Under threes’ play with tablets

# Details

## Year

2020

## DOI

10.1177/1476718x20966688

## Issued

2020

## Language

English

## Start Page

## End Page

## Authors

Marsh J.;Lahmar J.;Plowman L.;Yamada-Rice D.;Bishop J.;Scott F.

## Type

Journal article

## Journal

Journal of Early Childhood Research

## Publisher

SAGE Publications

## Topics

* Learning
* Social mediation
* Internet usage, practices and engagement

## Sample

954 UK parents of children aged from birth to three who had access to a tablet (survey) and four
children aged from birth to three (ethnography)

## Implications For Parents About

Parental practices / parental mediation

# Abstract

This paper outlines the findings from a study that examined the tablet and app use of children aged from birth to three. The aim of the study was to examine how far use of tablets and apps promoted play and creativity. A total of 954 UK parents of children aged from birth to three who had access to a tablet in the home completed an online survey that explored the children’s use of apps. Ethnographic case studies of four children aged from birth to three were undertaken in homes in order to explore in greater depth issues that emerged in the survey. The paper reports on the way in which the use of tablets promoted play and creativity across cognitive, physical social and cultural domains. The implications for policy and research are outlined.

# Outcome

"the study indicated that tablets and apps can foster play and creativity in a number of ways, as the data illustrate. All types of play (apart from recapitulative and rough and tumble play) were identified in the case studies when children used tablets. Creativity in young children’s use of tablets, as outlined in this paper, includes the use of expressive language, music and art, and the study has identified the extent to which apps that foster these areas feature in the lives of under threes... the study makes a contribution in terms of identifying the way
in which tablets and apps engaged these young children in play holistically across cognitive
(including linguistic), bodily/affective, social and cultural aspects of their development. As Else
(2014) suggests, these domains cannot be separated in a simplistic fashion, and play practices in
the case studies were likely to include many, if not all, of the domains simultaneously. The study
thus indicates the value of the Integral Play Framework for the study of children aged from birth to
three’s play with tablets... the play of under threes with tablets contained most of the types of
play identified in non-digital play, thus indicating that it is not appropriate in contemporary society
to disregard the overlap between the digital and non-digital domains for this age group. Rather,
play needs to be framed in contemporary contexts in ways which recognise its material nature,
drawing on new materialist understandings of intra-actions between humans and objects, and
which acknowledges that this perspective must also pay consideration to the immateriality of the
digital." (March et al., 2020: 12).