

Balancing Tech, Play and Future Happiness: Is that iPad really a good idea for your toddler?

If you have to ask any number of today's parents about children and technology, you would probably find a lot of varied opinions out there. Some would say that young children are not ready to experience and handle electronic items, and the rest would say that they must experience it as early as possible. After considering these two opposing ideals it seems that some common ground needs to be found between all the controversy. Considering how most kids are with everything they handle, it doesn't make much sense to give them your touch-screen device to play with for a couple hours. The chances of the device looking the same as when you gave it to them are slim. The biggest drawback of technology these days is that it has a tendency to be fragile and requires a fair amount of finesse to handle and keep it in good working order. Generally speaking, most youngsters would not take such care of your mobile device and who wants to get angry with a three-year-old for being a three year old?

Consider that most children can't handle expensive equipment, and on the other hand we have a world that is constantly changing and evolving leaps and bounds on the technological frontier. So much so, that just about everyone has a piece of technology playing a functional important role in their lives. The presence of technology is so prevalent that it simply cannot be ignored, even if you tried to. So where does one turn to when trying to give your child the right exposure to cell phones, tablets or computers? How does a parent that wants to give their child the best possible start in this technological world of ours, get their little ones off to a good start? The answer to this problem actually lies in the cause. By allowing a child to experience and work with technology as often as possible, they start to learn how to use it with the same care as you. Under the supervision of a knowing and patient adult, there is really no limit to how much a child can learn about technology. For most parents, the thought of letting their child handle expensive electronics is an unnerving one. Cell phones, iPads, computers, DVD players and televisions are can be rather expensive. If you end up having to replace them when you could have prevented it in the first place, you find that it leaves a bitter taste in your mouth.

The best place to start is at home, where you can sit with your child while they play a game on your phone. They could spend some time with you while you surf the internet on your computer. Letting them type in search entries into Google and going through the web pages with them is an ideal way to create an interactive learning experience while getting the exposure to technology that they need. Keeping a child occupied helps prevents boredom in a child, and every parent knows that a bored child can easily become a problem child. Let's say you happen to be busy with a work project, and your child is bugging you for something to do. We often resort to a quick solution like putting on a DVD for them to watch. That too can become a tedious matter as they always have to decide which of the movies they want to watch. It causes frustration for the parent and the child experiences your aggravation when it isn't necessary. If they know how to put a disc into the player, turn the TV on so they can sit back and watch their favorite animation, you can leave them to their own devices and you can carry on with your work unhindered.

For parents that don't have time to teach their kids about technology but still want to offer their children a chance to experience it first hand, so they can learn and develop the skills they will need in future, there is the option of sending them to techno camps or summer schools where they get exactly that. These camps offer your child a chance to learn from hands on experience and develop a keen insight into what is required to master technology from an early age. There are countless examples of children all across the US where they have learnt from these exact opportunities, and they have developed skills that an adult would only learn once they have graduated from high school. A thirteen year old girl is able to animate in 3D because she attended a workshop that taught her how to do it.

By the time she finishes high school, she will have enough 3D design experience under her belt to secure a stable job that pays well. Another young boy from Alaska attended the Digital media academy at Stanford University, where he was able to study filmmaking. By the time he turned fifteen he had produced two documentaries based on places he visited with his father a few years earlier. These children are going to grow up being more prepared for some of the adversities in life, and they may even be responsible for making great changes for everyone. This may sound a little off the topic here but it actually ties in quite nicely to the question posed in the title. If you take a look over the ages, we see that key individuals are responsible for great changes to mankind. They are people that have great talents and are exposed to the right environments to allow them to flourish. Individual potential needs to be identified early in life, so that it can be coupled with the child's will to do what they really want. A lot of your child's frustration stems from their inability to develop themselves and in most cases that tends to manifest itself in mischief. Once they have the means to do what they can, and need to do, they will flourish and go on to make positive contributions to their lives, their families and to society as a whole.