

Exploring Technology

Let's explore technology together! Children will discover how everyday devices work (or don't work) and use them in creative ways through play.

STEM Focus: Technology & Tools

Experiences Your Children Will Have

- Exploring different types of technology through pretend play scenarios
- Learning how tools and devices help us in everyday life

Vocabulary

- Device(s): A machine or tool that helps you do something
- Button(s): A part you press to make something happen
- Click: To press or select something to make it do something
- Feature: A special part or ability that something has
- Swipe: To move your finger quickly across a screen or surface

Materials

- Old or non-working devices (phones, keyboards, remotes, cameras, printer, speaker, etc.)
- Working devices (timer, stopwatch, calculator, tablet, camera — if available and used with supervision)

Beginning

- Tell your child, *Today we are going to explore technology!*
- Show your child a few items and explain their names. You might say, *This is a phone. We use it to call people.*
- Explain that some items work and some do not.
- Say, *I wonder what you will discover about these devices!*
- Invite your child to explore freely.

Middle

- Encourage your child to touch, explore, and play with the devices.
- Use the materials alongside your child and imitate how they use them.
- Use the vocabulary words intentionally while interacting with your child.
- Talk about what they are doing. You might say, *You are pressing buttons!*

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- Use specific strategies below, depending on your child's age:
 - Infants and toddlers may explore the materials by mouthing, holding, or pressing the buttons on the items. You can support your child by describing their actions: *You are holding the remote; You pushed the button!*
 - Preschoolers may pretend to use devices (calling, taking pictures). You can support your child by joining their play: *Who are you calling?; What did you take a picture of?; How did you do that?*
 - School-age children may explore how devices work and create more complex play. You can support your child by encouraging leadership and creativity: *Show me how this device works.*

End

- As you notice your child begin to lose interest, give them a warning that you are going to put the materials away. You might say, *In a few moments we are going to clean up. You can try out one more idea with your device.*
- Encourage your child to help you clean up the materials and put them away together.

Additional Learning

- Plan times for children to use technology in a purposeful way (use a calculator at the grocery store; use a stopwatch at the park to track how long it takes to run from one object to another; set a timer for when food in the oven will be done).
- Visit your local library to find books about different types of technology (typewriters, 3-D printers, microscopes, metal detectors, voice recorders, mini cassette recorders). They may even have some of these types of tools available to check out!