



# Technology and young children

## Technology is all around us!

At home children can have access to a range of technology. They can program washing machines, televisions and the microwave. These actions have a purpose in everyday life which makes sense to children whilst also encouraging them to see how timers work, and how numbers and colours are used in everyday situations.

We all use mobile phones, pressing buttons, using keypads, finding out information, talking to our friends and taking photographs.

Out and about young children can press buttons at traffic crossings

When they visit the supermarket, railway station and airport terminals they can be introduced to digital screens and electronic arrival and departure boards.

Many children's toys have an electronic element e.g. pressing buttons causes music to play, part to move or lights to flash.

## Supporting your child to develop confidence when using technology

Research shows that children learn best when supported by an adult in their chosen explorations and investigations of technology:

- Guide and instruct your children how to use technology e.g. when introducing a camera
- Model how and when to use technology e.g. "I think I'm going to need a label on this box. Do you want to help me make one on the computer?"
- Model how to play imaginatively with everyday technology e.g. "I'm going to need to fix this, it's a bit dark under here, shall we find a torch?"
- Model language using correct technical terms. E.g. click on the icon
- Encourage problem solving e.g. "I wonder what happens if ...?"
- Stimulate your child's interests and encourage higher levels of engagement e.g. "what happens if we press this button?"

## Remember!

Our children have been born into a digital world, where technology will become an ever-increasing part of their lives. As technology changes so rapidly, it is important children are taught skills to keep them safe and are encouraged to develop positive attitudes which values lifelong learning.

There are many benefits to using technology, such as: developing fine motor skills, hand eye coordination and improving language skills. However, it is important to remember that too much screen time can be detrimental to young children.

A report, from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Children Health have provided the following guidance.

- Have rules in place for screen use and stick to them
- Think about your own media use
- Prioritise face-to-face interactions
- Protect sleep – don't use screens an hour before bedtime

## Keeping safe!

Children now have access to technology from a much younger age and although this comes with its benefits, it is important that children are taught how to keep themselves safe when online.

As a parent or carer, you may worry about whether your child is safe online. It is important to understand what the risks are and how to talk to your child about them.

Talking to your child openly and honestly is one of the best ways to help them stay safe. Creating an environment where they feel comfortable to share with you what they are doing when online. There is lots of free advice and resources available to support parents to do this.

[www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/)

[https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/home-family-life/technology/keep-teenager-safe-online/?gad\\_source=1&gbraid=0AAAAADwxRYwygSLKDrv2tEpDZTIB-7hEJ&gclid=EAlaIqObChMlplTLj5PvhwMVB5lQBh0CrAlpEAAyAAEgJ6MfD\\_BwE](https://parents.actionforchildren.org.uk/home-family-life/technology/keep-teenager-safe-online/?gad_source=1&gbraid=0AAAAADwxRYwygSLKDrv2tEpDZTIB-7hEJ&gclid=EAlaIqObChMlplTLj5PvhwMVB5lQBh0CrAlpEAAyAAEgJ6MfD_BwE)

<https://www.internetmatters.org/resources/online-safety-guide/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-keeping-children-safe-online/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-parents-and-carers-to-keep-children-safe-online>