

An open letter by [Paolo Beneventi](#) about [Children tell themselves in video](#)

Dear all, media educators, teachers and active citizens

This project comes from a long professional history, working with children, listening to them, recording their voices and faces so that, for example, when I write on education I have the opportunity of basing on their real words, gestures, expressions, and not only on memory, abstract ideas or worse, on postulates induced by passing trends of the market. With their enthusiasm or their boredom, the children tell me if I am good or bad in my job, and they also teach me how it could be easy in fact to put together in a harmonious way [body expression](#), storytelling, [nature](#), [technology](#). In our societies, today, maybe only children can show how to enter the kingdom of heaven!

If someone is interested, the links above are to three books I wrote; two old, in Italian, out of catalogue and whose proofs I've put free online, and another in English, just published.

I am looking for people working on audiovisuals with children along the world who agree to walk a little way together. Not to give up our respective professional status, but to claim as a group the power of a know how that can be very important (if we think of it), in order to get rid of many cliches on young generations in which nowadays public opinion is often trapped.

- What messages can come from kids when free to play (as children *play*) using the universal language of video in first person?
- What new frontiers of communication, also outside the enclosures of commercial social networks?
- And can we, clarifying ideas together, go beyond traditions, emotions and intuitions, and build something like a common theory for our work on more scientific bases?

The task is very big, but it can be very interesting, and also amusing. And the World Wide Web can be the perfect environment where to carry it out, if we remember that we can use Internet far beyond the current individual and shallow approach, [essentially passive](#), dictated by commercial networks.

The [Promotional video](#) and the hints in the [web pages](#) introduce the topics we are starting from. The collection of video examples, as well as the windows opening to what several operators in the world have published available online, provide original documents, first-hand works on which we can exchange our observations and reflections.

Some of these videos will be shown also to the general public **next October in Brescia** during the exhibition "**Children tell themselves in video**", but as a first step we would like to organize a **preliminary meeting in June**, in presence at Brescia or surroundings with those who can, and possibly online with the others who like to take part from far. Before and during this meeting, a list of possible chapters will be proposed, to be filled, corrected, developed together with all those wishing to share ideas, experiences, proposals.

This letter is also to see, from the answers, the place and the date.

In addition to the three questions above, we ask to the participants their opinion also on topics like these:

- Why media education is important, for children and people of every age?
- Can the traditional audiovisual grammars, the practices induced by social networks and the play of kids blend successfully into something that's not only consumption, but active production of culture?
- Children today are to be "protected" from everything, or can they grow up capable of managing responsibly communication using firsthand the old and new media?

I have proposed books of mine in the introduction to this document, several videos in the web site, and I'm going to quote many articles, written by me and other authors, in a dedicated bibliography. Something that everyone can do is to report their personal list of publications, videos, websites, that they think it should be useful to know and share to give substance to the common work.

For all those who believe it possible a communication society in which all of us can all be mindful actors, including children.

Paolo Beneventi, May 2024