

Thomas Berger, IFZ
Natascha Compes, Bergische Universität Wuppertal,
Jennifer Dahmen, Bergische Universität Wuppertal,
Anita Thaler, IFZ

Use IT – but smartly!
Communicating pro-environmental ICT usage to young people

Teaching and informing young people about sustainable and environmental friendly aspects of living is one of many important challenges of the 21st Century. Information and communication technologies (ICT) as an arena for diverse technology practices play an important role in adolescents' everyday lives. To 'google' something, to 'hashtag', or 'youtubing' are common pastime activities of young people. However, the ecological impact of those practices is elusive to most young users because the online electricity consumption is indirect and not observable. Furthermore, the grey energy embedded in the hardware and web-infrastructure remain hidden and hard to fathom.

The transdisciplinary EU-funded project 'useITsmartly' wants to address the question of energy efficient ICT usage via peer education. In a participatory approach with adolescents, it aims at capacity building and subsequent behavioural change. Based on two investigative empirical phases useITsmartly is testing several didactical concepts to inform and empower young citizens to lower the ecological footprint of their ICT use. The paper presented at the conference will inform about the background of the project as well as about work-in-progress results and insights.