



DEVELOPING IN DIGITAL WORLDS

Findings from parents in later adopting English medium schools

Phase One
2015-2017

Project Overview

- Developing in Digital Worlds is a four-year project conducted by the University of Auckland's Faculty of Education and Social Work and funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment
- This is the first study in the world to identify links between teaching, family participation and game-based learning in order to promote educational outcomes and equity
- The project focuses on children aged 4-17 years to test how to promote cognitive and social development in the '21st Century' digital world

Study Aims

- How does participation in the digital world influence children's cognitive and social development?
- What skills, knowledge and capabilities do children need to manage, engage, and benefit from participating in the digital world?
- How can family, educators, and society effectively support children's involvement in the digital world?



EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WORK
WOOLF FISHER
RESEARCH CENTRE

PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE



35 parents participated

4 different schools

10 parents had children in years 3-4

25 parents had children in years 5-10

Digital Access and Familiarity

- Most parents said they were not familiar with digital technologies (71%), with the other parents describing themselves as novice users (3%), intermediate users (20%) or expert users (6%)



- The majority of parents reported using digital devices at work (72%), with a handful of parents using digital devices at home

Influence on family/whānau/aiga

- Most parents said that digital learning had not influenced the activities they do as a family
- Up to half of the parents who said that digital learning has had "a bit" or "a lot" of an impact on family life, this was mainly stated in positive terms:

She "helps at home using the knowledge she has from her digital learning such as cooking recipes, a bible movie, dress fashion"

He or she "brings a lot of new ideas for our family time, such as new games to play"

"I make sure that family time is more important"

- Those parents who felt digital devices impacted negatively on family life talked about their child's frequency of use

"she spends her free time on her chromebook rather than going outside and playing"

Digital Support that Parents Give

- When asked how often their children need support with their online **social skills**, about half of the parents reported infrequent support (once a month or less)



- Parents tended to support their children's online **thinking skills** slightly more frequently, but half still gave their children support only once a month or less

- More parents and caregivers of younger students (Years 3-4) were familiar with digital technology than older students (Years 5-9). This may be related to parents support of younger children with learning discussions and less direct approaches of reminding and monitoring with older children



- Many parents said they wanted to know more about how they could support their children in digital contexts

One parent suggested that the reason for infrequent support was that parents take the opportunity to do other things when their kids are online

Digital Support that Parents Would Like

All parents said they could be better supported to help their child develop cognitive and social skills in digital contexts. They suggested four ways:

Guidelines (e.g. advice on app use, including recommended use for students)

"maybe just some written guidelines, questions or prompts written down that can remind us of what things we could discuss with kids at home"

Access (e.g. to students' blog sites) and visibility of student usage

"I've also requested for visibility of usage daily i.e. websites etc."



Reminders for regular discussions about learning and positive online interaction (e.g. cybersmart practices)

to "have discussions about these things at home"



Clarifying the distinct roles of home and school such as developing critical thinking skills in digital environments



"am I supposed to be doing that [critical thinking] or the school?"

Thank you to all
those who contributed
to this research.

More Information

If you have any queries, you are most welcome to contact the project manager, Angela McNicholl, at a.mcnicholl@auckland.ac.nz or 09 923 8978, or email the principal investigator Professor Stuart McNaughton on s.mcnaughton@auckland.ac.nz

Visit the Developing in Digital Worlds website to find out more:

developingindigitalworlds.blogs.auckland.ac.nz