

Study of Preschool Parents and Caregivers Use of Technology and PBS KIDS Transmedia Resources

The 2012 Study of Preschool Parents and Caregivers Use of Technology and PBS KIDS Transmedia Resources is an important part of the multiyear CPB-PBS *Ready To Learn* summative evaluation being conducted by Education Development Center, Inc., and SRI International. The study provides added context for findings from the 2012 Preschool Pilot Study of PBS KIDS Transmedia Mathematics Content and provides a better understanding of how parents use transmedia and technology in the home as well as parents' perspective on using transmedia and technology in the classroom for early math and literacy learning. Via a paper-and-pencil survey, we asked parents of children included in Preschool Pilot classrooms, to share: (1) their goals for and involvement in their children's literacy and mathematics learning; (2) their attitudes toward reading and mathematics; and (3) their attitudes toward and use of media to support children's learning at home. A small number of parents also expanded on their feedback during focus groups.

Findings

- Parents believe that technology is a powerful support for learning, see technology skills as a necessary part of their child's 21st-century education, and support use of technology in the classroom with certain limits.
- Although television and computers are the most commonly used technologies, many children have access to a variety of digital devices within their homes.
- Parents tend to associate specific media platforms with learning, often pairing a device's form with its potential to be educational.
- Despite generally positive attitudes towards technology and its ability to support learning, parents express concern that too much technology can keep children from other healthy experiences and they limit its use.
- Although many parents choose to set limits on their children's media use, these limits vary by family and by the age of the child.
- Parents gravitate toward television programs, Websites, and digital games designed specifically for children by PBS, Nickelodeon, and Disney.
- Although families move fluidly through a great many programs and digital activities, the promise of learning undergirds many of the decisions parents make.

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Findings

- Home technology-infused routines can be social, as digital play is an occasion for children to watch, explore, and play together with their parents and other family members.
- Parents engage in a wide variety of roles when it comes to media engagement, from technology provider to monitor to learning supporter.
- Parents look to the media, other adults, and their child's school for information when making decisions about children's technology use.
- Parents have a growing appetite for educational technological resources and would like to have more time to use them with their children.

Interested in more?

For readers interested in a more detailed look at these findings, including: illustrative examples, recommendations, and a detailed description of research methods, the full-length report and executive summary for this study are available:

cct.edc.org/rtl

There you'll also find other current and past *Ready to Learn* summative research studies. And, to speak with the evaluation research team, please contact:



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