

THRIVABLE INSIGHTS FROM THE THRIVABILITY MATTERS WEBINAR

Hi, passionate thrivability enthusiast. We live in unprecedented times. The numbers prove that climate change is here to stay. Social injustices corrupt the very fabric of our society, and misinformation and false narratives clog our devices through mainstream and social media. It's important to have reliable information from people who stand to gain nothing from sharing it with you. A person's agenda defines their motivation. THRIVE's agenda is to assist others to build a thrivable future, while our passionate volunteers walk the talk to deliver an authenticity that is difficult to find elsewhere.

Every month, THRIVE delivers a knowledge-filled [webinar](#), straight to your screens, providing statistics, facts, tips, tricks, and hints on how we can solve the problems our world faces everyday. from new innovations and discoveries, to the actions that people and communities take every day to make our world just a little more thrivable.

Each month, a particular solution is unpacked, disseminated, and investigated, to see how it applies to us and how we can play as a global team, on the playing field of Earth, to reach these goals. It isn't enough for us to sit passively by and let governments and businesses make our decisions for us. After all, their motivation is driven by their agenda. What does that mean for us?

Our aim is to arm you with the knowledge to change from being simply sustainable to terrifically thrivable. Therefore, I'd like to introduce you to Monika Kulshrestha. She was an esteemed guest for the January 2025 Thrivability Matters Webinar, who spoke to us as part of the *Discoveries: Education, Employment, & Economies* theme. Monika's focus was on how the world is becoming increasingly reliant on digital devices, and the means to empower youth to effectively use these tools to thrive. The thrivable insights that follow are her precious pearls of wisdom that she generously shared

with us during the Q&A session that follows every webinar.

INTRODUCING MONIKA KULSHRESTHA



Monika Kulshrestha is an accomplished entrepreneur, engineer, and IT professional with a passion for driving innovation and fostering business growth.

Since 2014, she has successfully expanded a retail venture into a global enterprise, impacting over 500 individuals and startups through her innovative training programs and initiatives.

Q & A

We understand that having digital literacy is becoming an absolute necessity. In your view, what are the key digital skills that children should develop from an early age to thrive in today's world?

In today's fast-paced digital world, children need a **balanced and evolving digital foundation** to ensure they thrive—not just online, but in all aspects of life. Digital literacy should be nurtured across different life stages, each requiring a unique

approach to technology. **Early childhood (0-7)** should focus on **emotional bonds and playful digital awareness**, using technology as a tool to enhance creativity rather than replace real-world interactions. For example, interactive storytelling apps paired with physical books can spark imagination while ensuring screen time remains intentional and limited. As children enter **middle childhood (8-12)**, developing **digital literacy, critical thinking, and a healthy tech balance** becomes essential. Fun fact-checking games or supervised research projects can help them differentiate between reliable and misleading online content, fostering a responsible approach to information consumption.

During **adolescence (13-18)**, young people should focus on **building independence, resilience, and safe digital habits**. This is the time to guide them in ethical social media use, responsible digital footprints, and using technology for personal and social growth. Encouraging teens to take online courses, learn presentation skills, or engage in crowdfunding projects for social causes can empower them to see technology as a tool for positive impact. Finally, **young adulthood (19-24)** is about preparing for careers and mindful digital engagement. At this stage, mastering professional networking through LinkedIn, earning industry-relevant certifications, and building digital portfolios can set them up for success in a competitive job market.

By providing structured guidance at every stage, we **transform digital interactions into opportunities for growth, creativity, and meaningful connections**. The goal is not just to help children navigate the digital world but to **thrive within it—equipped with the skills, confidence,**

and ethics to use technology as a force for good.



How does digital education allow for inclusivity for children who are differently abled?

Technology is a powerful equaliser, breaking barriers and fostering inclusivity in education. Digital education provides **assistive technologies** such as speech-to-text, screen readers, and adaptive learning software, making learning accessible for children with visual, auditory, or motor impairments. AI-powered tools also support non-English-speaking children by helping them express their thoughts—when used meaningfully, rather than as a copy-paste shortcut, AI can be a bridge for communication and self-expression.

Additionally, **flexible, self-paced learning** allows children with different cognitive abilities or neurodiverse needs to engage with content at their own speed, reducing pressure and improving retention.

Gamified and interactive platforms create virtual spaces where children can collaborate, socialise, and develop essential skills in a way that feels engaging and empowering.

At **Happy Hobby Hour Junior (HHHJ), a Deals Colony initiative**, we believe that digital literacy should be inclusive so that every child—regardless of ability—has the opportunity to learn, grow, and thrive

in the digital world.

By integrating adaptive tech and fostering a supportive learning environment, we can ensure that all children feel seen, heard, and valued.

When you discussed the importance of the topic, you touched upon the idea of building resilience. Could you share a real-life example where resilience was fostered through the use of digital technology?

Building resilience in young people through digital technology is crucial in preparing them for today's fast-changing world. A powerful example comes from our **Happy Hobby Hour Junior** initiative, where a group of young participants launched a **fundraising campaign to support children in need of medical care.** At first, many hesitated to promote their cause on public platforms, fearing rejection or failure. However, through **guided brainstorming, digital strategy sessions, and hands-on social media engagement**, they gained confidence in using technology to amplify their message.

When faced with setbacks—such as low attention or missed fundraising targets—they didn't give up. Instead, they learned to **analyse challenges, refine their approach, and adapt.** To boost engagement, they introduced **creative digital campaigns**, including sponsor outreach, interactive online storytelling, and blended online-offline events like **arts and crafts sales, robotics showcases, sports tournaments, and wellness sessions (yoga, dance, and mindfulness).** These efforts not only strengthened their fundraising but also built their confidence in problem-solving and digital innovation.

More than just a campaign, this experience **fostered persistence, adaptability, and teamwork—key**

ingredients of resilience. It showed them that resilience isn't just about bouncing back from failure but about **pushing forward with confidence, creativity, and a problem-solving mindset.** In a world where digital tools shape opportunities, this hands-on learning empowered them to see setbacks as stepping stones to success.



All of us here know the negative impacts of social media, but do you think it can support quality education for children?

Yes—when used **mindfully and with purpose!** Social media can be a **powerful tool** for education and connection if guided effectively. Instead of being just a distraction, it can offer **valuable learning opportunities** when used with intention.

- **Global Learning & Cultural Exchange:** Social media connects children with **mentors, experts, and peers** worldwide, fostering **cultural awareness** and broadening their perspectives. It also helps children stay connected with **family and friends** who may be far away or face barriers to in-person interaction.
- **Personalised Educational Content:** With access to **interactive lessons, webinars, and educational pages**, children can explore learning

methods that suit their **unique interests and learning styles**—from STEM experiments to language learning apps.

- **Community Engagement & Skill Development:** Platforms like **YouTube, Facebook, and LinkedIn** offer spaces for **knowledge sharing**, public speaking, and collaboration. For example, in **Happy Hobby Hour Junior workshops**, children share their learning progress in online groups, boosting their confidence and teamwork skills.
- **Encouraging Entrepreneurship & Social Impact:** Social media provides a platform for young changemakers to **showcase their talents and passion projects**—whether it's **raising funds for charity**, launching a **recycling initiative**, or promoting an **eco-friendly business idea**.

The key to **maximising benefits** is **structured guidance**—just as schools have behavior programs, we need **screen-time management and ethical tech education** programs. Initiatives like **Happy Hobby Hour Junior** help children transition from **mindless scrolling to meaningful engagement**, ensuring they develop **safe, responsible digital habits** that enrich their growth.

By shifting from **passive consumption to purposeful connection and creativity**, social media can empower children to **thrive holistically**—academically, socially, and emotionally—preparing them for a **confident, responsible future in the digital age**.

Please share any experiences about school projects that you were a part of which successfully incorporated thriving.

During our school workshops, particularly as part of the school's "Morphing Week," we successfully integrated the concept of **thrivability** into the students' daily lives. In one memorable session, Year 4 students were challenged to make mindful choices around their tech use and redirect that time into building public speaking skills. The kids were incredibly excited about the activity, especially the group-based approach where they collaborated, shared ideas, and competed on who could reduce their screen time the most. By discussing strategies and activities they could do at home instead of screen time, students boosted their confidence and felt empowered to make positive changes. This not only improved their public speaking but also strengthened their social skills through shared experiences.

Another impactful initiative was held at a North Brisbane school in collaboration with the Office of Fair Trading, where we led activities to help students develop safer digital habits. The focus was on recognising fake marketing and advertising and learning how to report or seek help from their parents if they encountered deceptive practices. This workshop equipped students with vital skills to navigate the digital world responsibly and fostered an environment where they could confidently share what they had learned with their families. Through these projects, we saw the power of practical, hands-on learning and how it nurtured a sense of responsibility and awareness in the students regarding their digital consumption.



How can community-based initiatives play an important role in promoting digital literacy among children and their families?

Community-based initiatives are powerful catalysts for promoting digital literacy, as they create accessible, inclusive, and culturally relevant learning environments for children and their families.

By offering **hands-on workshops, mentorship programs, and intergenerational learning opportunities**, these initiatives bridge the digital divide and ensure that all children—regardless of background—gain essential skills. For example, **local libraries or community centres** can host coding bootcamps, safe internet navigation sessions, or family-friendly tech discussions to help parents understand online safety.

Programs like **Happy Hobby Hour Junior** not only introduce children to ethical technology use but also provide structured activities, such as responsible social media engagement and digital creativity projects like app-building or eBook writing.

Additionally, community-led initiatives create **a support system** where families can learn together, fostering digital responsibility, collaboration, and real-world application of technology.

By embedding digital literacy into social settings, we empower children



to **thrive in an interconnected world** while strengthening family bonds and community engagement.



If you found value in this webinar, and loved it as much as we did, please register for our next exciting webinar at [thrivabilitymatters.online](https://www.thrivabilitymatters.com).

We can't wait to see you there. Keep on thriving!

Thank You

Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-NC](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).

Attributions:

THRIVE logos and light from the THRIVE Framework resources.

Image of Monika Kulshrestha courtesy of Monika Kulshrestha.

All other images courtesy of Microsoft Office Creative Commons license.