Early Childhood Education and Media Use: Practical Strategies for Success

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Agenda

- Current Status of Media Use in Early Childhood

- APA Guidelines for Media Use in Children

- Advantages/Disadvantages of Media Use in the Classroom

- The Utilization/Application of Media Use in Infancy & Toddlerhood

- Practical Strategies:
  - Effective Planning Strategies
  - Zoom Fatigue
  - Planning for Hybrid-learning and transitions
  - Helping Families Navigate Media Use with their Children

Disclaimer

- The discussion of Electronic Media Use can be a particularly touchy subject. Any points or suggestions made are simply to foster awareness, offer suggestions and alternatives, and not to judge.

Media Use in Youth Today(ish)

Media use is defined as use of any of the following:

Television watching

Tablet/Phone engagement

Video Games

Average Duration of Media use in children: 3 hours, 48 minutes

How Media can Impact Health & Development
(Digital Wellness Guide)

- Aggression
- Brain Development
- Mental Health (Anxiety & Fears, Cyberbullying, Body Image)
- Nutrition & Physical Activity
- Risky Behaviors (Sexual Behavior & Drugs/Alcohol)
- Sleep
- Social Connection
- Stereotypes
- Education & Learning

American Academy of Pediatrics Guidelines Media Use in Children
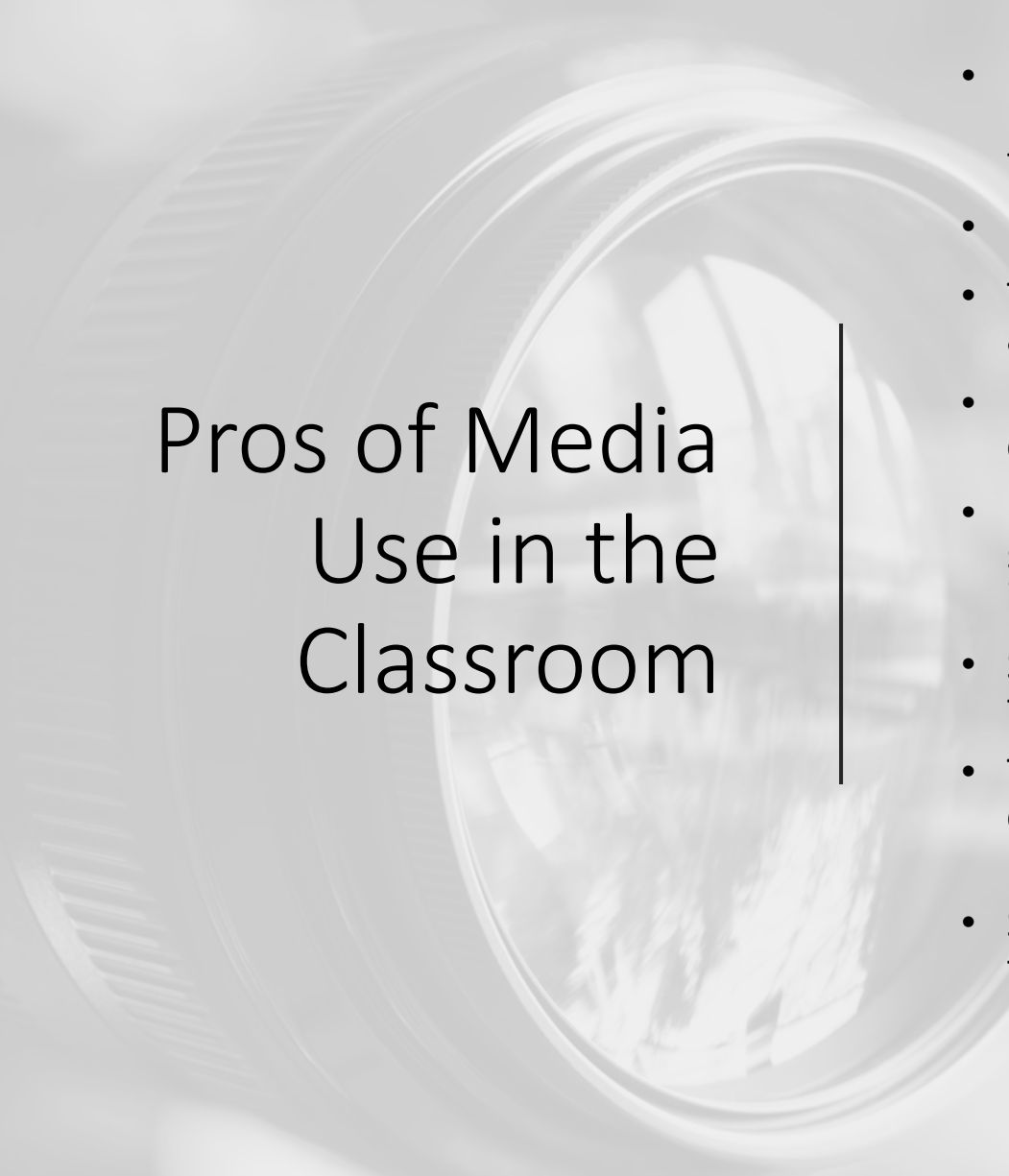
(APA, 2019)
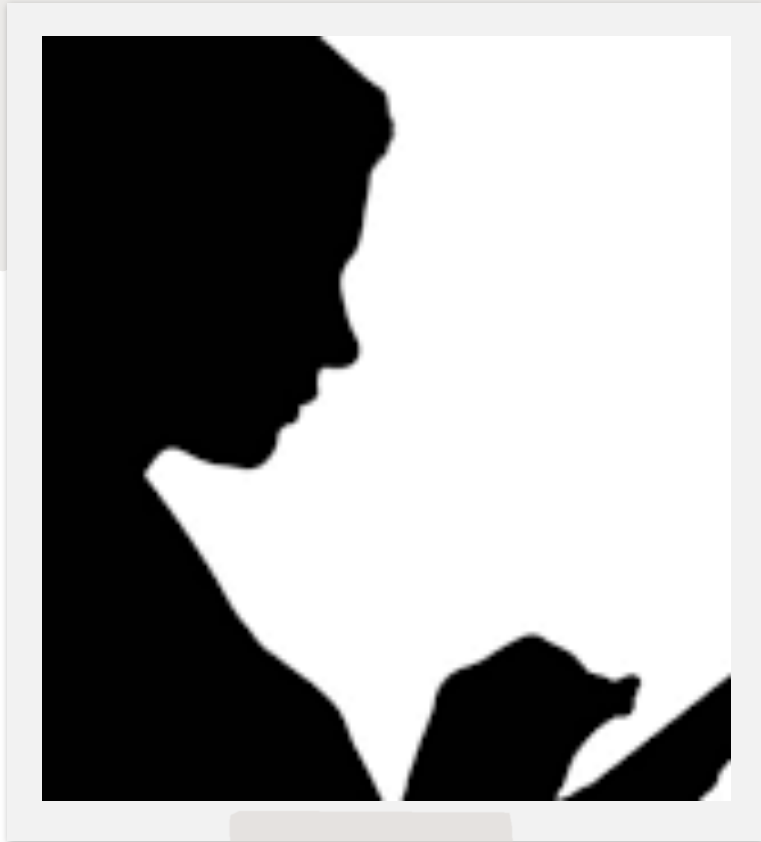
- For children under 18 months, avoid screen-based media except video chatting

- For children 18 months to 1 year, screen-based media should include high-quality programming and involve co-watching

- For children aged 2 to 5, limit screen time to 1 hour a day

- For children 6 and up, establish consistent limits on time spent using media and the types of media used

Guidelines for Effective Safe Use
(Digital Wellness Guide)

- Don't overreact
- Teach children about technology early on
- Use your judgement
- Protect bedtime
- Supervise online activity
- Teach healthy online behaviors
- Discuss digital decision-making
- Foster real-life friendships
- Always learn more!

Pros of Media Use in the Classroom

- Many media sources (feature films, music videos, visualizations, news stories) can **showcase complex ideas** in a short period of time.

- Media offers both cognitive and affective experiences.

- The use of media sources help **connect learners with events that are culturally relevant**.

- News stories can be used to **connect theories taught in the classroom with real world events and policies**.

- Popular media (films, music, YouTube) are a familiar medium to students that helps gain attention and **maintain student interest** in the theories and concepts under discussion.

- Students can **hone their analytical skills** by analyzing media using the theories and concepts they are studying.

- The use of media in the classroom **enables students to see concepts and new examples** when they are watching television, listening to music, or are at the movies with friends.

- Students can **experience worlds beyond their own**, especially if the media is sharply different from their local environment.

Some Cautions

Media and Infants and Toddlers

(Digital Wellness Guide)

Television and Movies

Print Media

Music

Media and Preschoolers/ School-Aged Children

(Digital Wellness Guide)

Television and Movies

Print Media

Music

Video Games

Mobile Media (Cell Phones/Tablets)

Media and Education/Learning

- Key takeaways from the literature:
  - Children who multitask with media (e.g., multiple devices or multiple programs) take longer to complete their work than those who focus on a single task and quality of work declines.
  - Virtual game-based learning can be an effective and engaging method of learning
  - Watching educational TV may help children with executive functioning skills

Helping Guide Children's Media Use

DO YOUR HOMEWORK
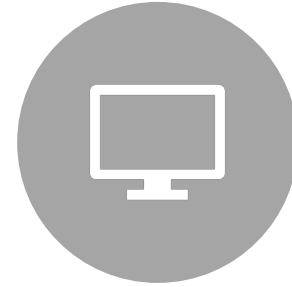
USE MEDIA MINDFULLY

PRACTICE MEDIA LITERACY

View Technology as a Tool

LIMIT USE OF ELECTRONICS AS A MEANS TO PACIFY OR SOOTHE

ENGAGE IN HIGH QUALITY, EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

Additional Media Strategies to Consider

- Designate "Media Free Times/Zones" (examples: during homework/independent work, lunch time, physical breaks, etc.)

- Constantly monitor child use (websites/apps accessed & screen messages for bulling)

3 Ways to Make Remote/e-Learning More Engaging
(Valenzuela, 2020)

1. Use Virtual Breakout Rooms

2. Use Interactive Slides

3. Encourage Students to be Social

Make A Strategic Transition Back to in-person Classes

Plan Plan Plan!

- Step-By-Step Guide for parents and students to know what to expect with either hybrid or face-to-face teaching.
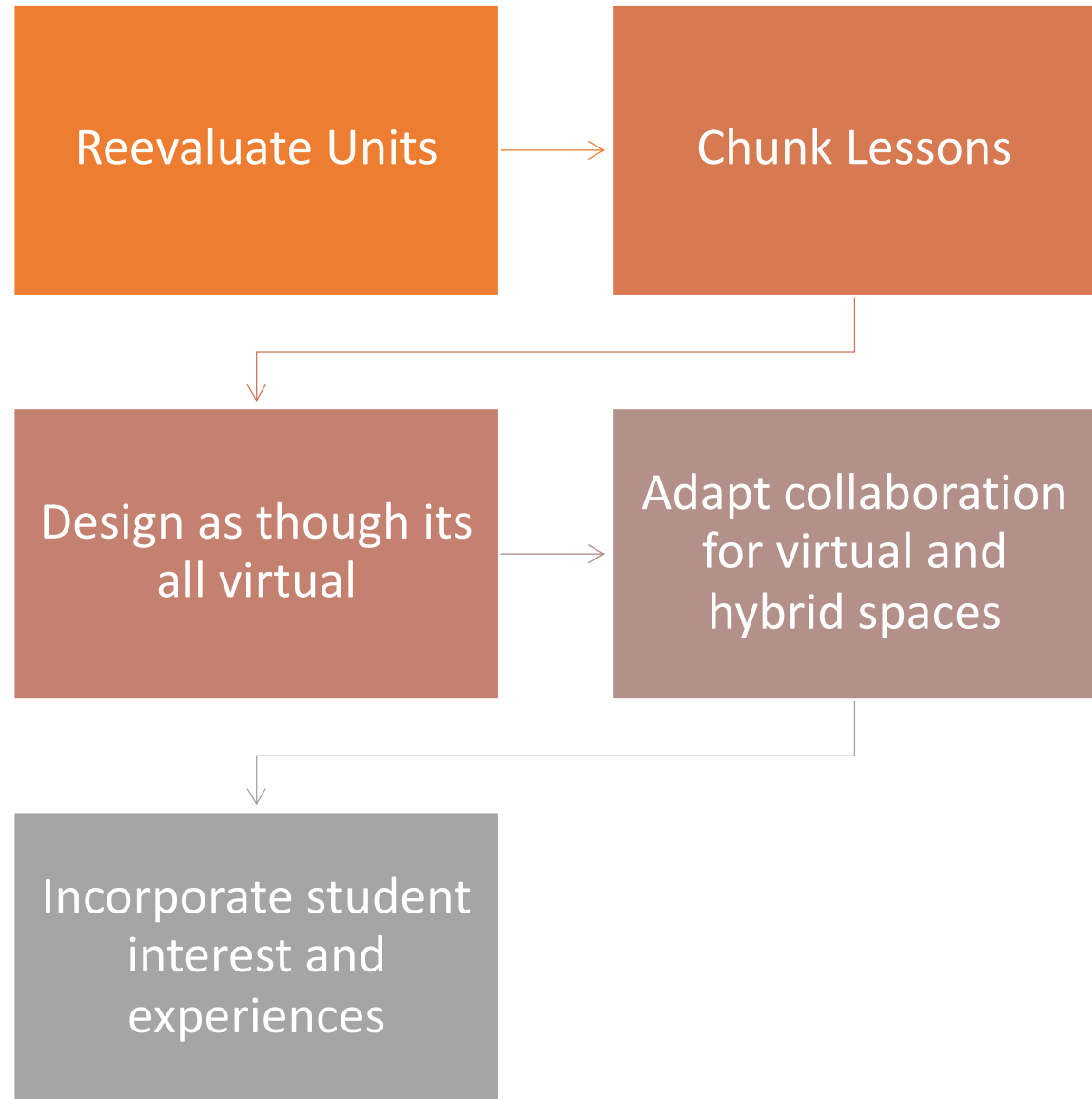
Test the Tech

- Zoom/Google Class, Learning Apps, etc.

Teach!

- Do what you do best!

Personal Prep for E-Learning/ Distance Learning Days

- Develop a plan for childcare/supervision on e-learning/distance learning

- Establish a bedtime routine

- Develop an easy to follow daily schedule

- Set up a workspace for e-learning

- Utilize timers to help stay on task

- Provide opportunities for children to take physical breaks

- Help students stay connected through video chats, online games, etc.

- Engage in a variety of leisure activities

Supporting Students During the Transition from Distance Learning to In-Person Learning

- Listen

- Validate Feelings

- Help Cope (offer pleasant distractions, engage in problem solving, & model realistic thinking)

Self Care: Preventing Zoom Fatigue
(Doffy & Fosslein, 2020)

Avoid Screen-Based Media as a Distraction

Turn Off-Self View

Switch to Phone Calls or Emails (if you can)

Minimize the Zoom Screen

Build In Breaks

Increase Physical Activity During Breaks

Avoid Multitasking

Reduce On-Screen Stimuli

Resources for Parents & Providers

Common Sense Media	https://www.commonsensemedia.org
PBS kids	pbskids.org
Sesame Workshop	sesamestreet.org
The Mediatrician (Michael Rich, Boston Children's Hospital)	https://cmch.tv/parents/ask-the-mediatrician/
Family Media Plan	https://www.healthychildren.org/English/media/Pages/default.aspx

Additional Resources for Clinicians

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Questions?

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