Study finds kids justify illegal downloads

BRUSSELS (Hollywood Reporter) - Children in Europe are aware of the risks of illegal downloading, but often rationalize their act by saying that everyone -- including their parents -- is doing it, according to a major European Commission survey.

Other excuses included: the download is for personal and private purposes; the Web sites presumably remunerate the artists; claims of harm inflicted on artists lack credibility; and DVDs and CDs are simply too expensive.

Almost all of the children surveyed in the 27 European Union member countries as well as in Norway and Iceland said they expect to continue downloading. They also said the risk of downloading a virus was far more dissuasive than the risk of legal proceedings.

The survey results, released Friday, found that most kids use the Internet several times a day and, while Internet use is to some extent limited by parents, most own their own mobile phones, the use of which is largely unsupervised.

The survey also found that children are much more attuned to such potential online risks as security, viruses, identity theft and potential dangerous contact with strangers than parents imagine, and tend to know about the necessary precautions.

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