

A joint position statement of the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent College

## Technology and Interactive Media as Tools in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8

Television was once the newest technology in our homes, and then came videos and computers. Today's children are growing up in a rapidly changing digital age that is far different from that of their parents and grandparents. A variety of technologies are all around us in our homes, offices, and schools. When used wisely, technology and media can support learning and relationships. Enjoyable and engaging shared experiences that optimize the potential for children's learning and development can support children's relationships both with adults and their peers.

Thanks to a rich body of research, we know much about how young children grow, learn, play, and develop. There has never been a more important time to apply principles of development and learning when considering the use of cutting-edge technologies and new

media. When the integration of technology and *interactive media* in early childhood programs is built upon solid developmental foundations, and early childhood professionals are aware of both the challenges and the opportunities, educators are positioned to improve program quality by intentionally leveraging the potential of technology and media for the benefit of every child.

*Interactive media* refers to digital and analog materials, including software programs, applications (apps), broadcast and streaming media, some children's television programming, e-books, the Internet, and other forms of content designed to facilitate active and creative use by young children and to encourage social engagement with other children and adults.

This statement is intended primarily to provide guidance to those working in early childhood education programs serving children from birth through age 8. Although not developed as a guide for families in the selection and use of technology and interactive media in their homes, the information here may be helpful to inform such decisions.

NAEYC and the Fred Rogers Center do not endorse or recommend software, hardware, curricula, or other materials.



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