



COMMISSION for  
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

United Nations Headquarters, New York

# Digital Technologies and Parenting Education

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INTERNATIONAL  
DAY OF FAMILIES  
15 MAY 2021

UN-DESA May 14, 2021



In Iroquois society, leaders are encouraged to remember seven generations in the past and consider seven generations in the future when making decisions that affect the people.

(Wilma Mankiller)

[izquotes.com](http://izquotes.com)

# Looking the future

On one hand...

- Greater convenience & efficiencies ('tele-everything', 'smart' devices, AI boom)
- Opportunities for personal expression, creativity.
- Work as more flexible, less bounded by time or place
  - Adaptable worker skills valued

Yet, on the other....

- Growing social and racial inequality, worsening security and privacy and further spread of misinformation
- Peoples' mental health will be challenged
- Job insecurities due to employment shifts to automation, on-demand work

Anderson, J., et al, (2021, February 18). *Experts say the "New Normal" in 2025 will be far more tech-driven, presenting more challenges.* <https://www.pewresearch.org>



U.S. INTERNATIONAL CANADA ESPAÑOL 中文

# The New York Times



THE PRIMAL SCREAM


## Working Moms Are Struggling. Here's What Would Help.

What government, employers and the rest of us can do.

Photo credit: Brenda Ann Kenneally @ NYTimes.

UN DESA May 14, 2021





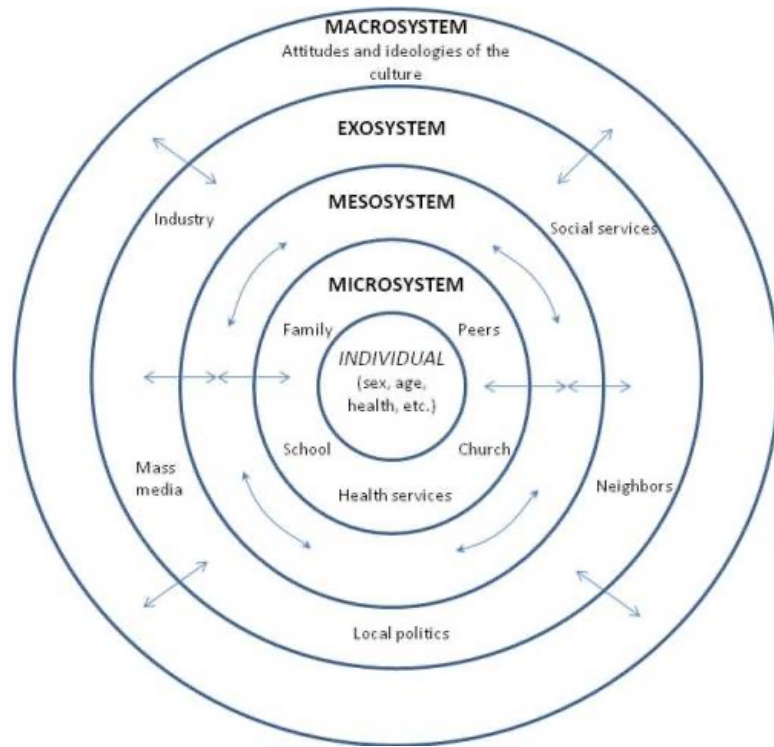
*The most important question we must ask ourselves is, 'are we being good ancestors'?*

*- Jonas Salk, polio vaccine pioneer*

*The ultimate effects of technology will be determined by technical capabilities and by how technology is used, how individuals, organizations, and policy makers prepare for/respond to shifts in economic/social landscape.*

National Academies of Science (2017): IT and the  
US Workforce: Where do we go from here?

# Bronfenbrenner's bioecological perspective on human development

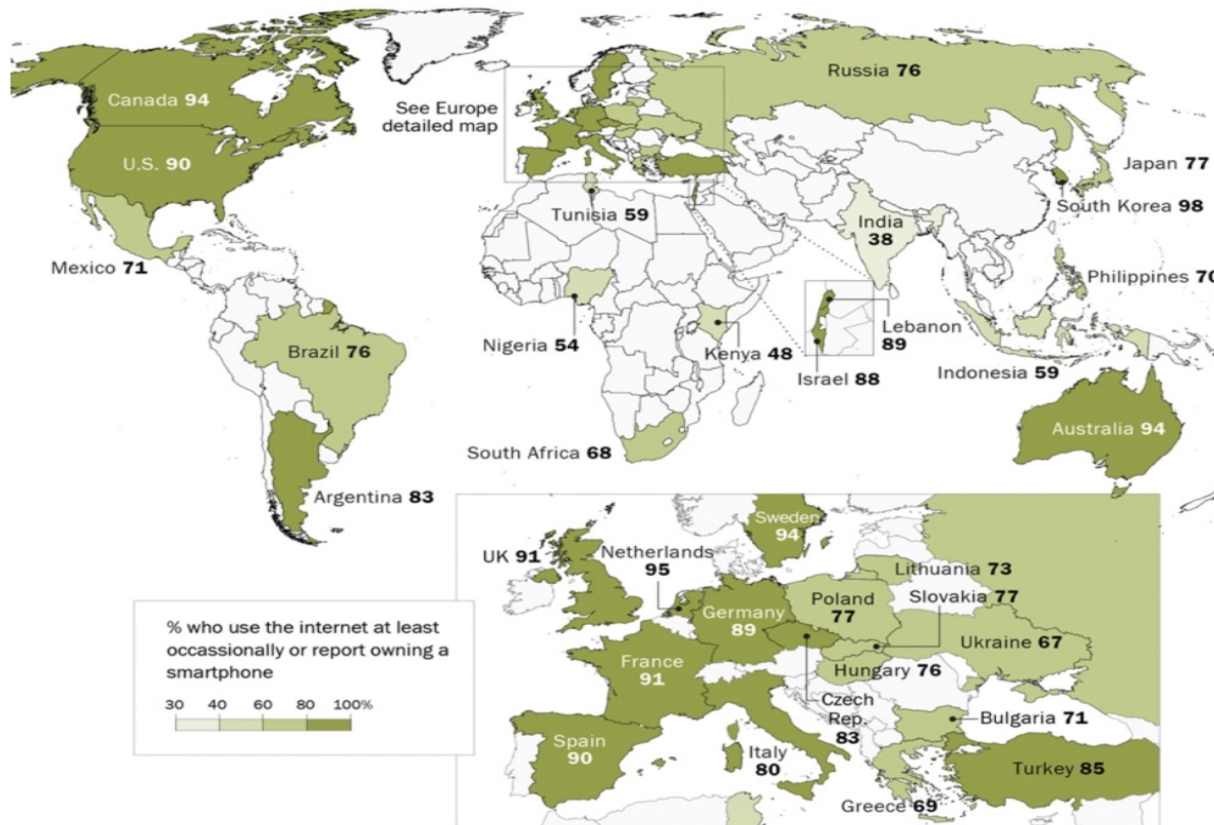


- Development as influenced by interactions of the person- in process and context – over time.
- Systems that the individual interacts with directly and indirectly influence development.

Credit: Hchokr at English Wikipedia, CC BY-SA 3.0

## Internet use is a prevalent part of many people's lives across the globe

% who use the internet, at least occasionally, or report owning a smartphone



Source: Spring 2019 Global Attitudes Survey. Q51 & Q53. U.S. data is from a Pew Research Center survey conducted Jan. 8-Feb. 7, 2019.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

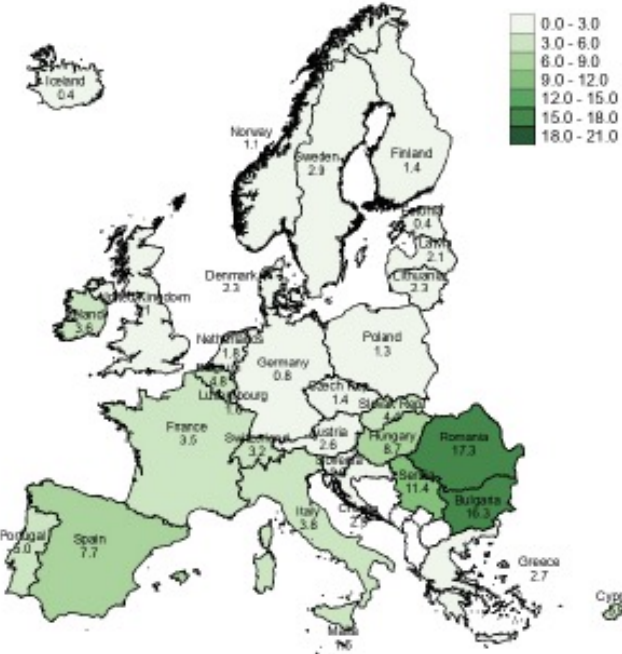
Internet access and use varies around the world. Although approximately 77% have internet access, this ranges from developed economies (e.g., US, EU) 98% to less developed economies (e.g., Africa, India), 13%.

Schumacher, S. and Kent, N. (2020, April 2). *8 charts on internet use around the world as countries grapple with COVID-19*. Pew Internet and American Life. Retrieved from <https://www.pewresearch.org/>

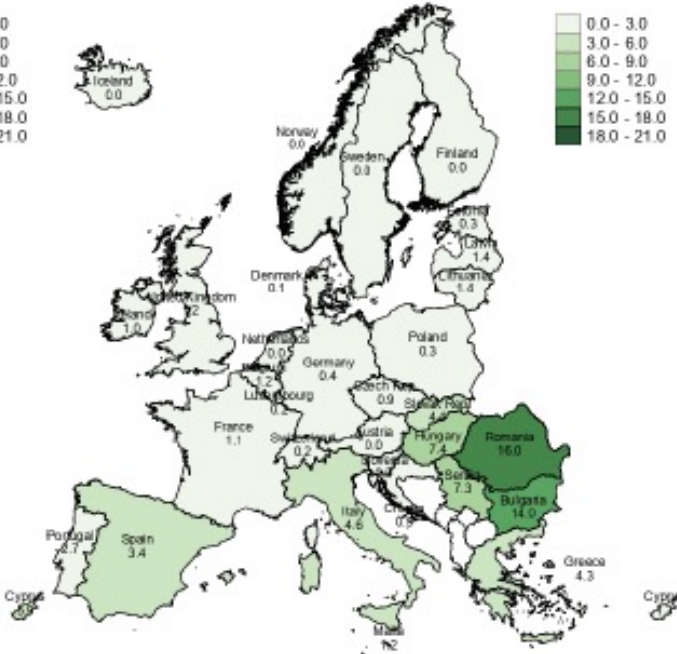


European children (6-16) in households that cannot afford a computer (left); that cannot afford an internet connection

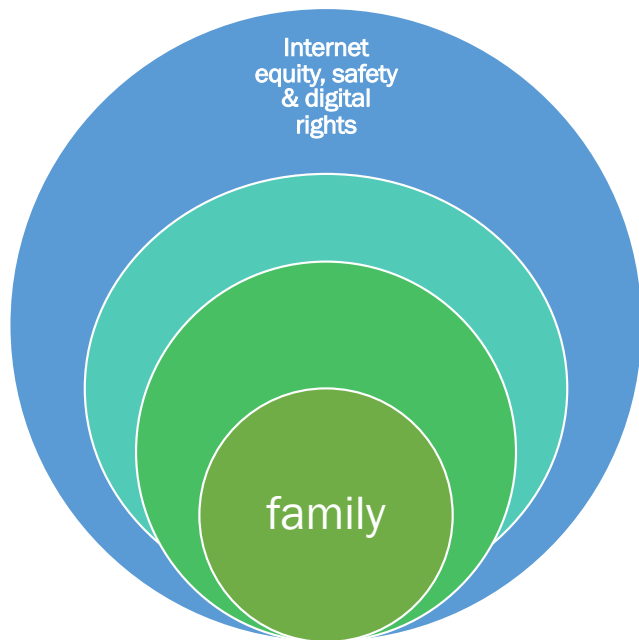
**Figure 2a:** Percentage of school-aged children (6-16) who live in a household that cannot afford a computer, Europe, 2019



**Figure 2b:** Percentage of school-aged children (6-16) who live in a household that cannot afford an internet connection, Europe, 2019



Ayllón, S., Holmarsdottir, H.B. & Lado, S. (2021). Digitally deprived children in Europe. (DigiGen - working paper series No. 3.



Ensuring internet access addresses SDG targets in goal areas 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 9 & 10.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

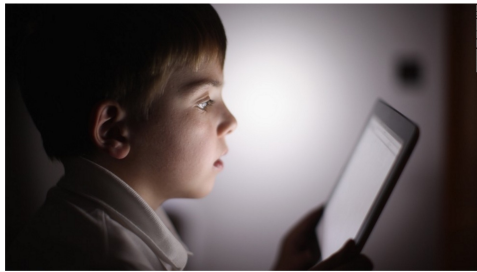


Policy 1: internet access as a basic human right.

Policy 2: Online spaces that protect digital rights.

## Is the Internet hurting children?

By Chelsea Clinton and James P. Steyer, Special to CNN  
 Updated 10:04 AM ET, Mon May 21, 2012

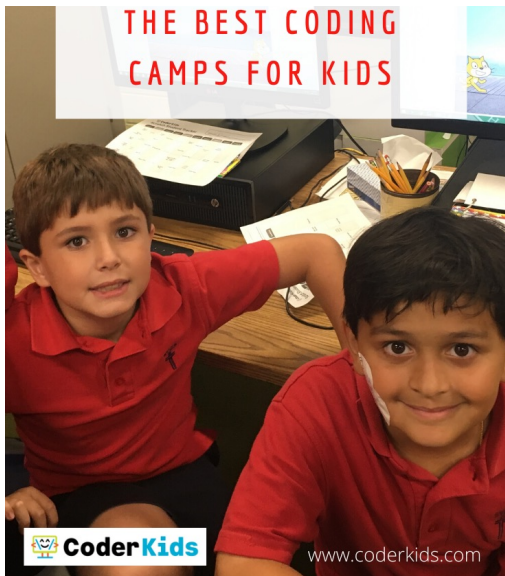
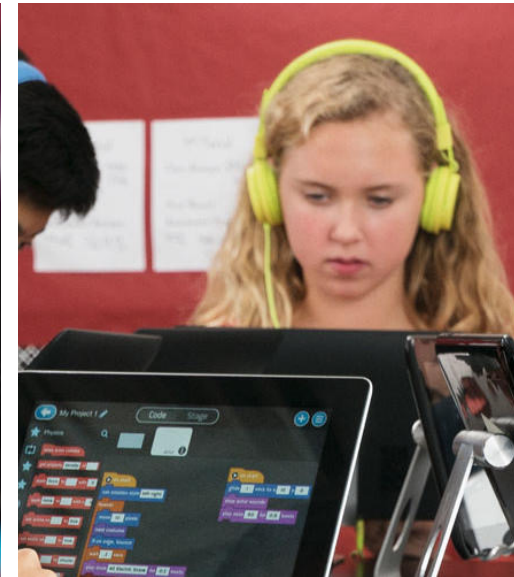


## Some Human Development Concerns:

- Sleep
- Distraction from learning, socialization
- Possible addiction (e.g., internet gaming disorder)
- Obesity
- Bullying, damage to mental health
- Exposure to harmful images
- Exposure to online predators
- Security and privacy breeches

• ...





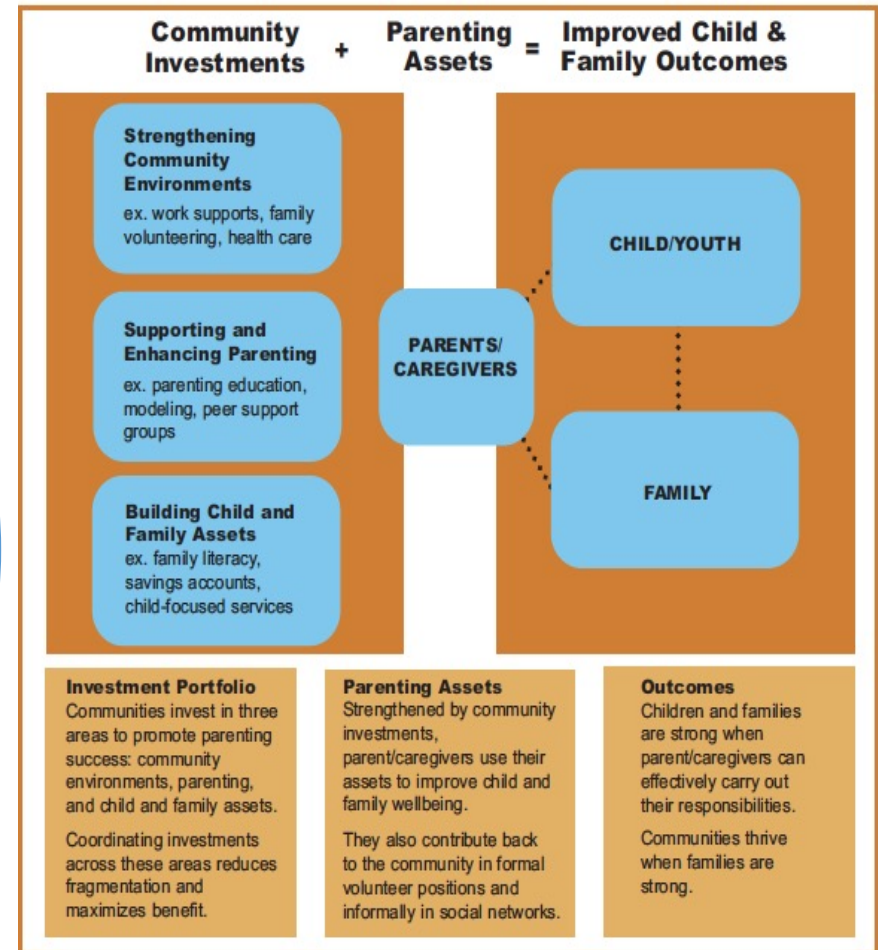
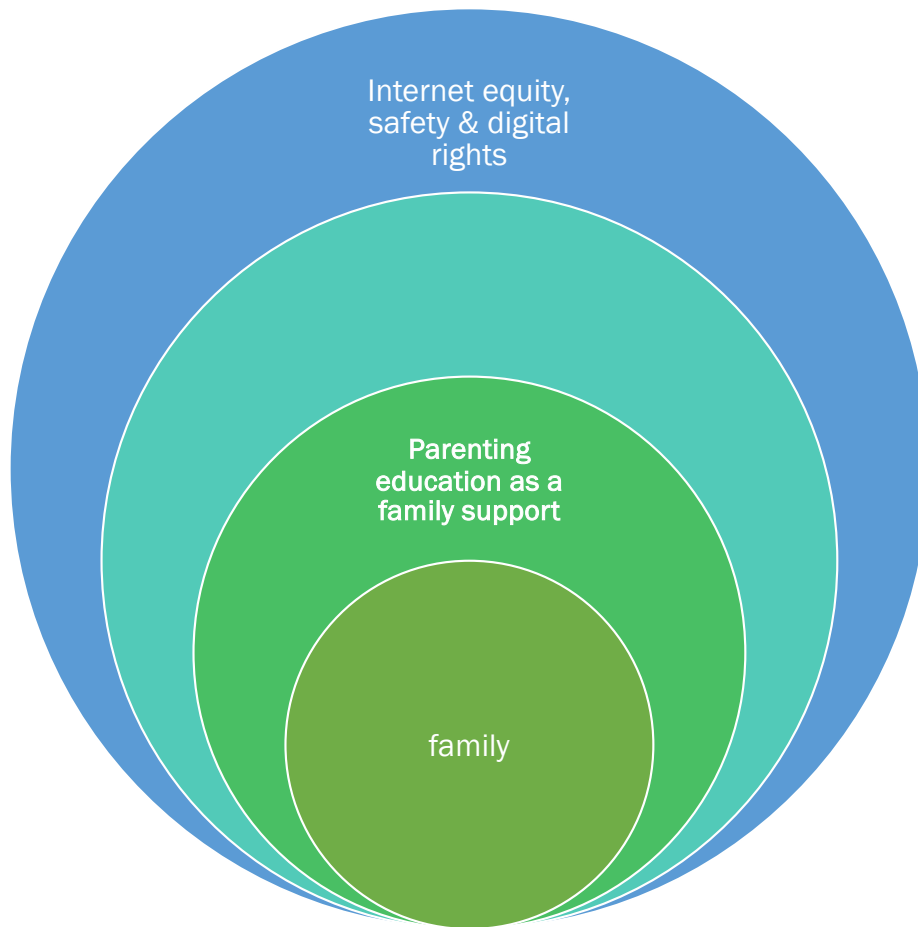
- Opportunities for learning and engagement.
- Creativity, collaboration, connectivity, and identity development.
- Personal expression
- Cultivating skills to use in adulthood





UNESSA May 2021

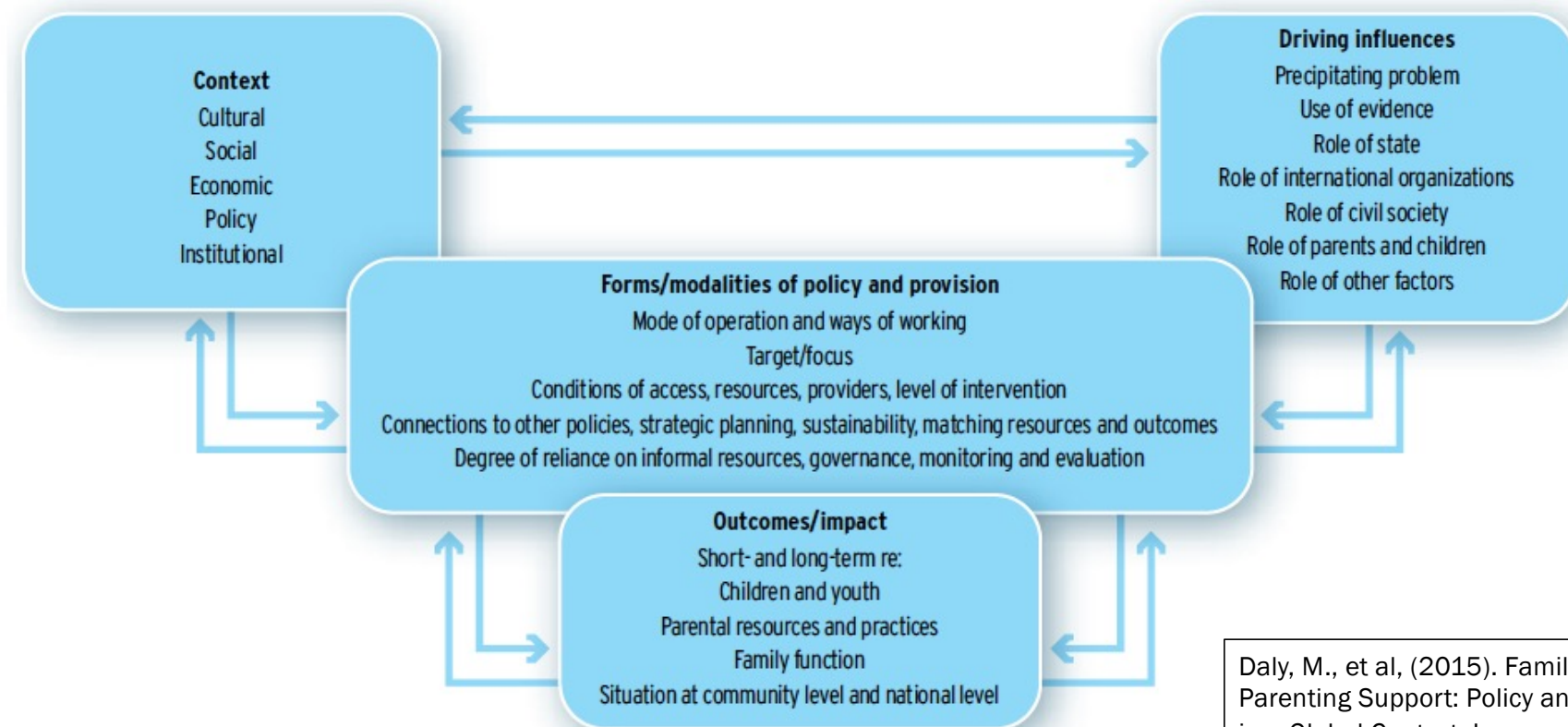
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From Family Strengthening Policy Center (2007). The Parenting Initiative: Investing in Parents so Children & Youth Succeed.



# Parenting & Family Support

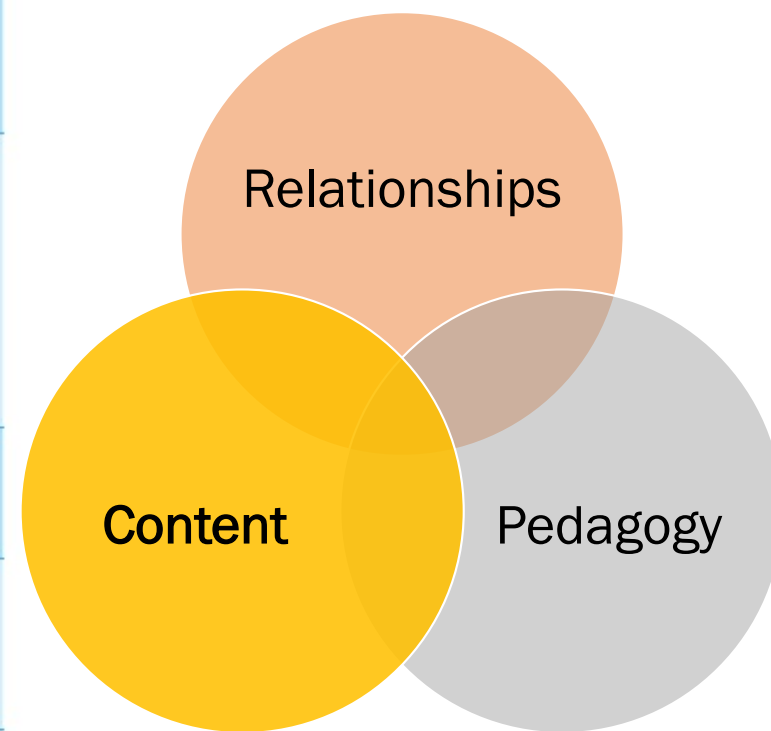


Daly, M., et al, (2015). Family and Parenting Support: Policy and Provision in a Global Context, Innocenti Insight, UNICEF Office of Research, Florence.

**TABLE 1** The universe of possible outcomes of family support and parenting support

Daly et al, 2015

TARGET	SHORT TERM	LONG TERM
Child focused	Emotional and behavioural development Involvement in education and health monitoring Reduced risk of maltreatment; increased safety Greater participation in decisions that affect child	Reduced rates of child poverty Reduced rates of mortality, stunting and wasting Higher immunization rates, breastfeeding, child safety Reduced risk of anti-social behaviour among children and adolescents
Parent focused	Improved skill levels Improved attitudes and feelings, coping and confidence Improved knowledge and understanding of child development Improved knowledge of resources and support services available Engagement in social networks and community	Improved emotional and mental health (stress, well-being) Increased involvement of fathers Continuous involvement in the child's life (when in the child's best interest)
Parent-child focused	Parent-child relationship Attachment, bonding Communication	Increase in the use of positive discipline Reduced rates of children's exposure to violence in the home
Family relations	Strengthened relationships	Reduced poverty
Family condition and family functioning	Less social isolation Increased care role and support by other family members	Reduced rates of family conflict Reduced rates of family breakdown Reduced rates of child placement in alternative care
Community Capacity building	Development and operation of policy, programme or intervention adjusted to national conditions Use of volunteers Making available materials Training and capacity building of staff and volunteers	Building up a portfolio of policies or interventions Building up a trained sectoral workforce or resource pool (including volunteers) Change in local or national values and practices Reduced rates of children's exposure to violence in the community and/or locality



**THE CONTENT OF PARENTING  
EDUCATION**

University of York, 14, 2021



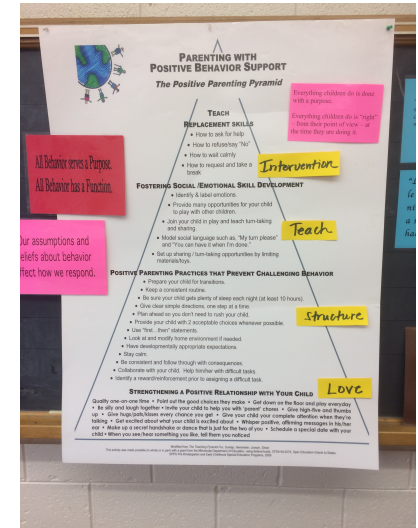
# Parent Education Core Curriculum Framework

2011

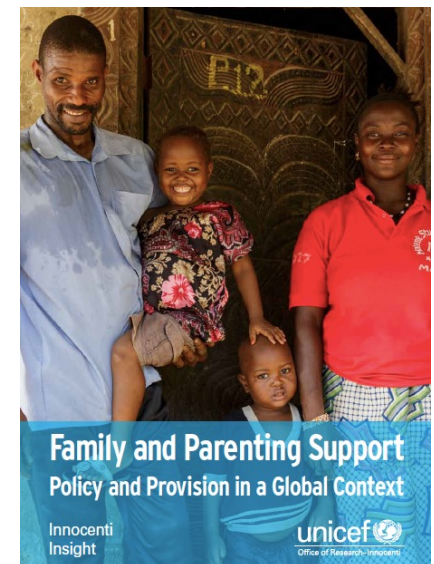
A Comprehensive Guide to Planning Curriculum for Parent Education Programs  
In the domains of...



## PEDAGOGY



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Family and Parenting Support  
Policy and Provision in a Global Context

Innocenti  
Insight

unicef  
Office of Research, Information



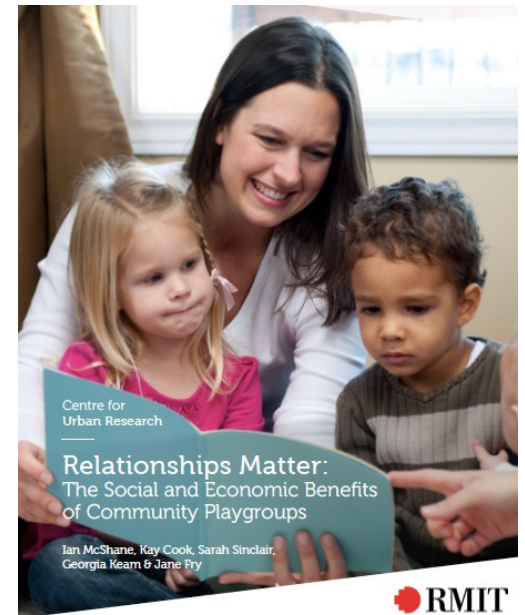


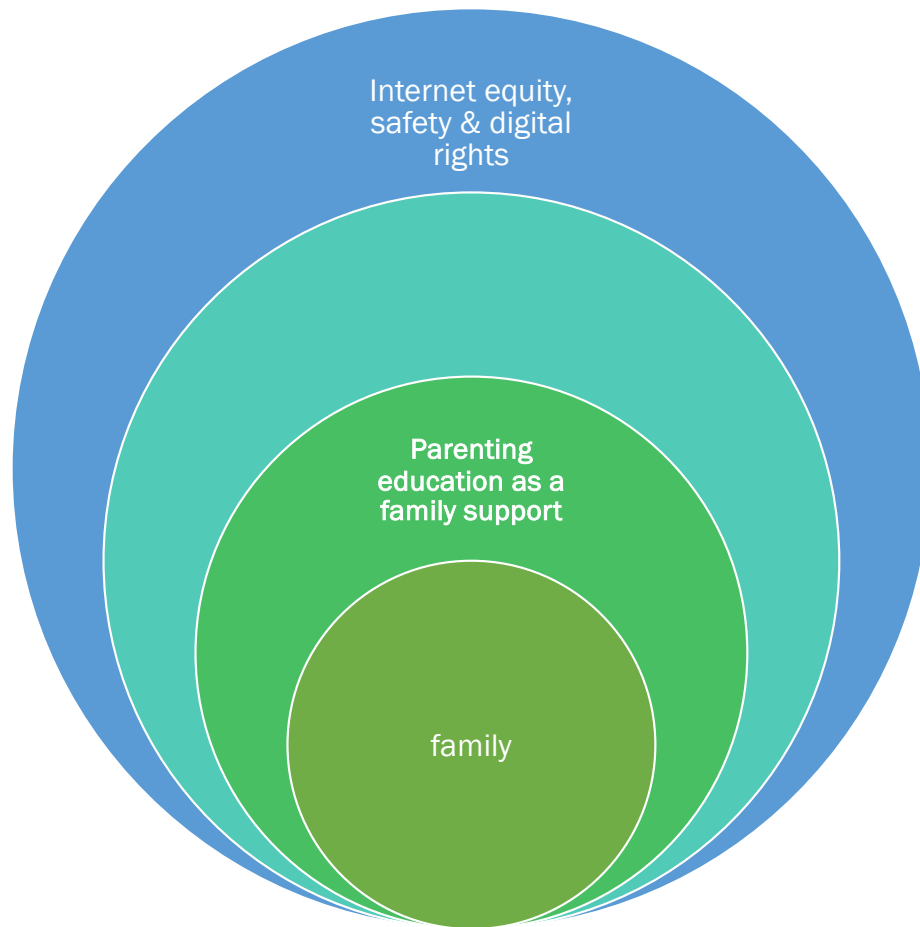
*"No significant learning can occur without a significant relationship."*

*James P. Comer,  
MD, MPH*

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## RELATIONSHIPS



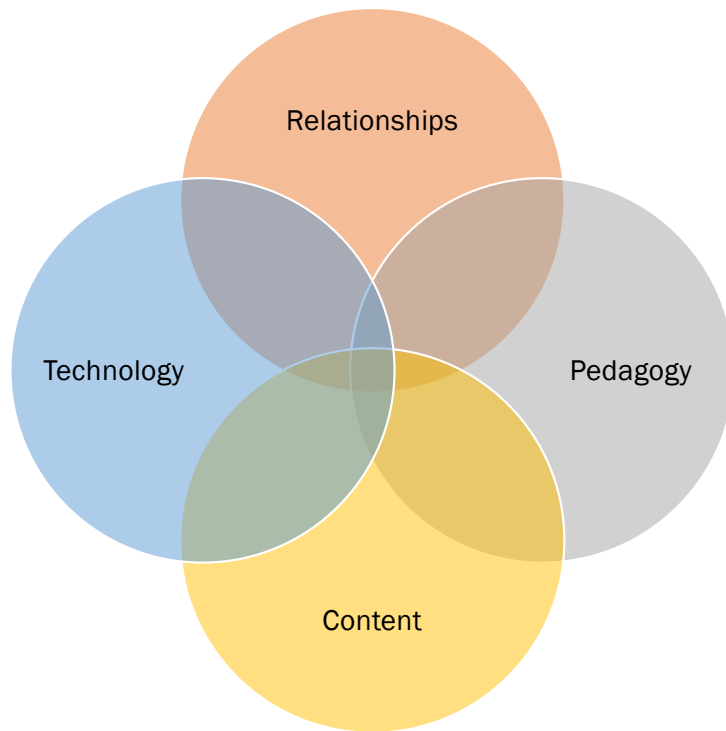


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## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



# Parenting Education as the Promise in our Digital Age



*“Parents should also be encouraged by providers and educators to help frame a child’s relationship to digital media, discussing online etiquette, empathy, ethics, internet safety, personal boundaries, and how to regulate their own media habits. (Coyne, et al, 2017; S115).”*

*What matters is not only what advice is provided for parents but also how it is provided. ... it should be timely, ..it should reach parents from all walks of life, in the languages that they and their children speak at home. Relatedly, it should be transparent to parents how digital services engage with their children, ..and what parents can do if they consider there’s a problem or injustice. (Livingstone, 2021)*

General Comment 25 by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child: “..**parental mediation is more effective if it prioritises “mutual empathy and respect, over prohibition or control”** (para 86).



## Parenting Children in the Age of Screens

*Two-thirds of parents in the U.S. say parenting is harder today than it was 20 years ago, with many citing technologies – like social media or smartphones – as a reason*

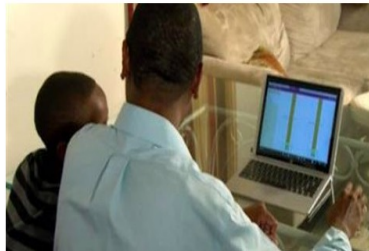
BY Brooke Auxier, Monica Anderson, Andrew Perrin and Erica Turner

Pew Research, July 2020

### How to Make a Family Media Use Plan

From TV to smartphones to social media, our lives are dominated by 24/7 media exposure. Despite this, many children and teens have few rules around their media use.

**Parents, help your children balance their online and off-line lives!**





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UNICEF May 2022

Technology embedded as a content area in parenting education can be integrated within many outcomes.

It can be visited, revisited, and an area of problem-solving within the peer community

# Sample content aids on media literacy

Chile Ministry of Education,  
Center for Education &  
Technology



2020 Council of Europe Easy steps  
to help your child become a Digital  
Citizen



 common sense media®

Find movies, books, and more ...

Movies & TV

Books

Apps & Games

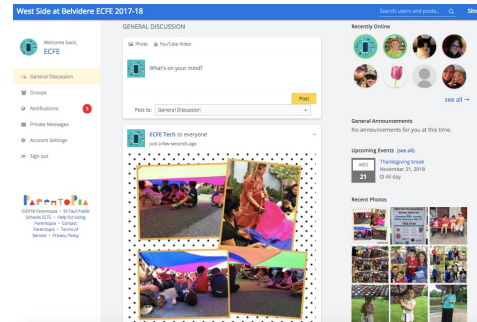
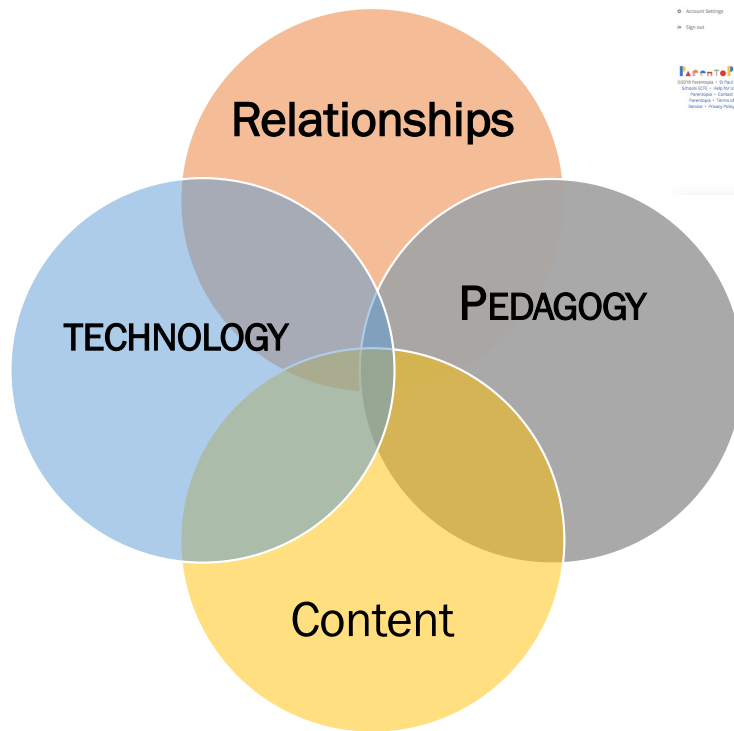
Parents Need to Know

Facebook, Instagram, and Social



Singapore Media Literacy  
Council

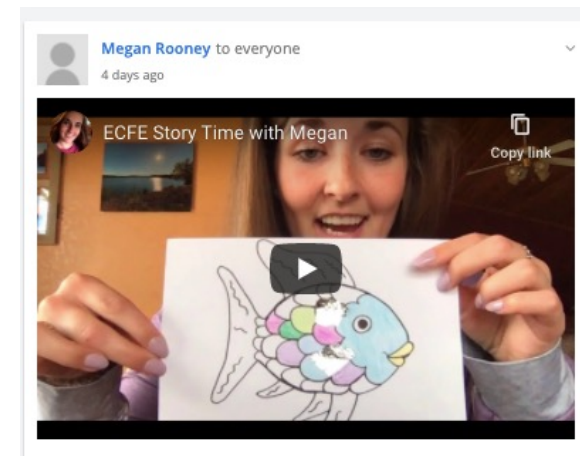
# Technology-Integrated Parenting Education



## Mandatory On-line Parenting Education Class

Center for Divorce Education's  
**CHILDREN IN BETWEEN**  
(Formerly: Children in the Middle Online)

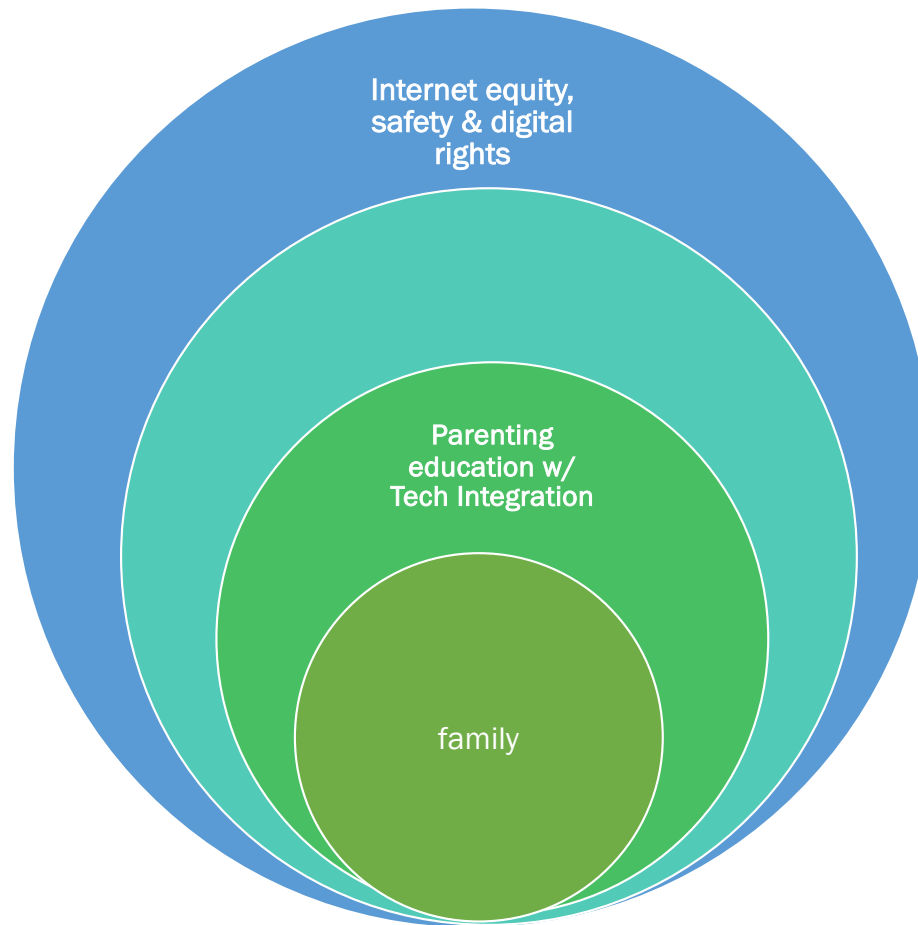
► A Co-Parenting Program for Divorcing Parents



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# Trouble in paradise: Challenges to parenting educator preparation & support

- Globally, parenting education is highly fragmented and decentralized.
- Parenting education programs may adhere to individualized standards of preparation and of practice. (US, NPEN.org)
- Many of those offering parenting education are trained to the specific curriculum or model.
- Unlike more unified professions (e.g., social work, teachers, therapists) there are no guidelines or work requirements specific to technology competence in parenting education.
- The majority (75%) of family educators report that their knowledge about technology and use of tech is learned ‘on their own.’ (Walker, 2019). Many report using their own devices for work.



# MN Board of Teaching

Tech requirements of all educators:

- Student learning (personalized learning, learning differences)
- Technology-enriched learning environments
- Diverse learning
- Assessment (using technology in student assessment)
- Discrimination (equity issues and technology)
- Technological knowledge
- Digital citizenship
- Contribution to the teaching profession
- Broadening student knowledge about technology
- Variety of technologies



# Challenges to practice in the workplace

COVID-19 adaptations (Spring, 2020) – quotes from parenting and early educators.

*“With so little planning time, and support for the technology available through the district, It really felt like the train left the station without [me].”*

*“At one moment, I would feel ineffective, as though I was working in a vacuum, putting material for families out into a void where it wasn’t doing anyone any good. And I felt selfish for wishing I would hear from families, knowing that they were likely stressed and overwhelmed. I struggled to know that there was anything that I was doing – to meet any real needs.”*

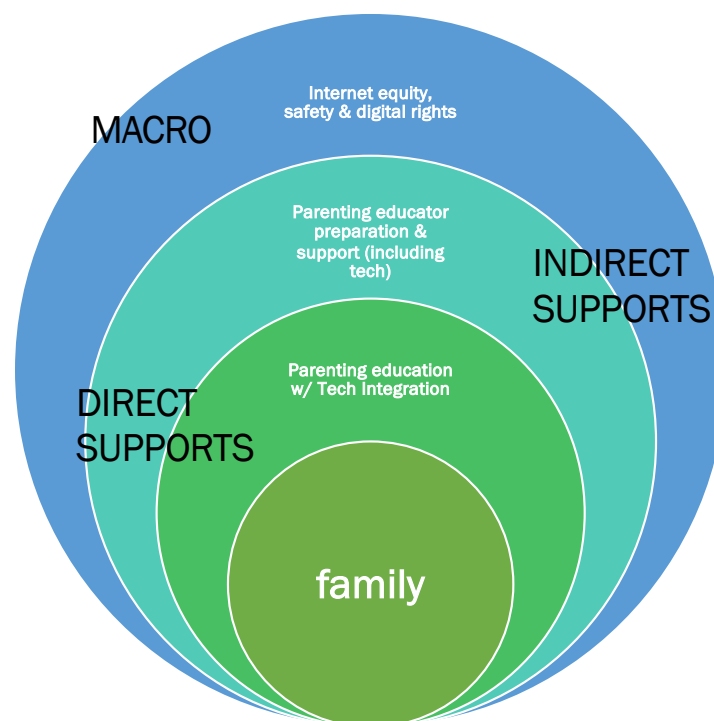
*“I wish that all students were able to connect and not just those that can afford to buy devices.”*

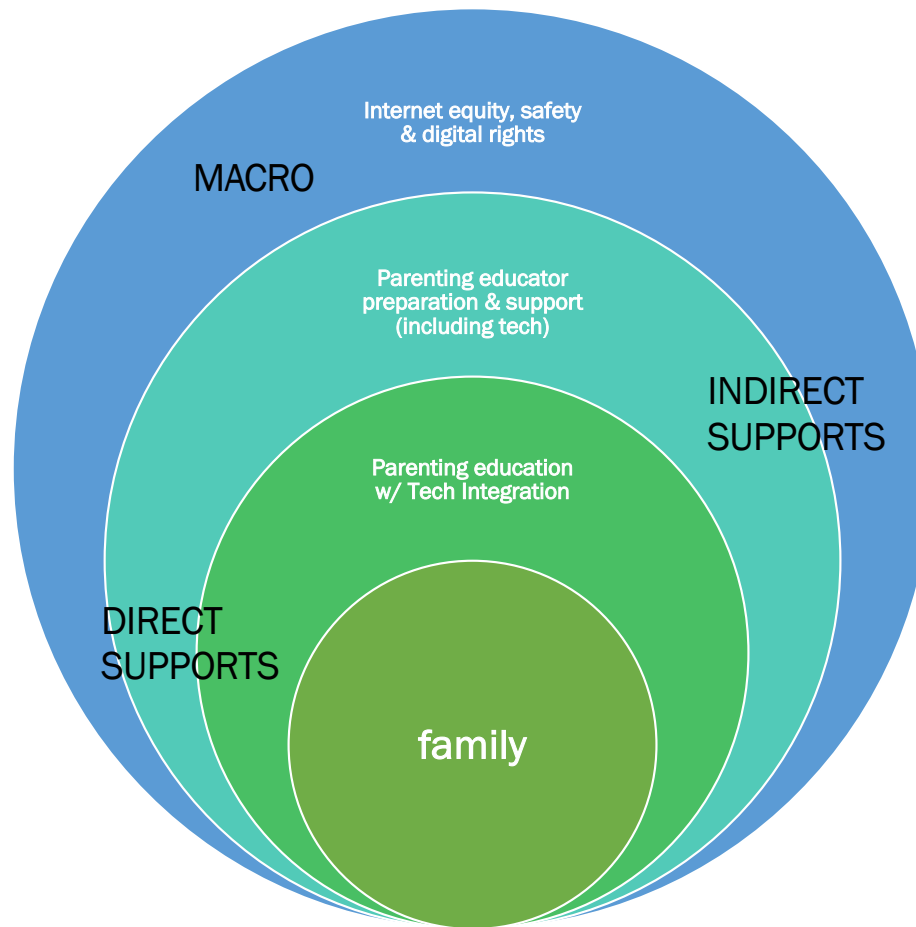
Picture taken in 2016. donated TV + VCR



1. Ensure internet access (equity), safety and promote digital rights.
2. Include parenting education as a family support strategy and when addressing the range of children's outcomes.
3. Integrate technology in parenting education – as content, pedagogy and in maintaining relationships.
4. Provide a system of supports and standards that empower parenting educator ability and confidence.

**Working across this policy ecology will heighten the achievement of targets in the SDGs.**





And it will  
make us  
'good  
ancestors.'





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