Digital Media and Early Learning
What We Know and Why It Matters to Early Childhood Educators
Tennessee Child Care Resource & Referral Network
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About Erikson Institute
Our vision is that every adult who works with young children or on their behalf will be knowledgeable, aware, skilled, and alive to the possibilities of each child’s life.
Follow Fred’s lead...Use tech “with” rather than “instead of”
We have to help give children tools, building blocks for active play. And the computer is one of those building blocks. No computer will ever take the place of wooden toys or building blocks. But that doesn’t mean they have to be mutually exclusive.

Share your thoughts
Do you have a definition for digital media literacy?
Share your thoughts

How would you rate your confidence in your digital media literacy?

Our digital media literacy comes first

• We do we need to know and be able to do to intentionally and appropriately select, use, integrate and evaluate technology?
• Gain knowledge, skills and hands-on experience – become fluent
• Increase our confidence and competence – become intentional
• Understand digital citizenship
• Narrow the personal/professional use gap
• Move along the continuum from...
  consumer > adopter > adapter > creator
Your digital media literacy matters

• Attitudes
• Knowledge
• Experience
• Competencies
• Leading to fluency
• DML for “4M” educators in formal and informal settings, teacher educators, trainers and parents

We are now the Jetsons...
...so we need media literacy in 2014

Media literacy is about helping children develop the life skills they need to become thinkers and makers in the multimedia environment that is their reality...

It is precisely because our culture surrounds us with media that we need to model healthy and productive ways to integrate digital media technologies into our lives.

Faith Rogow
What are the concerns?

- Too much passive, non-interactive use
- Exposure to inappropriate content
- Commercial messages and in-app sales aimed at children
- Negative impact on social-emotional development – socially isolating, interrupts adult-child relationship

- Displaces / replaces “ECE essentials” like hands-on, creative and open-ended play, construction, small manipulatives...
- Reduces outdoor time, decreases physical activity / Increases obesity
- Increases sleep disruptions
- Adult media use, misuse, over use and “always on” tech – background TV
Can the screen be a window, mirror and magnifying glass?

- Imagine
  - A child looks through a window for a view of something beyond
  - A child looks into a mirror that reflects his/her interests
  - A child uses the screen as a magnifying glass to explore the world

- Would we count minutes of window time, mirror time or magnifying glass time and place the same limits as we do with screen time?
- How would teachers use technology differently?
- How could parents use digital windows, mirrors and magnifying glasses?
- We need to reflect on and explore our educational window of opportunity?

Every window – architectural or electronic – is a gateway to adventure, inquiry, fantasy, storytelling, self-discovery and learning. David Kleeman, PlayVangelist

The perfect storm

- Zero to Three, Setting the Record Straight
- RAND Corporation Reports
- Common Sense Media, Early Connections: A Parent Education Toolkit for Early Childhood Providers
- Technology and Digital Media in the Early Years: Tools for Teaching and Learning
- New ideas about "screen time" in the Headlines
  - Can You Turn Screen Time into Family Time?
  - Common Sense, Science-Based Advice on Toddler Screen Time. Finally!
  - Yes, Your Toddler Can Watch TV: The New Rules on Screen Time
  - Kids and Screen Time: What Does the Research Say?
What are our goals for tech in ECE?

- Do no harm
- Acknowledge and address the concerns
- Eliminate the false dichotomy
- Explore the intersection of child development, early learning, early literacy and children’s media
- Focus on digital media literacy
- Use technology that is engaging and empowering
- Promote a healthy media diet
- Help parents establish a family media ecology at home
- Use technology tools to enhance family engagement

What are our goals for educators?

- Know what matters and apply what you know
  - Child development theory
  - Influence of family, culture and community
  - NAEYC & Fred Rogers Center Joint Position Statement
  - Developmentally appropriate practices framework
  - 40 years of children’s media research
- Become 4M educators who know the 3Cs and apply the 5Es
- Become connected educators
Technology and Interactive Media as Tools in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8

A joint position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children’s Media at Saint Vincent College

DAP matters

Digitally literate educators who are grounded in child development theory and developmentally appropriate practices have the knowledge, skills, and experience to select and use technology tools and interactive media that suit the ages and developmental levels of the children in their care, and they know when and how to integrate technology into the program effectively.

NAEYC & FRC Joint Position Statement
Keywords

- Tools
- Intentional
- Appropriate
- Integrated
- Balanced
- Interactive
- Quality content
- Joint engagement
- Access & Equity
- Professional development
- Select, Use, Integrate, Evaluate

When used intentionally and appropriately, technology and interactive media are effective tools to support learning and development.

What matters most?

- 3Cs
- 4Ms
- 5Es
- Relationships
Lisa Guernsey’s 3Cs matter

- Content
- Context
- Child

The 4Ms for digital age educators

1. Manager
2. Mediator
3. Mentor
4. Maker
The 5Es for digital age educators
Martin Blows e-words framework

- Swap traditional practices with ICT
- Engage learners by using a richer mix of media
- Deepen learning through the use of ICT
- Enhance
- Extend
- Empower
- Change the content, process and location of learning

Share your thoughts

- What technologies have you seen used in early childhood programs and the home?
- What have teachers and parents used to guide their tech choices?
Lisa Guernsey’s 3Cs matter

- **CONTENT** How does this help children engage, express, imagine, or explore?
- **CONTEXT** How does it complement, and not interrupt, children’s natural play?
- The Unique **CHILD**: How do we choose the right tech tools and experiences for each child’s needs, abilities, interests and developmental stage?

Content matters

- Appropriate images, language, and design
- Support teaching goals and children’s learning/development
- Accommodates children of different abilities and needs
- Culturally appropriate and inclusive
- Repeatable
Creating media matters

- Young children are capable of creating their own messages and expressing themselves through media
- Give children (and their adults) control over what they use and how they use it
- Consuming media > Meaning-making > Creating media

Context matters

- Children learn best in active environments when they are engaged in meaningful, interactive and social contexts
- The individual child’s development, learning and the family media ecology matter
- Providing access to quality media requires engaging parents and children
  - at home
  - in school, early childhood programs, Head Start, family child care homes
  - in informal "third spaces" – libraries, museums, zoos, nature centers
Technology in the classroom

Prek teacher Yeliz Zurawic uses iPad during a small group activity.

Inquiry matters

• Learning is meaningful for students
• Stimulates new ideas and hypotheses
• Supports authentic problem situations that require strategic thinking
• Opportunities to demonstrate understanding and learning
Relationships matter

- Young children learn best in the context of interactions and relationships with attentive, responsive, caring adults
- Co-viewing < joint engagement with media – using media together leads to more learning
- Media use to encourage pro-social behaviors and promote social/emotional development
- Use technology as a tool to strengthen relationships with adults and peers

Family engagement matters

- Empower families
- Focus on family strengths and capacity building
- Be inclusive of all families
- Embrace the whole family
- Ask parents what they want to learn about
- Solicit feedback on and act on what you learn
Family engagement matters

- Offer parent workshops at school
- Connect parents to online resources, groups, trusted sources and to each other
- Encourage parent-to-parent communication and sharing
- Organize BYOD events and Tech Playdates
- Share ideas with other connected educators

Home-school connections matter

- Empower parents
- Focus on parents’ strengths and capacity building
- Go where the parents are
- Get connected and stay connected
- Keep parents informed using a variety of tools and methods
- Model appropriate use of tech and media – set boundaries
- Build community in your classroom and school
- Share ideas with other connected educators
Child development theory matters

- Know about child development and early learning and what is typical at each age and stage
- Know what is individually appropriate
- Understand the family context
- Know what is culturally important


ECE “essentials” matter

- Creativity, curiosity and wonder
- Open-ended exploration
- Unstructured, active, imaginative play
- Loose parts and hands-on learning
- Authentic and deep engagement
- Empowering experiences
- Outdoor play and nature
- Solitary and shared experiences
- Interactions and relationships
Technology in the Classroom

http://www.pbs.org/teachers/innovators/gallery/2012/entries/1043/

PBS LearningMedia, 2012 Teacher Innovator Awards, Erin Stanfill, PreK Teacher, Burley Elementary School

3Cs in the Field

Help educators and parents use 3Cs to guide technology choices for:

- Technology framework
- Documentation
- Communication
- Reflection
A healthy media diet matters
All screens are not created equal

• Consider screen exposure throughout the day and across settings
• Shift from “how much” they watch to “what they watch”
• Use media “with” rather than “instead of”
• Place limits on passive use
• Avoid inappropriate content/commercial messages

A healthy media diet matters
All screens are not created equal

• Look for media experiences that are interactive, include positive interactions with others, and give the child control
• Emphasize relationships and joint engagement with media
• Advocate for a digital age definition of “screen-time” – AAP, Caring for Our Children, ECERS, QRIS, Accreditation, Teacher Preparation
Take the Lead

Build your digital media literacy:

• Be willing to take risks

• Use digital tools to support your learning and professional growth

• Have fun – it’s okay to enjoy the experience

Begin and end with relationships

Computers can be useful machines, especially when they help people communicate in caring ways with each other...
Begin and end with relationships

...Let’s not get so fascinated by what the technology can do that we forget what it can’t do...It’s through relationships that we grow best and learn best.
TEC Curation – Trusted Sources

For slides and resources, visit us at www.teccenter.erikson.edu