunteers answer together in one room at BRIS, with a employee supervisor always available.

- **To be interactive** and able to write on BRIS' website the child must register gender and year of birth, username and password.
- The child is anonymous towards BRIS and other children on the website.
- In the personal inbox on the website the children find the e-mails they have written and the responses from BRIS. Also their chat logs and their submissions to BRIS Forum.

- In the **BRIS-chat** and the **BRIS-mail** the child have a contact with a adult at BRIS.
- It's possible to share or ask about anything they want.
- Most common contact topics are Friends, Fear/anxiety and School.
- Contacts about poor mental health is much more common in the BRIS-mail and the BRIS-chat compare to the phone.
- In all BRIS supporting contacts with children the average age of the child is 14,4 year. Approximately the same in all support services.
- Girls is accounted for 80 percent of the contacts. In just the webbased services the proportion of girls is even higher.

- The BRIS-mail

- You can write to the BRIS-mail everyday, all around the clock.
- BRIS give a personal response to all e-mails., within three to four days.
- The mails can be up to 32 000 characters long.
- In the year 2009 the BRIS-mail received 8300 e-mails. 7500 e-mails got a supportive responses.
- The rest was empty or contained too less information to get a supporting response.

E-mail from a child:

My best friend doesn't feel good. She's having problems with her boyfriend again and now she's almost stopped eating and has begun to cut herself. I can't handle it any longer, just looking on when she does this to herself, but she doesn't care about what I say. Soon, I'll feel like I can't be bothered.

Response from BRIS:

Hi! It's great that you write us your thoughts! You say that you soon won't be able to deal with caring about your friend whose doing poorly. A good friend offers support and listens, and you seem to feel a great sense of responsibility for your friend. Of course, you should be there for each other, but your friend is also personally responsible for how she feels. From your description, it sounds as if she is having pretty big problems right now, so maybe it's time to make sure she gets more help. When you have fought for and supported a friend for a long time, you can end up feeling a bit empty if nothing comes of it. This is normal. Maybe you can't get her to feel better all on your own. She herself has to want to feel better and dare to accept support from somebody else. How much do her parents know about how she is feeling? You have a heavy burden to bear if you are the only one who knows. Maybe you can go along for support if your friend wants to talk with an adult. Besides her parents, this could be the school nurse or a counsellor at the youth counselling centre, for example, or some other adult she trusts. And don't forget that you might also need somebody to talk to. All the best, BRIS

- The BRIS-chat

- A chat between one child and one adult.
- Tested from December 2007 to april 2008. The evaluation showed a very good response. Now operated and developed with the financial support of Allmänna arvsfonden (the State Inheritance Fund).
- In 2010 open all year, except the summer. Four days a week, between 3 pm and 6 pm. The opening hours will extend continuously next years.
- In 2009 BRIS had 2300 chats, 1800 became supportive chats.
- No rule how long a chat can be. But an idea that no longer than one hour.
- A chat last almost 45 minutes in average.

BRIS: Hi and welcome to the BRIS-chat, my name is Anna.

CHILD: Heh, ok. So I have loads of problems.

BRIS: Ok, where do you want to begin?

CHILD: My parents are divorcing right now. My dad is completely sick. He's stalked us and bombed us with texts.

BRIS: Sounds tough.

CHILD: I'm really worried and am so tired. Can't deal with all this anymore..!

BRIS: Do you want to tell a bit more about it

CHILD: Well, my dad is mentally ill and he's controlling and that. And he wont leave us alone. He's gonna walk over dead bodies to get in touch with us in the best way possible.

BRIS: Does he say that?

CHILD: He hasnt said so exactly but hes said hes gonna do everything to get back with mum again. And he's coming around my little sisters school all the time.

BRIS: How were things before? Before the divorce I mean? With your dad?

CHILD: I've never had a good relationship with him. EVER.

BRIS: Ok, so actually it's not the divorce itself that is tough, rather how he's acting now.

CHILD: Yeah, and that I cant deal with his behaviour and what he's doing.

BRIS: Yes, that is understandable...

CHILD: I don't know what I should do,..

BRIS: So how are things with you, your mum and your sister otherwise, when things are good?

(Here, the chat continued for about another 30 minutes with around another 20 lines from BRIS and the child – before a conclusion neared,)

CHILD: But when is the BRIS-chat open next time? Do I need to go through the same things again?

BRIS: Take up what you feel is important for that time. And you do have your counsellor who knows everything and who you can talk to in the meantime, and your mum of course!

CHILD: Alright. Thank you SO much for letting me chat with you. I feel a lot better. :)

BRIS: Thanks yourself, it was fun chatting with you! So should we say good-bye?

CHILD: haha, yup. Bye, have fun! :)

Chat with a girl, age 14

- **BRIS Forum**

- Comprises three different parts: The Discussion Forum, My poem and the Source of Joy.
- An opportunity to express themselves, discuss and share experiences with other young people.
- All submissions are read by BRIS before they are published.
- 90 percent of the submissions are published.
- If BRIS refuse a submission, the child always receives a personal message about this.
- Most often BRIS refuse the submission because of that the child breaks his anonymity or that the submission does not provide constructive support.

- Discussion Forum

- BRIS has decided a few overall themes, such as School, Being young and Bullying.
- The child chooses a theme under which to write a main submission. Or choose to answer an already existing main submission.
- In 2009, 29 000 submissions were made to the Discussion Forum.. 27 000 were published.

My dad beats, threatens and violates me. been abused and everything for almost 7 years. i can't take it any more. please can somebody help me. do you have any advice. please help me. What can I do???

Main submission to the Discussion Forum by a 14-year-old boy

Response from girl, age 14

Oh, how awful that must be!

You can either

- * go live with your mum (if possible?)*
- * call the police and report the child abuse!*
- * contact social services*
- * talk to your dad about it, suggest he go to a psychologist*
- * call BRIS and you'll get even more advice! :)*

I'm really keeping my fingers crossed for you!

Loads of hugs and Merry Christmas :D

Response from boy, age 15

Just 1 thing:

Don't think, "well, he'll stop when I grow up", just go straight to the police or social services and tell them

Response from girl, age 14

What a pig! A guy that meant a lot to me was abused from when he was little up to now... He stood up to him and showed he was tough and not afraid anymore and refused to take any more shit! Then his dad changed and sought help. Actually, he had a mum he went to now and then (who didn't know about it). I don't know what you should do, but hope it works out

- My poem

- Any text of maximum 2000 characters.

- In 2009, 1100 submissions were published on My poem.

Rare flowers

Real friends are like rare flowers. You can't hurt them, you can't let them down, you can't step on them and you absolutely cannot forget them, the rare flowers... I thought I was a rare flower, such a rare flower that couldn't be treated like that...but I was wrong.

Submission to My Poem from a 14-year-old girl

- Source of Joy

- Offer a free-zone, where one should be able to share and enjoy various expressions of hope, joy or love. All other submissions are refused.
- Maximum 150 characters.
- In 2009 1100 submissions were published on Source of Joy.

Music makes me happy, gives me strength to fight. If there were no music, I wouldn't be here.
Submission to Source of Joy from a 14-year-old girl

My grandma helps me through everything, although she doesn't know it.
Submission to Source of Joy from a 16-year-old girl

- You can choose to **just read**, without registration and logging in.
- Different forms of support and advice is available.
- All current posts within BRIS' Forums.
- Shortened and re-written mails from children, with responses to them from BRIS.
- Fact sheets. Reports. Movies.

- **Say what you think**

- Addressed to adult visitors just as much as to children and young people.
- Anyone can submit their views or questions about BRIS support services.

- **Barnperspektivet.se** (TheChildPerspective.se)

- A new website which BRIS launched in May 2010.

The goal is to expand the opportunities for adults to receive web-based support in matters concerning children.

- The site should be a complement to the BRIS Adult Helpline – about children.
- Some parts of the site is available in different languages.

- **The future then?**

- Important to be on the toes.

- Sms? Group chats? On-line gaming?

- The children and young people will show us!

Thanks for your attention!

Thomas Jonsland

BRIS

thomas.jonsland@bris.se

BRIS