FAST FACTS: Technology Use with Young Children

Concern	Recommendation	Description
If I integrate technology, children will spend all their time in front of a computer.	Technology should be used in ways that encourage social interaction.	Computers, multi-touch mobile devices and audio recording devices can support unique social interactions and collaboration between children when these technologies are used in a small group of children under adult supervision. (For example, children in first grade can use a multi-touch mobile device such as an iPad to co-create an illustration of an observation from a nature walk.)
I do not have time to add technology into my class schedule.	Technology should be used when necessary rather than a designated time during a daily schedule.	Technology use should be thoughtfully woven through units and investigations. Children develop and learn competencies through meaningful and authentic experiences, which contribute to curriculum and learning goals. (For example, children in kindergarten will learn that computers can be used to communicate with others as they Skype with a relative in the classroom.)
I am not sure which device to buy first or which device is the most important.	Teachers should use multiple technologies to support learning experiences.	The use of multiple technologies help children learn the various uses and purposes for devices. They will also learn how technologies can work together to create a particular experience. (For example, if a teacher uses an iPad 2 and an LCD projector to project an ebook, children can simultaneously see how projectors and multi-touch mobile devices work together, and also engage with literature in a 21st century fashion.)
Once teachers receive technology, they can begin using it immediately and continuously.	Teachers need high quality professional development to carry out and maintain practices with technology.	Training to use technology in ways that are developmentally appropriate and rooted in intentional use requires complex teacher training. Ongoing goal setting for individuals, centers, and schools is necessary to monitor the uses and outcomes with technologies. (For example, teachers participate in an "on-site" book club exploring areas of curriculum and how technology can be woven within. In this book club, teachers reflect on practices and set goals for the future.)

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Technology is going to widen the gaps we already see in education.	Technology should be used to close both the achievement gap and the digital divide.	With today's technologies, never before have photographs and videos been so accessible. Harnessing this access provides children authentic experiences to learn about communities and cultures throughout the world. These experiences build awareness and background knowledge. With developing grant programs, initiatives, and district investments, schools can use technology in ways similar to those in independent schools. (For example, children in second grade view videos of family traditions in another culture to compare and contrast cultural and family values.)
Every technology is suitable for all settings, programs, and schools.	Technology should be evaluated before purchase, just like any other classroom material.	All classroom materials should be chosen carefully so that they meet the developmental and learning needs of the children. Teachers and administrators need to consider implementation strategies, the role of professional development, and how certain technologies will support the curriculum goals and vision. (For example, teachers and administrators sit down to explore budget, curriculum goals, parent support, and teacher skills to determine which technologies best fit their program or school.)
Technology should be used to help young children identify letters, numbers, and shapes.	Technology should also be used in ways that go beyond skill and drill.	A significant goal for early childhood teachers is to help children develop a sense of inquiry across disciplines. Technology can be used in several ways to help children develop and answer questions they have about various topics. (For example, children in preschool, with the assistance of adults, use digital cameras to take photographs of interesting buildings seen on a neighborhood walk.)

- Supporting Reports: Take a Giant Step, Sesame Workshop, 2011
- Educator Resources: Tech and Young Children Interest Forum, www.techandyoungchildren.org
- Children's Technology Review, www.childrenstech.com, Warren Buckleitner
- *Teaching in the Digital Age: Smart Tools for Age 3 to Grade 3*, (May, 2012), Brian Puerling, Redleaf Press
- *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8*, (2010) Copple & Bredekamp, NAEYC
- *Into the Minds of Babes*, (2007), Lisa Guernsey, Basic Books
- *Practechal™ available Spring 2012*