Tapping into Children’s Learning from Interactive Digital Media

Interactive digital media include devices and applications that invite a child to physically interact with the screen—to tap or swipe in order to elicit a response. For very young children, physical interaction with a screen promises to promote “minds-on” learning, but poorly designed interactive features may distract children’s attention. Georgene Troseth will present research showing that the type of screen interaction in a word-learning app, such as tapping, dragging, or watching, affected young children’s learning. Another way media can be “interactive” is when a social partner provides support for playing, watching, or reading that is tailored to a child’s current skill level. Parents’ active mediation in other studies supported preschool children’s learning from and engagement with video stories and eBooks.

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