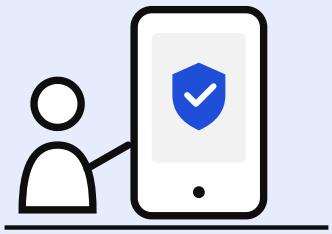
Specialty

Design for children

Designs products and services used by children and teenagers with their age, privacy and safety in mind, and often includes them in the design process itself.



In Spanish
Diseño para la infancia

Origin
Druin (1999); ICO (2020)

What problem it addresses

Many apps and games used by minors were designed for adults: they collect their data, push them to keep using them or show them advertising. Several laws now require fixing this through design.

Principles

Most protective, by default
Privacy settings start at the safest option, without the minor having to change them.

By age
What is asked, explained or allowed changes with the age of the user.

With them, not just for them
Children take part in design as partners, not just as people to be observed.

Applications in design

✓ Use it like this
Ask whether a minor is likely to use your product, even if it isn't meant for them, and design for that case too.

✗ Avoid
Using rewards, streaks or alerts to keep a minor using the app for longer.

👁 Don't fall for it
Asking for a date of birth isn't enough: laws such as Brazil's now require reliable age verification.

Connections

Uses these methods

- Privacy by design

Related to

- Game design
- Legal design

Authors and works

1999	**Allison Druin**	Proposed cooperative inquiry, a way of designing technology with children as design partners at every stage.
2020	**Information Commissioner's Office, United Kingdom**	Its Age Appropriate Design Code sets 15 standards for online services likely to be used by minors, including high privacy by default. It came into force in September 2020, with a year to adapt.
2025	**Brazil**	The ECA Digital (Law 15.211) has required since March 2026 the most protective settings by default and reliable age verification, where self-declaration is not enough, and bans loot boxes in games minors may use.

Sources

Original sources

- Druin, A. (1999). Cooperative inquiry: Developing new technologies for children with children. In Proceedings of the SIGCHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems (CHI '99). ACM. View source (https://doi.org/10.1145/302979.303166)
- Information Commissioner's Office (2020). Age appropriate design: A code of practice for online services. ICO.
- Lei n.º 15.211, de 17 de setembro de 2025, que dispõe sobre a proteção de crianças e adolescentes em ambientes digitais (ECA Digital). Diário Oficial da União, Brasil.

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