Mindful sharenting: What factors shape sharenting-related privacy protection behavior

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Sharenting = parents sharing information about their children and parenting online (Blum-Ross & Livingstone, 2017)

- Czech Republic = **78.4%** of parents shared about their children aged 11-14 (current findings)
- The U.S. = **95%** of parents shared about their children aged 0-17 (Cai, 2023)

Sharenting practice entails both benefits and (privacy) risks

↓

Privacy paradox = parents keep sharing despite the risks (Chalklen & Anderson, 2017)

Mindful sharenting = maximizing positive aspects of sharenting while minimizing its risks (Walrave et al., 2023)

Our focus: **privacy protection strategies**

Privacy Protection Strategies

Intra-systemic

Before posting (BP)

- Asking for children‘s consent
- Consulting the appropriateness of the post with a spouse or a close person before sharing
- Asking oneself if they would like someone else to share a similar thing about them

When posting (WP)

- Adjusting visibility settings
- Selecting photos/videos where the children‘s face is not visible
- Covering children‘s face (e.g., with emoji/filter)
- Editing or deleting older posts
- Avoiding sharing identifiable information about the children
- Sharing content with a time limit

Extra-systemic

Family rules

(Cino & Wartella, 2021)

Previous Research and Research Gap

- Studies on what drives parents to employ privacy protection are **scarce**. (Beuckels et al., 2025; Cino & Wartella, 2021; Lieberknecht et al., 2026)

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- Focus on **early adolescents** (11-14 years old)
  - Digital autonomy
  - Self-presentation
  - Privacy management

Hypotheses

RQ1: What factors are linked to engagement in privacy protection strategies?

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Parental Perceptions

H1 - Privacy concerns

H2 - Privacy self-efficacy

H3 - Consent norm

Privacy Protection Strategies

(a) Strategies before posting

(b) Strategies when posting

(c) Family rules

(Ajzen, 1991; Bandura, 1982; Baruh et al., 2017)

Control variables: sharenting (posting frequency, positive posting, posting of challenges), parental age and gender

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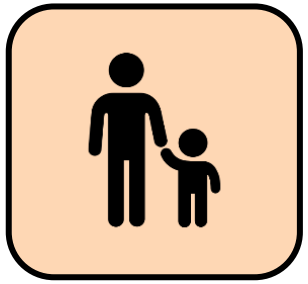
RQ2: What is the overall engagement in privacy protection strategies?

Control variables: sharenting (posting frequency, positive posting, posting of challenges), parental age and gender

Methods



- Parent-early adolescent (aged 11-14) dyads
- N = 1,562 → **N = 1,224 parents** (78.4% of parents who reported sharenting)
- Parents‘ age: 24-71, M = 43.27, SD = 6.33, 60.6% women
- Quota sampling
  - Parent education, municipality population, region
  - Adolescent sex, age
  - Min. 40% (step)fathers

- CAWI survey
- Czech Republic
- April/May 2025
- STEM/MARK survey agency

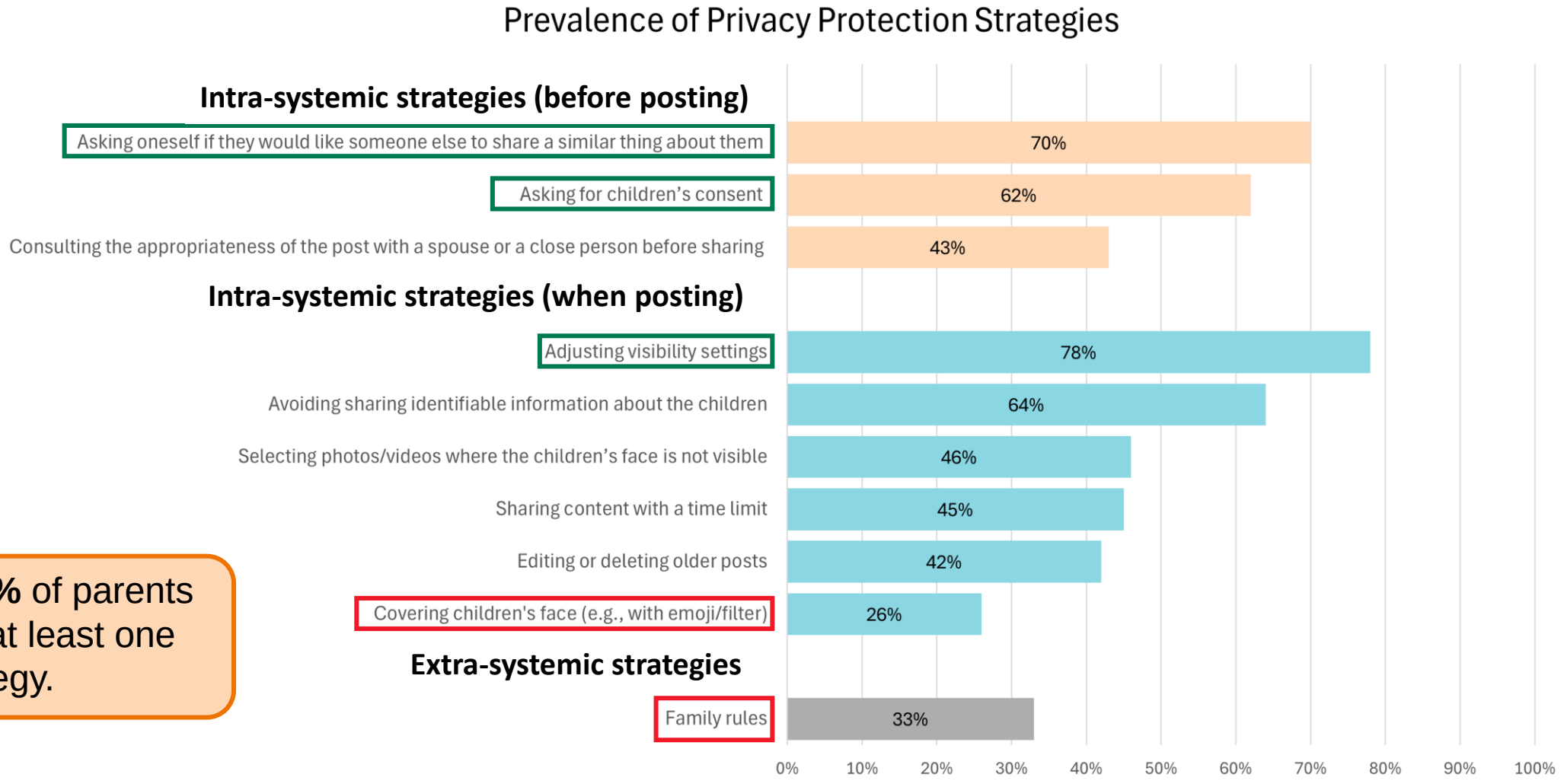
- SEM
- Robust maximum likelihood estimator (MLR)
- Full-information maximum likelihood (FIML) to handle missingness

- preregistered study
- approved by the University Research Ethics Committee

Measures

- Adapted sharenting scale (13 items) – Cai (2023)
  - posting frequency (M = 1.90, SD = 0.67)
  - positive posting (M = 1.91, SD = 0.71)
  - posting of challenges (M = 1.32, SD = 0.71)
- Reformulated sharenting privacy concerns scale (4 items, M = 4.70, SD = 1.56, ω = .94) – Dinev and Hart (2006)
  - About an individual → about one‘s children
- Sharenting self-efficacy scale (5 items, M = 5.12, SD = 1.19, ω = .91) – Peng (2024)
- Sharenting consent norm scale (1 item, M = 3.55, SD = 1.53) – developed for this study
- Intra- and extra-systemic strategies (10 items) – developed for this study
  - Privacy protection before posting (M = 2.88, SD = 1.14)
  - Privacy protection when posting (M = 2.67, SD = 0.89)
  - Family rules (M = 3.50, SD = 1.79)

Main Results (Explorative Aim)



96.6% of parents use at least one strategy.

Base: Parents who answered „at least once“ in the last six months.

Main Results (H1-3, SEM)

Predictor	Privacy Protection Before Posting (R^2 = .15)	Privacy Protection When Posting (R^2 = .17)	Sharenting Family Rules (R^2 = .14)
	β	β	β
Privacy Concerns	**.28*** **	**.28*** **	**.27*** **
Privacy Self-Efficacy	**.09** **	**.15*** **	.05
Consent Norm	**.19*** **	**.06**	**.16*** **
Sharenting: Posting Frequency	.00	.00	.07
Sharenting: Positive Posting	**.10** **	**.14** **	.02
Sharenting: Posting of Challenges	.00	**.11** **	**.07** **
Parent Sex	.01	**-.09*** **	**.08** **
Parent Age	.02	.00	-.05

$\chi^2(88) = 124.75$, $p = .006$, CFI = 1.00, TLI = .99, RMSEA = .02 with 90% CI [.01; .03], SRMR = .02

Main Results (H1-3)

Privacy concerns and consent norms → all privacy protection strategies
(H1a-c and H3a-c **supported**)

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(H2a-b **supported**)

Privacy self-efficacy → family rules
(H2c **not supported**)

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Discussion

- **Privacy concerns** – the strongest predictor of a broad range of privacy protection strategies (cf. Cino & Wartella, 2021)
  - Correlated with: less frequent sharing and less positive posting (cf. Ní Bhroin, 2022, Peng, 2024, but in line with: Chen, 2018; Dienlin & Metzger, 2016)

- **Privacy self-efficacy** positively predicted only intra-systemic strategies (cf. Lieberknecht et al., 2026)
  - Extra-systemic strategies (family rules) may reflect a different construct
  - The role of social self-efficacy → future research

Discussion

- **Privacy consent norms** positively predicted all three privacy protection strategies, namely strategies before posting and family rules
  - Should I post it? **vs.** How should it be posted?
  - Other social norms – interconnected social perceptions (Sparkman & Weber, 2023)

- **ONLY** the 33% of parents thought that asking children for consent before sharing is *somewhat* to *very true* for other parents with children of similar age as their own

- Asking children for consent was **the 3rd most used strategy** (62%) (Cino & Wartella, 2021)

Final Take-away

How can we create a successful intervention / educate parents about safe sharenting?

- Explain potential risks and short-/long-term consequences
- Recommend effective privacy protection strategies

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Additional slides

Limitations & Future Directions

- Cross-sectional findings → longitudinal design
- Self-reported measures → potential bias → mix-method design
- Refining measures - e.g., a unidimensional concept of social norms → two-dimensional (descriptive and injunctive)
- Czech sample → comparing different cultural contexts

Hypotheses

H1: A higher sharenting privacy concern is associated with greater privacy protection before posting (H1a), when posting (H1b), family rules (H1c).

H2: Higher sharenting privacy self-efficacy is associated with greater privacy protection before posting (H2a), when posting (H2b), family rules (H2c).

H3: A higher sharenting consent norm is associated with greater privacy protection before posting (H3a), when posting (H3b), family rules (H3c).

Exploratively we examine the overall engagement in the privacy protection strategies.

Main Results (H1-3)

Results of an SEM Model Predicting Privacy Protection Behaviors (N = 1,224)

Predictor	Privacy Protection Before Posting (R^2 = .15)				Privacy Protection When Posting (R^2 = .17)				Sharenting Family Rules (R^2 = .14)			
	B(*SE*)	95% CI	*p*	β	*B*(*SE*)	95% CI	*p*	β	*B*(*SE*)	95% CI	*p*	β
Privacy Concerns	**0.21(0.02)**	**[0.16, 0.25]**	**<.001**	**.28**	**0.16(0.02)**	**[0.13, 0.20]**	**<.001**	**.28**	**0.32(0.04)**	**[0.25, 0.39]**	**<.001**	**.27**
Privacy Self-Efficacy	**0.10(0.03)**	**[0.03, 0.16]**	**.004**	**.09**	**0.13(0.03)**	**[0.08, 0.18]**	**<.001**	**.15**	0.08(0.05)	[-0.02, 0.18]	.126	.05
Consent Norm	**0.14(0.02)**	**[0.10, 0.19]**	**<.001**	**.19**	**0.04(0.02)**	**[0.00, 0.07]**	**.037**	**.06**	**0.19(0.04)**	**[0.12, 0.26]**	**<.001**	**.16**
Sharenting: Posting Frequency	0.00(0.07)	[-0.13, 0.13]	.982	.00	-0.00(0.05)	[-0.11, 0.11]	.972	.00	0.18(0.10)	[-0.01, 0.37]	.063	.07
Sharenting: Positive Posting	**0.16(0.08)**	**[0.01, 0.32]**	**.033**	**.10**	**0.17(0.06)**	**[0.05, 0.30]**	**.005**	**.14**	0.05(0.11)	[-0.16, 0.27]	.627	.02
Sharenting: Posting of Challenges	0.01(0.06)	[-0.11, 0.12]	.922	.00	**0.14(0.05)**	**[0.04, 0.24]**	**.008**	**.11**	**0.19(0.09)**	**[0.01, 0.36]**	**.036**	**.07**
Parent Sex	0.02(0.07)	[-0.11, 0.15]	.739	.01	**-0.17(0.05)**	**[-0.27, -0.07]**	**<.001**	**-.09**	**0.29(0.10)**	**[0.09, 0.49]**	**.004**	**.08**
Parent Age	0.00(0.00)	[-0.01, 0.01]	.541	.02	0.00(0.00)	[-0.01, 0.01]	.898	.00	-0.01(0.01)	[-0.03, 0.00]	.075	-.05

Note: Parent sex was coded as 1 = woman, 2 = man.

$\chi^2(88) = 124.75$, $p = .006$, CFI = 1.00, TLI = .99, RMSEA = .02 with 90% CI [.01; .03], SRMR = .02.

Correlations

Pearson Correlations

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Privacy Protection Before Posting										
2 Privacy Protection When Posting	.64***									
3 Sharenting: Family Rules	.36***	.32***								
4 Privacy Concerns	.28***	.29***	.26***							
5 Privacy Self-Efficacy	.14***	.19***	.09**	.13***						
6 Consent Norm	.23***	.12***	.20***	.06*	.07*					
7 Sharenting: Posting Frequency	.02	.09**	.08**	-.19***	.00	.08**				
8 Sharenting: Positive Posting	.08**	.17***	.10***	-.16***	.00	.15***	.66***			
9 Sharenting: Posting of Challenges	.09**	.19***	.15***	.00	-.07**	.12***	.47***	.70***		
10 Parent Sex	-.01	-.11***	.05	-.04	-.09**	.00	-.02	.01	.08**	
11 Parent Age	.00	-.05	-.05	.03	-.06*	-.05	-.13***	-.14***	-.08**	.27***

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$