[This is the final author version of the abstract, as accepted to be presented at this conference]

**Please refer to this manuscript as follows:** Beuckels, E., Hudders, L., Vanwesenbeeck, I., & Van den Abeele, E. (2024). Work it baby! A survey study to investigate the role of underaged children and privacy management strategies within parent influencer content. Etmaal van de Communicatiewetenschap 2024, Abstracts.

**Work it Baby! A Survey Study to Investigate the Role of Underaged Children and Privacy Management Strategies Within Parent Influencer Content.**

On social media, including TikTok, Instagram and YouTube, highly popular social media users have made a profitable endeavor of transforming their family lives in sceneries for product placement (Abidin, 2017). Some of them are niche influencers, specialized in the field of ‘parenting’, as they often grew from being ordinary social media users to microcelebrities by sharing intimate content mostly on their domestic and family lives. Others already had a blooming influencer career when they started sharing pictures or ultrasounds of their - often unborn - child (Abidin, 2015). Both influencer categories can be considered ‘parent influencers’ and operate in an attention economy in which they aim to get noticed and admired by highly engaging in self-disclosure (Jorge et al., 2022). This includes sharing boundless information about their parental experiences by portraying their children on their profiles, an act referred to as ‘sharenting’ (sharing parenting; Blum-Ross & Livingstone, 2017).

Strikingly, a content analysis shows that sharenting and branded content accounts for nearly half of parent influencers’ profiles (Jiménez-Iglesias et al., 2022). This practice raises important concerns both in terms of the children’s privacy (i.e., misuse of images) as well as their wellbeing (e.g., child labour) following their displaying to a large audience. However, academic research currently lacks understanding of what influencer sharenting activities demand of the parents and children involved and how aware parent influencers are of these risks. Besides, qualitative research related to influencer sharenting shows that some specific privacy concerns (e.g., concern for the future or concern for negative comments of others) did encourage a minority of parent bloggers to adopt stricter privacy management measures, such as trimming down the quantity or anonymizing their posts (Archer, 2019; Blum-Ross & Livingstone, 2017). Interviews among experts did also reveal that parent influencers could adopt several privacy management strategies (PMS) to reduce the potential risks of their sharenting behavior (Hudders et al., 2022). This study will further build on this work to examine how these safe sharenting strategies are currently being employed by parent influencers.

The four research questions of this study are concerned with providing an insight into influencers’ sharenting labor (RQ1), their motivations to engage in these behaviors (RQ2), the privacy concerns that arise with these behaviors (RQ3) and safe sharenting strategies that are adopted by these influencers (RQ4). A survey approach among 89 Belgian parent influencers was adopted. First, several general items measured the parents’ demographic variables and engagement in influencer activities. The constructs Influencer Sharenting frequency, Sharenting Labor frequency, Influencer Sharenting Motivations, Safe Sharenting Strategies, Situational Privacy Concerns and Peer Influence (α= .663) were measured by validated or self-constructed scientific scales.

Our results show that sharenting is greatly normalized among the influencer population of this study. One quarter of the respondents engage their children in commercial influencer posts on a weekly basis and, on average, parents demand over 36 minutes of their child’s time to compose one single social media post. Further, results show that influencer sharenting is mostly driven by selfish motives (e.g. pride and pleasure), but also reveal a low sharenting risk awareness. Building on parent influencers’ safe sharenting strategies, this study identifies three parent influencer types: reckless, safe and authoritarian safe sharenters. This classification contributes to a better understanding of the heterogeneity of the parent influencer landscape and will foster the development of protective measures in favor of children’s wellbeing. Besides, the results of this study could strengthen future interventions and policies to protect children’s wellbeing while accounting for the perspectives of the parents.

Abidin, C. (2015). Micromicrocelebrity: Branding babies on the internet. *m/c Journal*, *18*(5).

Abidin, C. (2017). # familygoals: Family influencers, calibrated amateurism, and justifying young digital labor. *Social Media+ Society*, *3*(2), 2056305117707191.

Archer, C. (2019). How influencer ‘mumpreneur’bloggers and ‘everyday’mums frame presenting their children online. *Media International Australia*, *170*(1), 47-56.

Blum-Ross, A., & Livingstone, S. (2017). “Sharenting,” parent blogging, and the boundaries of the digital self. *Popular Communication*, *15*(2), 110-125.

Hudders, L., Beuckels, E., Van den Abeele, E., Vanwesenbeeck, I., de Brabandere, M., & De Jans, S. (2022, 9-10 June 2022). *Children, children on our wall. A mixed-method study exploring the risks associated with the portrayal of children on influencer accounts* UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre 10th Biennial Conference,

Jiménez-Iglesias, E., Elorriaga-Illera, A., Monge-Benito, S., & Olabarri-Fernández, E. (2022). Exposición de menores en Instagram: instamadres, presencia de marcas y vacío legal.

Jorge, A., Marôpo, L., Coelho, A. M., & Novello, L. (2022). Mummy influencers and professional sharenting. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, *25*(1), 166-182.