Playing IT Safe

Activity: Make a digital thing to keep you safe

This activity supports children's creativity and understanding of safety. Children are given a range of materials and asked to build a digital thing – a machine – that keeps us safe and tell us how it works. Could also draw a digital thing?

Readiness

Young children will have different ideas about safety and being safe and what that means to them to feel safe. We also know that the concept of online safety is not necessarily something that will make sense to them. Generally, around the age of 3 children become aware of the need for rules and how they can keep us safe.

Children are ready for this activity when they can talk about rules and how they keep us safe. If children are having difficulty with this activity, you can have conversations about safety in other areas such as road safety, sun safety and fire safety: "What rules do we have that keep us safe?"

Other Playing IT Safe activities to further explore who uses digital things include:

• Create a tech plan
• eSafety Family Technology Agreement (online)
• Playing It Safe Family Technology Plan (online)

Description

This activity is designed to allow young children to connect the concepts of digital things and safety through a creative exercise. It can be adapted to use whatever materials you have available to allow children to build and create.

• First, create a table or floor space with your chosen building/creation materials.

• Then, when children approach the space ask them when do they feel safe? The idea is to prompt them with questions that have them thinking about what safety is and when they are safe. You may need to share examples and help explain further what safety means.

• You can then offer the child the chance to build a digital thing using the materials in front of them that will help them to be safe. You may need to share examples of things that keep them safe.

• When they have created something, it is a chance for them to explain to you what it is and what it does. It is useful to record this as audio or in writing as it will capture the child's understanding of both digital technology and of safety at a point in time. You could do this once a term to see how their understanding of these concepts change.

You could also get children to draw digital things that keep them safe. The important thing is the way these creativity activities can stimulate discussion and allow you as the educator to introduce and explain different concepts to the children.

Resources required

Building and creative materials such as Mobilo, Blocks, Craft and recycled materials.

Purposefully-framed play

You will help to frame this activity by explaining key concepts to children in ways that they understand. You could say things like:

- "I feel safe when I am with someone important to me. When do you feel safe?"
- "What does it feel like to be safe?"
- "Where are we safe?"

Prompts

- How would a phone keep someone safe?
- What might you build?
- How many digital things do you know - one or two or three?
- What are those digital things you know of?

Learning statement

<Name of child> has demonstrated a level of understanding about safety and represented that through the creation of a device that will help them to feel safe. They have demonstrated creative thinking skills and used their fine motor skills and coordination to build/draw and make a digital thing that will help keep them safe.

Alignment

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity.

Children feel safe, secure, and supported. This is evident when children:

- Are able to articulate when and how they feel safe using digital things.

Outcome 5 Children are effective communicators.

- Children engage with a range of texts and gain meaning from these texts.
- Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media.

This is evident when children:

- Create and make representations of digital things.