



Early Childhood Australia
A voice for young children

**OUR
VISION:
EVERY
YOUNG
CHILD IS
THRIVING
AND
LEARNING**

MEDIA RELEASE

Sunday 23 September 2018

New guidance for educators on young children and digital technologies

Early Childhood Australia (ECA) this week released a new practical resource for early childhood educators to help them navigate the use of digital technologies with young children.

'Young children are now growing up in digital environments, using and seeing others use smartphones, tablets, computers, internet connected toys and apps. For the adults around them, this can be difficult to manage', said ECA's new National President, Chris Legg.

'Many Educators are keen to include technologies in their early childhood classrooms and have asked for guidance. They are also being asked by families for advice about how to manage digital technologies at home', said Ms Legg.

'Early Childhood Australia brought together experts in technologies, child development, health and wellbeing, and early childhood education to develop the Statement, which provides guidance for early childhood professionals on the role and best use of digital technologies in early childhood settings', said ECA CEO Samantha Page.

Drawing on the latest research, the ***Statement on young children and digital technologies*** provides advice on four key areas of early childhood: Relationships; Health and wellbeing; Citizenship; and Play and pedagogy.

Co-author, Professor Susan Edwards, from the Australian Catholic University, said: 'Early childhood educators are uniquely placed to make informed decisions about digital technology use that are in the best interests of children, based on their professional knowledge of how young children play, learn and develop. They can also work in partnership with families to model appropriate use of digital technology'.

The Health and wellbeing section of the Statement 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)
- using screen technologies to research class investigations (like a video tutorial on how to plant a vegetable garden)
- video-recording physical activities, e.g. jumping, skipping, climbing and re-watching in slow-motion
- using wearable technology (like fit bits) to develop awareness of the benefits of physical activity.

...continues

‘The Statement also addresses digital citizenship, which considers children’s right to access technology and the internet, as well as their right to online privacy and safety’, said Professor Edwards. ‘With young children increasingly using the internet it is important that they are able to participate safely in online environments.’

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.

‘The ***Statement on young children and digital technologies*** is a much-needed guide for educators to support young children to avoid the risks and maximise the benefits of using digital technologies. It will help adults to model constructive behaviour around digital technologies and support children to develop the skills they need to navigate the digital world’, concluded Ms Legg.

For interviews contact: Carolin Wenzel 0475 554 999

Download the *ECA Statement on young children and digital technologies* [here](#).

Early Childhood Australia is the peak advocacy body for children from birth to eight years, their families and early childhood professionals.