BIG

IDEAS

Giving children aged 0-5 the tools to understand digital things.

Playing IT Safe

alannah & madeline foundation

Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation

AFP AUSTRALIAN FEDERAL POLICE

Australian Government

eSafety Commissioner

For Educators

What is this for?

This BIG IDEAS document aims to share some of the key concepts relating to digital technology and online safety that children come to understand in more complex ways.

These are the ideas we are keen for children to come to understand at levels appropriate to their age and stage of development. For this reason, the following flowcharts have been created under each BIG IDEA. They track the activities in Playing IT Safe and give a rough guide as to what ages they are appropriate for. Along with these are other actions that are not activities, but conversation starters or questions you can ask children or further prompts for play-based learning you can explore.

These visuals are there to help you as an early childhood educator to adapt and create a learning environment and experience that is appropriate and supports children's learning. If you try an activity and it seems too complex for a child or children, you can use these BIG IDEA flowcharts top find an activity that still helps a child understand the idea but in a way that is simpler and possibly more suitable to their level of development.

Consider BIG IDEAS as an extra tool to support your planning and helping children to better understand technology and the world they live in so they can be safer online.

The BIG IDEAS are:

- There are digital things
- Digital things can be connected
- Digital things that are connected are useful
- I have choices around digital things
- We look after ourselves when we use digital things because we know they are connected
- We look after others when we use digital things because we know they are connected
- When something digital goes wrong, it can change lots of other things (because digital things are connected).

Developmental continuum

The purpose of Playing IT Safe is to guide early childhood professionals in their support of children in all formal early learning settings to support children's learning and development about digital technology and online safety.

This BIG IDEAS document helps those working with even children under one year of age to ask questions, to talk with them and help them make sense of a world that is full of digital technology. We know that helping younger children develop concepts and make sense of the objects, relationships and aspects of their world they discover sets them up to continue to learn and grow through their early years. The journeys represent this continuum of learning and development by sharing how the activities and different parts of Playing IT Safe can be used by educators depending on children's different ages and stages of development.

This is not an argument for young children accessing technology, it is an acknowledgement that it is part of children's lives. They see it being used every day by families and friends. Their curiosity means they want to know and understand what it is and how it works, and by us supporting that in age appropriate ways we help to prepare them to be safe online when they begin to use and engage with it more.

There are digital things.

Infants (0-1)

Conversations

"That is a living thing."

"Yes, look, that is a digital thing."

"That is a rock. It is a non-living thing."

Toddlers (1-3)

Activities

There are digital things

Pre-schoolers (4-5)

Activities

Building ourselves a robot

Dance like a digital thing

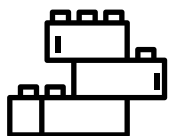# Digital things can be connected.

Infants (0-1)

Conversations

"This is a computer"

"This phone lets me talk to someone on another phone. I wonder how it does that?"

Explore

- Provide opportunities for children to explore different types of things that connect.

"The block connects to another block"

Toddlers (1-3)

Activities

Look inside a digital thing

Connected home corner

Pre-schoolers (4-5)

Activities

What is the internet?

Questions

"I wonder what else this can connect to?"

"How could we connect things in the sandpit? What would it help us do?"

"What does the connection help us to do?"

Playing IT Safe

Digital things that are connected are useful.

Infants (0-1)

Conversations

> "I use my iPad to play games."

> "We can talk to Grandma on FaceTime because she lives in Italy."

> "Mum uses the phone to do her work."

Toddlers (1-3)

Activities

Book Corner

What do we do with digital things

Connected home corner

Explore

- Provide opportunities for pretend play with objects representing digital things.

Pre-schoolers (4-5)

Activities

Make a digital thing to keep you safe

GPS, navigation and tracking

I have choices around digital things.

Infants (0-1)

Questions

> *"What do you watch/do on screens at home?"*

> *"What do you like about it?"*

Conversations

> *"What rules do we have that keep us safe?"*

Toddlers (1-3)

Activities

My favourite things

Children make collages (in real life or digitally) about things they like to do on a screen.

Create a tech plan

Explore

- Provide opportunities for children to play similar games digitally and in real life - e.g. matching games, jigsaws.

Pre-schoolers (4-5)

Activities

Who uses digital things

Playing games on digital things

Explore

- Provide opportunities to recreate some of the things they like watching, eg. Make your own unboxing videos.

- Use eSafety's family tech agreement to create one at home for your family.

We look after ourselves when we use digital things because we know they are connected.

Infants (0-1)

Activities

Video calling
Make a pretend iPad out of cardboard with the middle cut out so you can pretend face time. Practice the social skills associated.

Toddlers (1-3)

Explore

- Play 'password' game where children have to say an agreed password to get access into a space.

- Play games where children represent themselves in different ways.

Pre-schoolers (4-5)

Activities

Passwords

Avatars
Use playdough/craft or use an app to create avatars. Ask children about their choices and what they might use their avatar for. Play a game to guess the owner of each avatar.

Explore

- Provide opportunities for children to make a real video call e.g. you might call a mum at home and ask what are the ingredients for a cake you're baking.

We look after others when we use digital things because we know digital things are connected.

Infants (0-1)

Conversations

> *"That's a great tower you built, can I take a photo and send it to mummy?"*

> *"Would you like to be in the photo?"*

> *"Who's turn is it now?*

> *"Can I please have a turn?"*

Explore

Explore feelings through usual social/emotional activities. Discuss what could make them feel happy/sad/angry when they play online.

Toddlers (1-3)

Activities

	Taking a photo

	Sharing our digital things

Pre-schoolers (4-5)

Activities

	Guess who

	How do I feel when...

When something digital goes wrong, it can change lots of other things (because digital things are connected).

Infants (0-1)

Conversations

> "What does mum/dad/ granny/etc do to help us?"

Toddlers (1-3)

Activities

> Who can help us?

Explore

Provide opportunities in pretend play for children to be the mums, dads, nannas, etc who help when things go wrong with technology.

Pre-schoolers (4-5)

Activities

> Classroom pop-ups