H7ELDW: Early Learning in a digital world

Module Code:	H7ELDW
Long Title	Early Learning in a digital world APPROVED
Title	Early Learning in a digital world
Module Level:	LEVEL 7
EQF Level:	6
EHEA Level:	First Cycle
Credits:	5
Module Coordinator:	Meera Oke
Module Author:	Stephanie Roe
Departments:	NCI Learning & Teaching
Specifications of the qualifications and experience required of staff	

Learning Outcomes	
On successful completion of this module the learner will be able to:	
#	Learning Outcome Description
LO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of research and theory on babies, toddlers and children's digital engagement with digital technologies.
LO2	Recognise and evaluate how digital play environments can support babies, toddlers and children's early learning.
LO3	Examine the role of digital technology in documenting, assessing and sharing learning in early learning settings.
LO4	Understand the ethical, wellbeing and child protection considerations in relation to babies, toddlers and children's digital engagement.
LO5	Demonstrate an awareness of discourse in the wider context in relation to babies, toddlers and children's digital play.

Dependencies	
Module Recommendations	
No recommendations listed	
Co-requisite Modules	
No Co-requisite modules listed	
Entry requirements	

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Module Content & Assessment

Indicative Content

Types of digital technologies (Week 1)
This section will provide learners with knowledge and theory on digital technology being used by children, their families and early childhood educators in both home and early learning settings. Current examples to examine could include: Smart whiteboard, Tablet with apps, skype/facetime, smart phone, Xbox, digital photography, Alexa/ voice activated speakers, YouTube, WhatsApp group/conversations.

Research on digital engagement (Week 2)
This section will explore some of the research and theories in digital engagement looking at both the opportunities and the risks. Examples of types of research articles: Plowman, Stephen & McPake 2010 (supporting learning with technology in preschool/home), Wohlwend 2015 (collaborative literacy play with apps), Kelly 2015 (participation in remote technology to co-construct social relations), Edwards 2013,2016 (digital play not seen as real play), Burnett 2014 (pupils interactions around digital texts), Turkle 2017 (argument on dangers of technology including social media).

Social interaction in relation to digital play (Week 3)
This section explores the relationship between digital technologies and social interaction in the context of play, looking at examples of children engaging with digital technology one-by-one as well as collaboratively.

Digital play: A new classification? (Week 4)
Digital Play will be examined in relation to encouraging play and collaborative creativity, and ideas such as digital play becoming a new type of play, can be explored for example using Marsh et al 2016: Digital play: A new classification.

Digital play supports early learning (Week 5)
This section will explore how digital play supports learning in similar ways to other play types, for example encouraging creativity & imagination, and possibility thinking (could refer to articles: Cremin et al 2006; Craft et al 2012), as well as encouraging children's innovation, risk-taking, question posing, playfulness, being imaginative and self-determination. Ideas on messy play active digital play will be explored along with the benefits of touch screen technologies in supporting inclusion (could refer to articles: Flewitt et al 2014 – use of iPad; Giddings 2014 – digital play crosses over into other forms of play).

Digital play supports early learning part 2 (Week 6)
This section will explore how digital play can support babies, toddlers and children's sense of self, and examine the concepts of self-presentation vs self-representation (taking selfies). Another concept that could be explored is media literacy, for example the adult's role in supporting children's digital engagement through co-use with a parent, early childhood educator or another child. The concept of restrictive mediation will also be introduced as a role the adult can take in limiting the time or access a child has with a technology (for example screen time limits). Supporting cognition- concentration/ attention. Connected play- i.e. Pokémon Go- augmented reality apps.

Creating effective digital learning environments (Week 7)
This section will explore how to create digital learning environments that support child-centred experiences, positive learning dispositions, opportunities for symbolic play, social play, play-based learning.

Using digital technology for documenting learning and assessment (Week 8)
This section will examine types of technologies that can be used for documenting and assessing children's learning (for example Classroom Dojo, TeachKloud, Childpaths, Little Vista). The benefits of sharing learning with parents and encouraging them to leave feedback or comments through digital technology.

Wellbeing considerations (Week 9)
This section explores ideas on ensuring that safety measures in relation to child protection are in place, as well as a commitment to welfare and safety in relation to digital engagement (ideas on babies, toddlers and children having a digital footprint at a young age could be explored). Practising within an ethical framework will be explored and recent documents such as the 2020 'Code of professional responsibilities and Code of Ethics' can be introduced.

Keeping children safe (Week 10)
Introduce ideas and discussion such as: on working with the team in an early learning and care setting to review practice connected to early learning in a digital environment, recognising the parent's role in their child's learning in relation to using digital technologies, and what children need from us. Encourage learners to discuss the future of digital play and shaping digital play by exploring arguments on whether the focus should be on protecting children by keeping digital technology away from them or should the focus be on giving children the tools to navigate and cope with hazards through exploration. Ideas on children needing creativity, curiosity, criticality can be introduced here.

Discourse (Week 11)
This section will introduce arguments and encourage discourse on the decline of outdoor play and nature deficit (Clements 2004; Gray 2011, Hughes 2011), Dezuanni & Knight 2015 argument that outdoor play and digital play shouldn't be in opposition with each other. Other ideas to explore could be using digital photography in nature (Skar & Krogh, 2009, White 2015), connectedness vs connection, do children lose out on a proper childhood when engaged in digital play, limiting children's digital engagement is seen as good parenting.

CA Debate (Week 12)
Organise a group debate as part of the 50% Continuous Assessment. A sample debate question could be: Should digital technology be introduced into ECEC settings?

Assessment Breakdown	%
Coursework	100.00%

Assessments

Full Time

Coursework

Assessment Type:	Continuous Assessment	**% of total:**	50
Assessment Date:	n/a	**Outcome addressed:**	1,2,3
Non-Marked:	No		

Assessment Description:
Evaluate current use of digital technology in supporting children's early learning.

Assessment Type:	Continuous Assessment	**% of total:**	50
Assessment Date:	n/a	**Outcome addressed:**	1,2,3,4,5
Non-Marked:	No		

Assessment Description:
Debate: A sample debate question could be: Should digital technology be introduced into ECEC settings?

No End of Module Assessment

No Workplace Assessment

Reassessment Requirement

Repeat failed items
The student must repeat any item failed

Reassessment Description
Students must pass all components of assessment on the module; a component fail leads to a component repeat.

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Module Workload				
Module Target Workload Hours 0 Hours				
Workload: Full Time				
Workload Type	*Workload Description*	*Hours*	*Frequency*	*Average Weekly Learner Workload*
Lecture	Lecture	24	Per Semester	2.00
Independent Learning	Independent Learning	77	Per Semester	6.42
Workbased learning	Workbased Learning	24	Per Semester	2.00
			Total Weekly Contact Hours	4.00

Module Resources

Recommended Book Resources

Arnott, L. (2017), Digital Technologies and Learning in the Early Years, Sage, London.

Buckingham, D. (2013), Beyond Technology: Children's Learning in the Age of Digital Culture Cambridge, Polity Press, London.

Pettersen, J. (2018), Digital Childhoods: Growing up with technology, Routledge, London.

Siraj-Blatchford, J. and Whitebread, D. (2003), Supporting ICT in the Early Years (Supporting Early Learning), Open University Press, London.

Plowman, L. (2004), "Hey, hey, hey! It's time to play." Exploring and mapping children's interactions with 'smart' toys in Toys, Games and Media, (2004) D. Buckingham, D., Brougeres, G., Goldstein, J. & Erlbaum, L. (Ed's), Mahwah, NJ.

Sakr, M. (2020), Digital Play in Early Childhood: What's the problem?, Sage, London.

Supplementary Book Resources

Centre for Early Childhood Development and Education (CECDE). Siolta: The National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education, CECDE, Dublin.

Committee on the Rights of the Child [CRC]. (2013), General comments (2013) on the Right of the Child to Rest, Leisure, Play, Recreational Activities, Cultural Life and the Arts (Article 31), United Nations, Geneva.

Department of Children and Youth Affairs (DCYA). (2016), Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines for Early Childhood Care and Education, DCYA, Dublin.

Department of Education and Skills [DES]. (2018), A Guide to Early-Years Education-Focused Inspection (EYEI) in Early-Years Settings Participating in The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme, Department of Education and Skills, Dublin.

Early Years Forum. (2020), Code of professional Responsibilities and Code of Ethics.

Government of Ireland. (2018), First Five: A-Whole-of-Government Strategy for Babies, Young Children and their Families 2019-2028.

Recommended Article/Paper Resources

Edwards, S. (2013), Digital play in the early years: A contextual response to the problem of integrating technologies and play-based pedagogies in the early childhood curriculum, European Early Childhood Education Research Journal, 21(2), p.199.

Marsh, J., Plowman, L., Yamada-Rice, D., Bishop, J., & Scott, F. Digital Play: A new classification, Early Years, 36(3), p.242.

Plowman, L., Stephen, C., & McPake, J. (2010), Supporting young children's learning with technology at home and in preschool, Research Papers in Education, 25(1), p.93.

Wohlend, K.E. (2015), One scree, many fingers: Young children's collaborative literacy play with digital puppetry apps and touchscreen technologies, Theory into Practice, 54(2), p.154.

Other Resources

Early Years Forum. (2018), Code of ethics for early years teachers in Ireland, http://www.montessorialliance.ie/wp-cont ent/uploads/2018/04/CODE-of-ETHICS-for-E arly-Years-Teachers-in-Ireland-Early-Yea rs-Forum-April-2018.pdf

Discussion Note:	