

Information Communication Technology (ICT) *Ngā Rau Tangotango*



ICT is already part of children's lives: New Zealand children interact with ICT every day. A growing role of the whole education system is to support children's understanding of the nature of the technologies they encounter and to support learners to maximise the benefits they can provide. We can support our children to use ICT in healthy and safe ways that enhance their learning.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) in the programme *Ngā Rau Tangotango*

Te Whāriki

ICT can be used to support learning across all strands of *Te Whāriki*. In particular using ICT encourages purposeful and exploratory play, discussion, creativity, problem-solving, risk-taking and flexible thinking. These are reflective of the **Communication and Exploration strands** and can all be achieved in the playgroup's play-centred and responsive environment. Families have the greatest influence on young children's learning, and ICT can enable parents, families and communities to be included in their children's learning in new ways.



Incorporating ICT into playgroup sessions

Some playgroups may regularly use a lot of different information communication technologies as part of their sessions whilst others may use very few.

Decisions about what ICT is incorporated into sessions will depend on things such as the ages of children attending, the length of sessions and how often a playgroup meets. Rather than setting up a distinct place or space for play, ICT tends to be used to support or document other play that is occurring.

ICT in playgroups might be iPods, cell phones, MP3 players, computers and digital and video cameras.

- iPods might be used to allow access to pictures and music.
- Cell phones can take and send images as well as allow children to speak to people who are not at the playgroup session.
- MP3 players are great for sharing language and culture.
- Parents might bring in video cameras to record play and then play it back to children and talk about what they see.
- Computers are a great resource for accessing information in the moment, and can also be used for viewing photographs, writing stories and playing games.
- Digital cameras might be used to take pictures that the children can immediately review and discuss, that can be printed off and shared many times at playgroup. Photos can also be sent via a distribution list to all members of

a group (remember to get permission to do this) and can provide a way of sharing with all the children and parents what is happening in session. Photos can be a very useful way to capture children's learning in action.

- Video cameras allow children to revisit experiences and this is important for learning. Children benefit from being able to reuse play materials and re-enact experiences, but they also benefit from being able to watch themselves play.

Net safety

Netsafe is an internet safety group that provides online safety resources for parents and caregivers of young children. Netsafe provides information to parents and children on how they can keep themselves safe in the information communication environment. For information on this topic you might visit: www.netsafe.org.nz. Hector the dolphin is an online 'friend' who can help keep children safe when they are exploring on the internet. You can meet 'Hector the Protector' and his undersea friends, and see how they can help keep children safe online at: www.hectorsworld.com

There are a number of pamphlets available from Netsafe that can be requested: phone **0508 NETSAFE (638 723)**.

Playgroups also need to ensure that any ICT equipment does not expose children, or give them access, to any inappropriate material, such as that of an explicitly sexual or violent nature.