

Abstract

Digital dialogue – does it make a difference in early childhood?

Professor Caroline Barratt-Pugh

Family involvement is a crucial aspect of high-quality early education and care. Meaningful family engagement in children's early learning supports positive home-school relationships and ongoing academic success. However, increasingly many families have limited opportunities to connect with early childhood educators about their child's learning. The pressure on educators to engage in pedagogical practices that do not necessarily take account of children's 'funds of knowledge' ultimately disadvantage children, families and educators. Our research explores the way in which digital technologies, such as Seesaw, may help children, families and educators to reconnect. Early childhood educators and parents/carers from pre-primary classes in Western Australia took part in an on-line survey and were invited to take part in a semi-structured interview. The children were invited to take part in focus group discussions. The instruments were designed to elicit participants' perceptions, involvement and outcomes of digital technology as a means of enhancing family- school connections. The findings are under review and will be revealed in this keynote - Digital dialogue – did it make a difference in early childhood?