



Digital Media in a Family Day Care Setting

We Belong Family Day Care
Website presentation
April 2025

Introduction

- Explanation: What is digital media? What is screen time?
- Project: background
- We Belong Family Day Care
- Ideas/strategies for your Family Day Care
- Resources
- Where to from here?

Explanation

- This presentation will aim to deepen your understanding of how using digital media can strengthen relationships between children and between educators and children, as well as relationships between Educators and families. We will consider how to effectively integrate technologies in supporting children's play. Finally we will explore a new website created to support educators and services to help young children to use digital technologies across all contexts from the Statement.
- First question: Consider the difference between Digital Technologies and Screen Time: this consideration is important when introducing this topic to families. Often, families see Digital Technology as Screen Time: either phone, social media or tablets.



Background

The Statement on young children and digital technologies was launched at the 2018 ECA National Conference.

Instead of working towards ‘one-size-fits-all’ advice, a contextual approach recognises that educators are skilled at working in partnership with children and families and making decisions in the best interests of the child.

This Statement provides an overview of existing research about young children and digital technologies in four known areas of importance in early childhood education:

1. Relationships
2. Health and wellbeing
3. Citizenship
4. Play and pedagogy

The Project

- In 2020 We Belong FDC Services engaged in a 4 year research project (Young Children in Digital Society, Australian Research Council Linkage Program LP190100387) aimed at providing guidance for educators and families showcasing how relationships can be built through guided use of digital technology.
- The significance of digital media and technologies in the EYLF v2 recognises “that children live in a digital world” (Learning Outcome 5, Children are effective communicators p57). Our main focus from this Learning Outcome relates to children using digital technologies and media to access information, investigate ideas and represent their thinking.
- During this research project We Belong FDC was involved in the Relationships context.

Our story:

Over a period of two-three years, five educators and children aged two-three years took part in a research-based project where the children were presented with a range of technologies including, YouTube videos, face time, photographs and age-appropriate apps. Participation in this project has meant that our service had the opportunity to learn from the research project outcomes. Consequently, a better understanding of the concepts related to the project has impacted on the daily practices of our Educators.

“Technologies: includes much more than computers and digital technologies used for information, communication and entertainment. It involves the development of new objects or tools by people that help them in their lives. There are 3 broad types of technology: mechanical (e.g., wheels, blocks, levers and gears) analogue technology (e.g. film-based photography, drawing, painting); and digital technology (e.g. mobile phones and computers) (ECA 2018, p24).”

We Belong FDC : position

- In order to position your practices to align with our philosophy the first step is to refer to the Policies and Procedures, especially the section: Educational Program and Practice.
- Following are some reflections from our Educators who took part in this research project:
- Further application of the use of digital media in building relationships with very young children and between children has been extended within the educator practices as they further develop their knowledge and understanding. As we focus on Learning Outcome 5 across our service the examples of daily practice that have been provided by a cross section of Educators from We Belong FDC reflect revised pedagogies based on the implementation of the EYLF V2.

Some reflections: Question 1

Question: Can you give one example of how the use of digital media through this project has affected (hopefully positively) the relationships between children? Educator 1: "Overall children have experienced positive interactions in the use of digital media, for example: utilising YouTube to share ideas in what rhyme/storybook to dance/sing/listen too. Songs like "floor is Lava", story "bear hunt". As well as researching who are the characters in paw patrol. Using camera function, children watching themselves at mealtimes, FaceTime children who are away from the group for extended periods ."

Remembering that our content area from the ECA Statement on Digital Technologies was Relationships, this reflection provides examples of how the young children utilised the available technologies to explore perspectives of stories and songs which helped them to make sense of their world. *"Children use digital technologies to access images and information, explore diverse perspectives and make sense of their world"*

Question 1: more reflections

Educator 2: *“I had a new girl just came to care.... she [found it] quite hard.... to interact with other children. I use an app called Osmo (numbers, letters and shapes) for children working as a group.... I noticed after sharing the same interests in solving shape puzzles, the new child is more comfortable and confident in interacting with other children. They were also sharing a sense of humour when they did some drawing, making videos and recording their voices .”*

This child found a place in the service (Belonging) by using *“technologies and media available for fun and social connection.”*

- ‘Children engage with technologies and media for fun and social connection’

Educator 3. *"When I took the children outdoors, we used mobile devices to take pictures of trees, grass, and other natural elements. The children used their iPads to capture images of grass, trees, and clouds. During this activity, the children were much more actively engaged in the outdoor activities compared to when digital devices were not involved. The children would say things like, "What are you going to photograph? I will take a picture of this tree," "After you're done, let me borrow it," and "What did you take a picture of? Shall we look at them together?"*

After the children had taken their photos, we discussed and shared the pictures together. The children even supplied brief explanations of the photos they had taken ."

- **'Children adopt collaborative approaches in their learning about and with digital technologies'**

Reflections: Question 2

Q2. Can you give one example of how the use of digital media through this project has affected your approach to using digital media in your program and in your relationships with families.

Educator 1: "I have changed my view of using technology with children as I now program technology as a valuable resource in aiding my ability to help children's learning and development and relationships. For example: taking turns/making own choices and listening and sharing within a small group. It has widened the families understanding of technology "

- 'Educators acknowledge technologies are a feature of children's lives'

Reflections Question 2

Educator 2: *“I find myself more comfortable when I allow children using technology in care especially using iPad for solving puzzles, creating videos and recording their voices. Discussion with families about how we let children access technology in a safe way, has supported families with their knowledge of how technology can be used safely . ”*

- ‘Educators develop their own knowledge and understanding of appropriate digital technology use and safety with children and families’

Reflections Question 2

Educator 3. *“Using digital devices has enabled more proactive communication with parents about the child's growth, development, and noteworthy events. Currently, at my daycare, I upload some of the photos and videos that the children have taken. When discussing children's actions or behaviours without the use of digital devices, there was some difficulty in clear communication between the parents and me. However, when discussing using the photos and videos together, we were able to have more precise conversations about the child's development and specific events .”*

‘Educators provide opportunities for children to have access to different forms of communication technologies’

Watch this video

- This video has been created based on the previous Educator reflections:
- <https://vimeo.com/1033333731/ad1f744522?share=copy>

Ideas/strategies for your Family Day Care

- Our service project was focused in the context of Relationships. Following is an example from another context: The Health and Wellbeing section of the Statement (*The Statement on young children and digital technologies*) outlines how digital technologies can be used in ways that moderate sedentary screen-time and promote movement opportunities for young children, such as: playing with robots and game devices that require whole-body movement (like a dance step game on an electronic mat) o using screen technologies to research class investigations (like a video tutorial on how to plant a vegetable garden) o video-recording physical activities, e.g. jumping, skipping, climbing and re-watching in slow-motion or using wearable technology (like fit bits) to develop awareness of the benefits of physical activity.

Another idea:

- Digital touch technologies can be used with a range of other teaching strategies. For example, if an educator is promoting children's understanding of sustainable practices, they might sing a relevant song, read a story which links to an area of sustainability, and then use the camera application (app) with children to identify and capture images of sustainable practice or issues in the community. The educator might further engage children's learning with technology by using the images to create a digital story with the children, using voice recording apps to capture children's voices and ideas.

Consideration

- Cyber-safety education should begin with young children before they start school. Early educators are well placed to teach young children in age-appropriate and engaging ways, about how the internet works and how to interact respectfully with other people online.
- For more details: [eSafety Early Years Program for Educators | Young Children in Digital Society](#)

Supporting resources and strategies

- In the following slides we have provided you with a selection of supporting resources, including strategies.
- Explanations: This link to a new website which has been formulated as a result of the research project provides information and support across all of the contextual areas of Digital Technologies in Early Childhood Education and Care:

Young Children in Digital Society.

<https://youngchildrendigitalsociety.com.au/#:~:text=Young%20Children%20in%20Digital%20Society%20is%20a%20project,help%20children%20and%20their%20families%20use%20digital%20technologies.>

Resources/strategies

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/latest-news/blog/using-digital-touch-technologies-support-childrens-learning>

<https://digitalchild.org.au/integrating-digital-technologies-into-ecec-programs/>

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/latest-news/blog/young-children-using-internet>

More supporting resources: from Raising Children Network.

Sharing screen time and digital technology with children and pre-teens

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/school-age/media-technology/school-age-digital-family-life/shared-screen-time>

Using screen time and digital technology for learning: children and pre-teens

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/school-age/media-technology/school-age-digital-play-and-learning/screen-time-helps-children-learn>

Play in a digital world: ideas and tips

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/videos/play-in-a-digital-world-ideas-and-tips>

Conclusion

The purpose of this presentation was to provide an insight into We Belong FDC's participation in the research project: Young Children in Digital Society. We hope that we have sparked an interest for you to consider how you can position your pedagogical practices to support children in your daily program. Remember to refer to your Policies and Procedures as well as your philosophy AND your personal philosophy.

Thank you: and have fun.



ACTIVITIES

LET US EXPLORE SOME IDEAS:
SHOW AND TELL.

