

Implementing Technology and Online Parent Education in ECFE

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Agenda

- How are you currently using technology in your classroom?
- What does research say about best practices for technology use?
- Technology in practice:
 - Technology in the Traditional Classroom
 - Online Parent Education
 - Social Media
 - Text to Connect

Tell Us Your Story:

What types of technology are you currently
using in your programming?

What is working? What is not working? What is
needed?

Research Analysis Details

- Completed August, 2017
- Examined "Technology Use in Early Childhood Family Education: Enhancing Parent Education for Adult Learners"
- Research included 20 sources that examined the use of technology in adult education, particularly the use of learning management systems for online and hybrid learning.

The Goal of the Research:

- To align best practices in technology use with the mission of ECFE.
- To understand the use of online education and its potential application to the field of family education.
- To compare and contrast current online adult learning platforms, deepening our understanding of available technology.
- To make some recommendations for ECFE and other parent education programs for immediate implementation of technology in local programming.

The Mission of ECFE

"To strengthen families through the education and support of all parents to provide the best possible environment for the healthy growth and development of their children. Established in 1974, it is the largest and oldest program of its kind in the country and has been cited as a national model for parent education and family support"... "ECFE provides a place for parents to learn and practice important parenting and family life skills and build trusting relationships with other parents from their community. ECFE supports the growth and learning of parents and children together at a critical time for building protective factors in families and resiliency in children" ("Minnesota's Early Childhood Family Education: Answers to Commonly Asked Questions," 2015).

Why Does the Mission Matter?

"As the potential benefits of further digitizing online parent education are explored, the mission of Early Childhood Family Education will remain at the heart of the discussion. Rather than allowing technology to dominate our delivery and potentially change our product, this discussion will offer best practices for using technology to enhance the support and education of young families. With the online communities and technological supports that are suggested, parent connection should remain a priority."

(Somers, 2017)

Definition of Technology

Technology use: "methods employed in the classroom by parent educators, including but not limited to, electronic sharing of information, computer-based resources, applications, and online distance learning. Best practices in planning, pedagogy, and implementation will be examined and methods of delivery for electronic content will be suggested. Strategies for management of technological content and assessment of course efficacy will also be addressed."

(Somers, 2017)

LeNoue, Hall, & Eighmy (2011)

"students today want to participate in the learning process; they look for greater autonomy, connectivity and socio-experiential learning, have a need to control their environments, and are used to instant connectivity and easy access to the staggering amount of content and knowledge available at their fingertips" (p. 6).

Reasons for Increasing Technology Use in ECFE

- Remaining relevant
- Meeting families in ways that they like to communicate
- Offering a clear voice for parents seeking developmentally appropriate information about parenting and children (Martland & Rothbaum, 2006)
- Expanding our field

Increasing Digital Presence

“As ECFE professionals continue to examine best practices in sharing vital information with families, increasing our digital presence cannot be overlooked. Understanding the specific needs of young families in this digital age will allow professionals to fine tune their practice, share relevant information in a way that reaches their audience, and continue to provide the support and direction that families have benefitted from for over four decades.”

(Somers, 2017)

Parent Education Core Curriculum Framework

“Given evidence that participation in parent education can enhance parents’ interactions with their children, which, in turn, supports the child’s development in specific areas, a critical look needs to be given to the nature and quality of the way parent education is delivered including the content that is addressed in parent education delivery. If we are to expand the delivery of parent education to reach more parents in our communities, we need to be certain that we are doing so in the most effective ways possible based upon current research” (MNAFEE, 2011, p. 1)

Implementation

Three Models for Technology Use in Parent Education:

- Increased technology in the face-to-face classroom.
- A "hybrid" or "flipped" classroom.
- Exclusive online education.

Technology in the Traditional Parent Ed Classroom

- Emailing links to participants for view outside of class.
- Using Power Point presentations.
- Researched based information on the Web
- Video Clips
- In-person class pages
- Kahoot
- Other ideas?

Online Parent Education

- Focused topics
- 6-week courses utilizing a hybrid model of online and in-person classes
- <https://learn.sowashco.org/course/1417402507/materials>



Use of Social Networking Sites (SNS)

Mortagy & Boghikian-Whitby (2010), when studying student perception in online learning, conversely found that "there was no difference between face-to-face and online student in their satisfaction with student-to-student interaction. The satisfaction with the level of student-to-student interaction might be the result of changes in society and young adults that are undergoing in terms of computerized social networking. The age of Facebook, YouTube, text messaging and similar activities might be showing its effects in the educational arena" (p. 40).

Social Media & Parent Education



- Facebook Live Videos
- Biweekly posts during the school year
- Classroom pictures/videos
- Program Event Marketing
- Research based articles
- Blog post

Preschool Text to Connect

Why Develop a Texting Program?

- Align with our Pyramid Model
- Parenting is complex. Texts provide small steps parents can easily implement.
- Cell Phones are pervasive in our society.
- Similar texting programs have been used in healthcare to change patient behavior.

Preschool Text to Connect, con't.

- This is a low cost way of reaching parents. The cost to families is minimal.
- Parents self enroll in the program through Remind.
- Fact, Tip & Growth Texts

Example of Text Messages

- Fact: Preschoolers feel many of the same emotions as adults but don't have the language skills to express them & will act out how they feel.
- Tip: Use problem solving skills to help your child with their emotions. Offer choices of appropriate ways to express hoe they are feeling. "You are frustrated that the puzzle piece isn't fitting. Do you want some help or do you want to try a different piece?"
- Growth: You use problem solving to manage your emotions. Share your self-talk with your child. "I am frustrated that we are late for school. I am going to take some deep breaths to calm myself."

Barriers to Using Technology

"An LMS is well suited for managing student enrollment, exams, assignments, course descriptions, lesson plans, messages, syllabi, and basic course materials. However, these systems are developed for the management and delivery of learning, not for supporting the self-governed and problem-based activities of students. Therefore, an LMS does not easily support a social constructivist approach to digitally-mediated learning" (LeNoue, et al., 2011, p. 5).

Barriers, con't.

- Privacy concerns with social media
- Possibility of less community/support for parents
- Some families may not have access to technology
- Learning curve for educators and participants
- Marketing
- Decreased student participation/accountability
- Others?

Recommendations for Implementation

- Start! No matter your level of technology use in your practice, begin by adding technology to your classes everyday.
- Collaborate with colleagues: what has worked for them? What should you try? What should you avoid?
- Assess your online practice for effectiveness: survey participants after classes are finished and remain open and flexible to change.
- Support the greater goal of bringing online parent education to families inside and outside of Minnesota.

Dream with Us...

"For the family education field at large, we can and should continue to pursue online family education opportunities. Doing so will allow us to cross state lines, offer evidence-based information for families, and grow our field. As we pioneer new ways to offer online education, the call for further research is clear and desperately needed. Innovation in our online format, whether through developing a more appropriate learning management system for online ECFE coursework or in creating an application that puts reliable information in the hands of parents, will keep us relevant and increase our impact nationally" (Somers, 2017).

References

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