

A young child with dark hair, wearing a black shirt, is sitting at a wooden table. The child is using a blue marker to draw on a piece of brown cardboard that is propped up. In the background, there is a yellow shelf with various items, including a white box labeled 'BOOK BOX' and some books. A yellow container with several markers is also visible on the table.

Social Media, Technology, and Preschool Programs

Evaluating the Changing Landscape of Parent and Program Communication

An Analysis for the College of Charleston's N.E. Miles Early Childhood
Development Center

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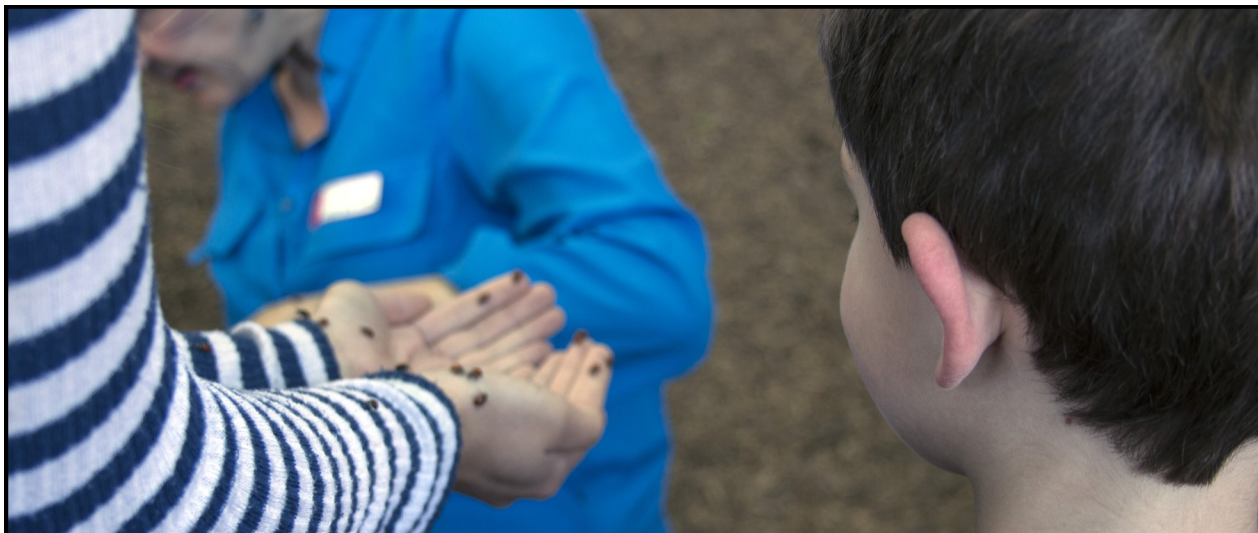
Capstone Action Research Project

Master of Public Administration

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	5
INTRODUCTION	8
ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND	10
ORGANIZATION OF REPORT	11
LITERATURE REVIEW	13
RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH CYBERSECURITY AND E-SAFETY	13
TECHNOLOGY AS A LEARNING TOOL	16
TECHNOLOGY AND PARENT-PROGRAM COMMUNICATION	18
CHILDREN, TECHNOLOGY, AND POLICY	20
METHODOLOGY	22
PARENT SURVEY	23
FOCUS GROUP	24
ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY	24
FINDINGS	26
ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY	26
ECDC PARENT SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS	29
RISKS	29
CAMPUS PROGRAM	33
INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY	37
PARENT-PROGRAM COMMUNICATION	41
DISCUSSION	44
POLICY AND PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS	49
CONCLUSION	52
REFERENCES	54
APPENDIX	58



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Technology and social media has revolutionized the way our society interacts with information. This report describes research conducted from a social constructivist perspective, to assess risks associated with technology and social media at the College of Charleston's N.E. Miles Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC). The literature on early childhood education and technology reveals a growing need to evaluate the risks associated with access to technology, developmentally appropriate practices, and integrating technology into the school ecosystem in a way that supports children and their families.

Assessment of the current parent perspective focusing on technology and social media use in their child's program was completed using a qualitative research design by distributing a parent survey and organizing semi-structured parent-led focus groups. Survey questions were also sent to the National Coalition for Campus Childcare Centers (NCCC) listserv, a membership non-profit supporting the professional development and advocacy efforts of campus childcare programs.

Key findings:

1. Most parents expressed low levels of concerns related to risks associated with cyber safety at ECDC while they do have concerns related to safety of information and identity theft in general.
2. Many parents felt being part of a college campus provided extra layers of support in terms of IT, access to professionals, and being backed by state regulations related to the security and safety of information as an institution of higher education.
3. The greatest risk perceived by parents was the high student employee and visitor traffic.

RECOMMENDATION 1: The program should construct a short list of program policies and distribute the list annually to parents.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The program should revise the student confidentiality form to include language outlining technology and social media use.

RECOMMENDATION 3: The program should revise visitor and observation guidelines to include language prohibiting photographs and video without written permission from a child's guardian.

RECOMMENDATION 4: The program should review and revise its existing social media policy.

RECOMMENDATION 5: The program office should distribute relevant information/studies/articles to families about technology, security, and technology best practices and issues.

RECOMMENDATION 6: The program should evaluate teacher technology interests and implement yearly technology in-services as appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION 7: The program should distribute a short list of policies for student employees at the beginning of each semester.

RECOMMENDATION 8: The program should annually review social media policies.





INTRODUCTION

Our society has been revolutionized by access to the Internet and the other technology tools that connect us with the online environment. Children are growing up in a world saturated with technology and access to information in multiple formats. They have access to interactive media such as computer games and non-interactive technologies in the format of DVD and television programs at an earlier age (NAEYC 2012). Since the development of the Internet, information communication technologies (ICT) have been changing the way our society communicates and learns, revealing new risks not previously associated with a child's safety (Grey 2011). Social media is just one tool generated from ICT providing people the opportunity to increase their social interactions with information (Bertot et al. 2012).

According to a 2013 report, 74.4% of U.S. households use the Internet (U.S. Census). Access to information is getting easier as many technological tools have the capacity to connect to

the Internet. Digital cameras, cellphones, computers, tablets, and video cameras are all tools bridging the information gap. But access does not generate retrieval of quality information and studies have explored the appropriate role technology should have in educational settings (Blum et al. 2010). In 2012, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), in partnership with the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media at Saint Vincent's College, revised their joint position statement on the use of technology as a learning tool to enhance cognitive, emotional, and linguistic development in early childhood education practices (NAEYC 2016). Sixteen principles serve as a template for integrating technology in school settings and to enhance home-school communication systems.

Additional technology options also create new vulnerabilities related to the security of information, confidentiality, and transmission of unwanted material. Given the increasing interest in potential risks of technology usage, the purpose of this exploratory study was to assess the current climate of technology and social media as learning and communication tools in an accredited campus early childhood program from the perspective of parents and administrators from other campus centers. Research questions for the study were:

- How do parents of young children view the risks associated with technology and social media?
- How does the program's position as a campus entity affect parents' views of cybersecurity?
- What responsibility does the program have to integrate and demonstrate technology with young children?
- How do parents feel about current parent-program communication systems used by the program?

The final report will assist decision makers at the N.E. Miles Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC) with assessment of their current social media policy and provide recommendations to uphold confidentiality and strengthen the school-home communication system.

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

Established in 1974, the College of Charleston's N.E. Miles Early Childhood Development Center is licensed by the Department of Social Services (DSS) and accredited by NAEYC, serving approximately fifty-six children aged two through five each academic year (College of Charleston 2016). As a laboratory and demonstration early childhood education program, center staff also work closely with campus and community stakeholders to promote quality education. There are currently 7,206 NAEYC accredited public and private programs in the United States or on international military bases (NAEYC, e-mail message to author, March 8, 2016). ECDC is led by the program Director, Administrative Assistant, and four Master Teachers. The remainder of the staff include five Graduate Assistants all working approximately twenty hours a week and upwards of thirty undergraduate hourly student employees.

The three-part program mission focuses on advocacy, providing quality care to children ages two through five, and being an active laboratory and demonstration program for student and community members (College of Charleston 2016). The program philosophy is rooted in the belief that learning is constructed through play and the exploration of ideas and experiences. The program staff seek to employ effective methods of communication with parent stakeholders to promote community engagement and inclusion that foster an environment that supports student learning (College of Charleston 2016).





ORGANIZATION OF REPORT

The plan for this research project was to assess the context of one campus center and how it approaches the changing landscape of technology and its impacts on school policy and practices. Childcare programs in the United States are accountable or respond to a variety of rules and benchmarks, including state and USDA regulations, labor laws, health and safety requirements, and education standards. ECDC complies with additional administrative layers and policies as a unit of a state-supported higher education system. This report was developed with a social constructive perspective, rooted in the belief that policies should be informed by socially constructed realities from stakeholders (Sneider and Sidney 2009). Stakeholder groups include the program's accrediting body, DSS, College of Charleston, staff, and the parents of enrolled children.

In order to place ECDC policies into a broader context of social media and technology safety for early childhood in general, the first part of the report provides a review of the literature on risks associated with social media use in early childhood settings, the role of technology as a learning tool, and the implications of technology for parent-program communications. This

section also includes descriptions of campus policies related to social media and technology and some of the emerging policies at the national level.

The subsequent discussion describes results from a campus program survey, parent survey, and two semi-structured parent-led focus groups. The recommendations that follow are primarily focused on implementing changes to current program policies and gaining awareness about areas of weakness in order to improve best practices for integrating and using technologies in the ECDC program.





LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of literature about early childhood education, telecommunications, teacher education, child development, computer technology, and law provides insights into risks associated with technology use in early childhood education. In addition, the literature addresses the evolving role of technology integration in the learning environment and technology as a parent-program communication tool.

RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH CYBERSECURITY AND E-SAFETY

Using technology and social media in educational settings creates a complex set of issues related to safeguarding against the threat of dangerous individuals and inappropriate content. Technology provides means for individuals to collect, assimilate, and synthesize information not

previously available prior to the age of the Internet. Risk definition and assessment should be conducted by early childhood programs (Beach 2010). A clear definition provides guidance for staff, parents, and other stakeholder groups.

Major areas of concern identified by parents have been content their children can access and overall safety (Grey 2011; Delen et al. 2015; Heider 2014). Accessibility of information has been made much easier as phones, computers, and tablets all have the capability to connect online. Content is defined as viewable information while safety includes any threat to the physical, technical, or emotional well-being of children within their environment (Grey 2011; Delen et al. 2015).

Common Sense Media (CSM), a non-profit specializing in education research, provides parents with resources to make educated decisions regarding online safety. The site offers suggestions like creating nicknames for children who have an online presence, turning off GPS capability when taking and posting photographs, monitoring

privacy settings, and using photo-sharing sites that require a login like Picassa or Flickr (Common Sense Media 2016). The responsibility to enforce protection lies with all child caregivers. The literature suggests both parents and educators should be held accountable for a child's care (Beach 2010). Maintaining safety requires clear policies for social media users to follow (Simon 2011). Support must also be provided to staff in order to maintain a working knowledge and understanding of changing technology trends.

A concern raised in the literature has been a lack of technology expertise among staff



(Bakir 2016; Beach 2010; Russell et al. 2003). According to a 2007 National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) report, technology is integrated in coursework for initial teacher licensure, but barriers exist in terms of resources and access to expand and practice those skills. Knowledge limitations can result in uncertainty about data safety, storage, and appropriate attribution of information, heightening the potential for putting families and a program at risk.

The NAEYC position statement describes a standard of excellence for educators who want to promote digital literacy and integrate technology in a developmentally appropriate way with children's learning (NAEYC 2016). The statement also reminds early childhood educators they are ethically responsible to families for adopting safe practices when using technology, social media, and communication systems (NAEYC 2016). Continuing education and professional development allow teachers to stay abreast of technologies their families may be using and be equipped to meet parent expectations for information regarding their child (Olmstead 2013).



For parents, risks arise when they don't understand or use the technologies their children use. Knowledge about how to use the Internet and different social media and technology tools provides benefits for both parties in the form of shared responsibilities, engagement, and understanding how children are communicating and experiencing the world (Delen et. al 2015; Hatzigianni and Margetts 2014). Parent involvement with a child's media and technology consumption has become an emerging focus of study (Hatzigianni and Margetts 2014).

In summary, approaches to address risks associated with technology and social media are dependent on context. Protection comes in the form of filtering programs to safeguard against hacking and other malicious activities. The implementation of program level professional development, as well as media policies, guide best practices for adults and children to safely use technology (Grey 2011; Heider 2014; Simon 2011).

TECHNOLOGY AS A LEARNING TOOL

Integration of ICT in the classroom has become widespread in the private and public school sectors. Students have ever-increasing access to technology with personalized learning initiatives and the use of iPads and computers in schools (Blackwell et al. 2014). The 2016 update of the National Education Technology Plan outlines terms for improved access to technology and leadership to support the incorporation of technology in education (U.S. Department of Education 2016). Technology prepares students for a future integrated with multiple learning, communication, and collaboration techniques. A 2015 survey of early childhood practitioners conducted by Teaching Strategies revealed 57% of respondents felt improved access to technology in the form of computers, tablets, and laptops would improve the learning experience in the classroom. The Kaiser Family Foundation's 2007 study on children and media revealed 59% of participant parents felt the Internet had a positive impact on the lives of their children. For older children, it can serve as a research tool. Defining how technology should be integrated into curricula is at the epicenter of modern educational debate. The 2012 revision of the



NAEYC position statement supports the use of technology if used in a developmentally appropriate way. Teachers should “carefully and intentionally use technology and media if and when it serves healthy development, learning, creativity, interactions with others, and relationships” (NAEYC 2016; 5). Technology should augment learning and not replace a child’s capacity to solve problems. Appropriate integrations of tools are considered developmentally appropriate when the tool extends the learning experience of the participant as a way to build knowledge. For example, birds and nests can now be examined through books, viewed through binoculars, or watched on a live webcam.

The literature suggests there is a place for technology in educating children. That space, however, should balance best practices to allow children to develop in an active capacity (Linn et al. 2012). A 2013 study conducted by Northwestern University polled families of children 0-8 years of age on how technology has affected their parenting; survey data revealed parents preferred directing their child to a book or toy as an educational tool over a computer, TV, or mobile device. In contrast, the Kaiser Family Foundation’s 2007 study on children and media revealed 56% of parents of children aged 2 through 6 believed baby videos had a positive effect on child development. A 2013 survey conducted by Common Sense Media portrayed 61% of respondents reported their children, between the age of 0 and 8 years old, watch educational TV shows. The same study reported 38% of children use mobile devices to access educational content and 34% use computers or educational games.

Parents’ beliefs about technology use and appropriate formats can vary, but in 2011 the American Academy of Pediatrics reaffirmed their 1999 position statement regarding limited to no screen time for children younger than two years old. The statement does address the potential

educational benefits of some programs for children older than two, but it provides guidelines for caregivers and reasons why media should be monitored and used carefully with young children.

The integration of appropriate uses of technology to augment the learning environment should be led by educators who are informed about the risks and benefits associated with early childhood technology use and who will apply its use to meet learning goals (Ernest et al. 2014).

TECHNOLOGY AND PARENT-PROGRAM COMMUNICATION

Parent-program communication systems have evolved beyond paper newsletters and notes sent home to messages that enable two-way communication. Collaboration and communication between parents and programs regarding student progress paves the way for student success and progress in school (Hatzigianni and Margetts 2014; Olmstead 2013). Technology has provided teachers a platform to address issues of time restrictions as a method to foster strong home-school relationships (Ramasubbu 2015). NAEYC's position statement recommends that educators use technology to communicate with families and remove barriers to promoting relationships with parents (NAEYC 2016). In early childhood settings, establishing these processes with families is just beginning. Teaching Strategies (2015) reported nearly 70% of educators use technology for parent-program communications, but technology as a learning instrument was valued higher at 61.44% compared to only 23.97% of educators feeling the best use of technology was to communicate with parents. Program communication and teacher buy-in is vital for families to have access to the program and teachers throughout the school year.

Consistent with the NAEYC Code of Conduct, located in Appendix A, early childhood educators are responsible for maintaining a climate of trust that fosters two-way communication

and enables caregivers the ability to act in the best interest of their children (NAEYC 2016). The development of successful communication systems is due in part to clear articulations about how those systems will be used, associated risks, and the benefits they provide for participants.

Relationships are at the heart of successfully implemented communication systems.

Program communications were limited to paper notes and one-on-one meetings until the Internet and computers were made available to the public. Yost and Fan (2014) reported “early childhood educators who have established successful parent-teacher partnerships are more likely to have highly positive involvements with parents and children” (36). According to research conducted by Croll and Kunze (2010), e-mail is perceived as a safe and relatively low risk method for sharing information between a program and parents.

Evaluating the risks of communication systems is important for the dissemination of information. Policies are needed to inform parents and educators about what content is appropriate for sharing electronically and the best ways to communicate with families. Finding methods conducive to both families and programs is important to support a child’s educational trajectory.



CHILDREN, TECHNOLOGY, AND POLICY

A 2009 NCES survey reported 97% of public school elementary and secondary education teachers have at least one computer in their classrooms (U.S. Department of Education 2010). Providing access to technology has become increasingly important in the digital age. Access to technology and social networking sites has blossomed with increased Internet connectivity in homes and at school.

A 2012 Consumer Reports study estimates nearly 5.6 million children under the age of 13 have Facebook profiles, despite regulations that ban children from using the platform (Bartz 2012). Reform efforts, like the Children's Online Protection Privacy Act of 1998 (COPPA), were established to protect children from the information and data mining ploys of marketers. For example, sites are required to request parental consent for children under the age of 13 (Federal Trade Commission 2016). Congress enabled the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) in 2000, to provide guidelines for schools' Internet use, and allocated federal funding to protect children from inappropriate content (Federal Communications Commission 2016). Establishment of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2002 reinforced national physical and cyber protections. These kinds of efforts at the national level provide grounds for the policies and state efforts. At the state level, in South Carolina, the State Educational Technology Plan 2014-2016 focuses on professional development, student engagement, technology infrastructure and procedures, and collaboration with outside stakeholders to provide technically embedded education supporting a new age of citizens (S.C. Department of Education 2016). The reforms, standards, and pressures faced by school districts filter down to, and affect, early childhood education.

The policy context for ECDC includes layers of educational and childcare guidelines that directly or indirectly affect early childhood education. As an accredited program, ECDC implements best practices for the development of children and relationships with families through their code of conduct, policy statement, and other governing documents disseminated to staff. The program also operates within the overarching policies laws affecting the College of Charleston.

As an entity within an institution of higher education, ECDC must comply with the Family Educational and Rights Privacy Act (FERPA) in order to protect the records and information of students (College of Charleston 2016). At the institution level, College of Charleston has a Social Media Team and a webpage outlining policies such as acceptable use, copyright information, IT security policy, personal records privacy and security policy, privacy statement, Web site requirements and guidelines, FERPA/Privacy policies, and student code of conduct that departments must adhere to when engaging in the use of a campus social media site (College of Charleston 2016). The ECDC staff is legally bound to sign the College of Charleston's Confidentiality Policy outlining the protection of information.

“I think it makes it more secure - as an employee of CofC, I am aware of the protocols in place to keep information secure, and feel assured by those protocols. I also think that if a data breach occurred, the College as an IHE and a state agency would be able to implement a plan to assist affected folks with identity protection, credit freezes, and other preventative measures.”



METHODOLOGY

To evaluate the current climate of technology and social media use through the perspective of parents at the N.E. Miles Early Childhood Development Center, the study implemented a qualitative research design utilizing a literature review, parent survey, focus group, and campus childcare administrator survey. The design was developed from a social constructivist perspective, in that knowledge about program policy can be informed through parent participation and input. This perspective is consistent with the program's constructivist approach to educating children. The purpose of this holistic assessment was to determine how collaboration among stakeholders could inform decision makers about best practices for policy implementation.

PARENT SURVEY

A five-question parent survey developed from the literature addressed themes of cyber safety, learning, and communication related to the use of social media and technology in early childhood settings. Table 1 lists the survey questions. The survey was e-mailed to the current family distribution list and parents were encouraged to e-mail responses or return a completed survey to a marked envelope in the facility. A copy of the e-mail sent to families is provided in Appendix B. All responses, regardless of transmission, were recorded anonymously using Excel. ECDC currently serves forty-six families and seventeen surveys were returned representing a 36.9% family response rate.

The first two questions were designed to assess risks ECDC's parents associate with safety and technology in the program. The third question focused on how parents felt about the program's position on campus relative to e-safety and technology. The fourth question was intended to determine the level of responsibility parents expect from ECDC staff when using technology with children. The final question asked parents to evaluate the technologies and methods ECDC is currently using to communicate.

TABLE 1: PARENT SURVEY

1. To what extent is cyber-safety at ECDC a matter of concern to you for maintaining confidentiality & privacy?
2. What risks do you associate with technology and social media use in our program?
3. [How] do you think our university setting affects the security of information at ECDC?
4. What should ECDC's responsibility be to demonstrate/integrate appropriate uses of technology with young children?
5. What do you think about the ways ECDC currently uses technologies for home-school communications (e.g., classroom/website blog; Facebook, e-mail, etc.)

Note: The parent survey was distributed by e-mail to all current ECDC families.

FOCUS GROUP

The survey questions were also used to guide a series of one-hour semi-structured focus groups. Parents of current ECDC children were invited to participate in a focus group session held at the ECDC facility in Charleston, South Carolina. A flexible schedule of lunch and evening sessions were offered to encourage participation. Copies of the e-mail and the flier sent to parents are located in Appendices C and D. The groups were moderated by ECDC's program Director and Administrative Assistant. A total of twelve parent participants attended one of the two brown bag lunch focus groups on February 29, 2016 and March 4, 2016 representing a 26% participation rate.

ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY

The five-question parent survey was also posted on the National Coalition for Campus Childcare Centers (NCCC) listserv, a nonprofit educational group supporting campus early childhood programs, edited slightly for program leaders. A copy of the e-mail is included in Appendix E. Three additional questions were asked in order to gather information from campus programs around the United States related to implementation of policy, training, and current technologies in use. Table 2 provides a list of all eight questions sent to campus administrators. Six programs replied to the listserv survey; two of the surveys were partially completed.

TABLE 2: NCCC CAMPUS PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY

1. Does your program have a social media use policy or another policy specifying use of information technologies?
2. Does your facility engage in any formal cybersecurity training/professional development? If not, is this something you have considered?
3. What kind of technologies does your program utilize to augment and support parent-family communications?
4. What risks do you associate with technology and social media use in your program?
5. To what extent is cyber-safety at your center a matter of concern to you for maintaining confidentiality & privacy?
6. [How] do you think your university setting affects the security of information at your center?
7. What should your program's responsibility be to demonstrate/integrate appropriate uses of technology with young children?
8. What do your families think about the ways your program currently uses technologies for home-school communications (e.g., classroom/websites blog; Facebook, e-mail, etc.)

Note: Administrator survey was e-mailed to the National Coalition for Campus Childcare Center (NCCC) listserv and resulted in responses from six campus programs.



FINDINGS

ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY

One of the six programs that responded expressed a high level of interest in the topic because it was hoping to integrate social media in their center as a communication tool later in the year. They did not, however, have any appropriate responses to the questions at the time the survey was distributed. The Director was interested in using ECDC's questions to poll their parents and compare answers at a later date. Not all school programs have fully embraced the use of technology and social media. Resistance to technology and social media integration could be due to a lack of resources, interest, or expertise as noted in the literature.

Two of the six programs responded to the first question by stating they do have a social media policy and two programs indicated they were either currently working on one or considering making one. One of the centers indicated the program does have a photo policy

explaining photographs may only be taken with program equipment, for educational purposes, and only with permission granted by the parent/guardian.

Three of the five programs responding to the first question indicated some form of cybersecurity training. One program specified the college offers training and another program has one online class to be completed by staff. The program currently working on developing a social media policy indicated implementing training as part of their new policy. The fifth program reported engaging in informal discussion among staff as needed and as indicated by their IT department. (ECDC does not currently provide formal training for cybersecurity for staff. Orientation covers policies related to confidentiality of personally identifying information, and new parents attend a New Family Orientation prior to the beginning of the school year.)

Questions four through eight pertained to reflecting and assessing risks, technology as a learning tool, and family communications in campus programs. Four of the six programs completed these questions. Three of these four programs specifically mentioned cybersecurity as a concern to their program. One program pointed out how easy it is to share too much information and to fail to obtain permission from families to share information. One program did not have any serious concerns with how technology was implemented because iPads are used only for documentation, observation, and researching classroom interests with the children. That program chooses not to use Facebook at this time. The major risks perceived by program leaders included unauthorized information sharing, inability to control postings, and risks associated with confidentiality and professional behavior. One of the programs noted e-security is a concern because it is hard to keep up with technology, and the issue of privacy is a reason why the program has been hesitant to use social media platforms. All four programs agreed their integration as a

college program has given them additional support through their IT departments and access to other experts.

Of the four programs responding to the question related to demonstrating technology usage with children, all expressed some degree of responsibility in the same way they model appropriate practices and behaviors. Two programs mentioned having computers in the classroom. One program revealed their children do get some computer time, but it is limited because the program is cognizant of how much access to technology and media children receive outside of school. Another program reported how they used to use computers for educational games and reoriented their computer time to make it more intentional. The program felt making this change was important to model appropriate practices to their college lab students. The program examples illustrate a commitment to using technology in a developmentally appropriate way.

Of the four programs, three mentioned parents would like more information in some format like a Facebook page. One center noted a program-specific survey revealed families with younger parents seem to want more communication through social media and older parents didn't mind not having that as much. Two of the programs did mention parent satisfaction. In general, parents seem satisfied with current communication methods. All five programs said they use e-mail as a way to support parent-program communications. Four of the programs utilize text formats for communication. Three of the programs said using a form of software: either Teaching Strategies or ProCare as ways to send messages to families. ECDC currently uses e-mail and each classroom chooses their classroom communication format. Table 3 summarizes the campus program survey responses and a complete list of all survey answers is located in Appendix F.

TABLE 3: SUMMARY TABLE OF NCCC CAMPUS PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY RESPONSES	
POLICY	Programs that actively used social media or planning to do so either had a policy in place or had a plan to implement one. Other programs reported having at least a photography policy.
TRAINING	Some programs expressed having access to cyber training or planning to implement some sort of training.
RISKS	Programs expressed concerns related to confidentiality and misuse of information.
TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION	Campus programs felt developmentally appropriate integration is an acceptable use of technology.
CAMPUS PROGRAM	Campus programs felt being part of a campus made them more cyber secure.
PARENT-PROGRAM COMMUNICATION	E-mail was the best way to communicate with families followed closely by using text systems. Two programs did feel their families would like more information via platforms like Facebook.
Note: Six programs responded to the survey e-mailed to the National Coalition for Campus Childcare Centers (NCCC) listserv	

ECDC PARENT SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS

RISKS

Survey responses did vary from extreme concern with online confidentiality to limited or no concern. At least nine of seventeen respondents reported limited or no concern related to cyber-safety at ECDC. One parent explicitly stated they were entirely confident and comfortable with ECDC cyber-safety protocols. Another response showed general concern with maintaining

confidentiality, but not as it related to the program. The parent felt “privacy and confidentiality are concerns. I have confidence that ECDC uses best practice guidelines to protect the children and parent’s privacy.” Deeper concerns were revealed related to personal identifying information, physical safety of children, and identity theft. One parent felt privacy should be upheld by not posting online or on social media anything that could be considered sensitive because of the risks and loss of proprietorship once images are online.

The issue of physical safety appeared in both the responses to the questions and in focus group conversation. One parent responded to the first question by expressing concern for the risk associated with people knowing the location of children. The parent wrote, “[I am] not so worried about confidentiality and privacy, I suppose, as I am with the potential risks that come out of releasing information electronically - such as violent people knowing the locations of centers with children.” Incidents like school shootings have raised the awareness of educators, policymakers, and parents on emergency protocols and the effectiveness of communication systems in times of crisis.

Another parent was very specific about how important it was not to have “my child’s image [...] made public with attribution.” Even though physical safety is a separate issue requiring additional layers of planning and teamwork, there is a correlation to cyber risks. The concern among parents to the location of children has been elevated with the knowledge of shooters on

“I absolutely cannot permit my child’s image to be made public with attribution (her/his name associated with it). In our case, it’s not just a matter of general safety – we have a very specific potential threat that must be avoided.”

campuses and in schools. Cybersecurity is interconnected with the protection of information and a school's capability to relay important information to parents/guardians.

Focus group findings on risks associated with cybersecurity at ECDC: One focus group agreed social networking sites like Facebook are better in terms of their policies on privacy, but one individual pointed out as citizens, we are trusting a corporation with our information and photographs. The level of trust in security of individual's information is challenged due to our lack of control over outside organization's governing policies and protocols.

One participant said they hadn't really thought about cyber safety until the survey came out. Another member was glad to participate, but concerned she wouldn't contribute much because she felt completely comfortable with how the program used technology. Another parent echoed this view because she was at ease with how the program used technology and handled family information. Another parent pointed out it might be helpful to be reminded of those policies parents sign off on because there is too much time between when the policies are re-signed and when the school year begins.

The same group asked about public program functions like the annual ECDC Halloween parade and how to address confidentiality and security when children walk

through campus. The Director pointed out parents have the option to choose not to participate in an event. A summary of survey and focus group responses is listed in Table 4.

Several respondents felt being in a university setting affected ECDC's security of

“My not quite three year old can operate my iPhone with greater ease than I, and that bothers me. It's like some of these interactive technologies are designed to respond to our most basic abilities.”

information positively in that Information Technology and Network Security have programs in place to monitor harmful cyber activity and college staff are granted their own account credentials and prohibited from sharing with other employees. The literature suggested having filter software and account protocols to reduce exposure and confidentiality breaches and these mechanisms are already part of the College’s IT infrastructure (Beach 2010; Chen 2003; Grey 2011).

TABLE 4: SUMMARY TABLE OF SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES ABOUT RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH TECHNOLOGY AND CYBER SAFETY

RESEARCH QUESTION	How do parents view risks associated with cybersecurity at ECDC?
SURVEYS	Parent priorities include child information safety and information about program location. There was also a general level of confidence in the program’s ability to address these concerns. Some parent concerns were related to screen time and integrating technology in a developmentally appropriate way.
FOCUS GROUPS	There was some trepidation with social networking sites as a program communication tool because it is not owned by the College of Charleston.
	Focus group members expressed support for current program protocols related to keeping information about families secure.

Note: ECDC received a 36.9% response rate from families; 26% participation rate for focus groups.

CAMPUS PROGRAM

Access to departments with specialties like Information Technology, Public Affairs, Legal Affairs, and the School of Education's Teacher Learning and Technology (TLT) Department provide added layers of protection and resource. One survey respondent was confident ECDC had access to an IT staff and expertise that did not compare to other preschools or public elementary schools. The ECDC program does have access to campus police and EMS in the same way as any other campus department. Another parent was particularly satisfied with how campus emergency personnel consider ECDC to be a focal point of safety. Many survey respondents felt ECDC's program was strengthened by being part of the college community.

“I love that ECDC is a primary focus of safety if there is a threat on campus.”

Another parent expressed dissatisfaction with IT at the college, but the respondent did not expand on why or how it may impact ECDC operations. Another was confident in their awareness “of the protocols in place to keep information secure, and fe[lt] assured by those protocols. [...] if a data breach occurred, the College as an IHE and a state agency would be able to implement a plan to assist affected folks with identity protection, credit freezes, and other preventative measures.” Many of the respondents to the survey believed being a campus program strengthened ECDC's ability to remain cyber-secure and added layers of security and procedures to protect employees and department information. Only a few people were not sure if being on a campus helped security and one individual didn't think ECDC was any more secure than the SC government.

A risk associated with being a laboratory program and worksite for students emerged from this conversation. One parent noted being on a campus opened up a bigger risk because of all the student employees and their assumed overuse of social media. The parent felt it was very important for students to understand policies in place at the program prohibiting the sharing of information and images. This same parent assumed students sign confidentiality forms, but wondered how or if back-checking occurred to ensure students are using technology appropriately.

With over thirty student employees each semester and 600-800 visitors a year, ECDC's ability to monitor appropriate use of technology devices does pose a challenge. Another parent responded "while I suppose that being a part of a university setting might negatively affect security, I do not feel insecure at all. In fact, because it is such a small, well-managed school with professor involvement, I feel much more comfortable about the cyber safety than if my children were in a large public school where there were fewer "eyes" monitoring issues such as cyber-safety."

The university ecosystem provides a context for adult learning as well. Student employees gain valuable experience by working with children under the supervision of Master Teachers. Providing support in the form of mentorship and monitoring are ways to reinforce the importance of security and censorship for all stakeholders. One parent did not express concern with security and felt confident staff followed appropriate protocols, but thought student employees may compromise ECDC security if they don't follow confidentiality guidelines (e-mail, computer, and talking among peers). Being a part of the campus community provides comfort for most parents because of the added layers of security for college students, faculty, and staff as a campus of more than 10,000 students (College of Charleston 2016). Risks associated with students and confidentiality may be simply a matter of communicating the reasons for precautions and

identifying the different ways confidentiality may be breached.

Focus group findings on being part of a campus community: Both focus groups agreed they felt more secure being a part of a campus. One person observed that the program seems to have a low profile. The parent's sister attended the College as an education major and was unaware of the ECDC program at all. One person noted it also helps that many of the parents interact and work with each other outside of school in some capacity. Concerns raised in both focus groups was visitor traffic, student employees, and being able to monitor and enforce best ethical practices.

One parent asked in a focus group about the current protocols for student employees and volunteers. Another member asked the moderators if students sign confidentiality forms in the same way parents sign off annually on policies. The Director explained all students and volunteers attend an orientation and sign a confidentiality statement. Visitors are told school artifacts cannot be used without permission and signs are posted in observation areas. Parents were curious how oversight takes place, but understood the complexities of being a site for student class observations. One parent reported she saw some of the student employees in class and they seem respectful and are careful when talking about their work at ECDC. One parent in the focus group specifically asked about shelter-in-place and evacuation protocols.



One parent suggested updating the forms students sign to explicitly outline social media and technology use in the classroom. Another parent suggested evaluating what is currently provided to visitors to allow for an added level of information regarding the ban of video or images of children or staff. Table 5 provides a summary of the survey and focus group responses of perspectives related to being part of a college campus.

TABLE 5: SUMMARY TABLE OF CAMPUS PROGRAM SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES

RESEARCH QUESTION	Do parents think ECDC’s university setting affects the security of information?
SURVEYS	In general, information is probably more secure because of campus policies and access to experts.
	Higher risk to confidentiality is perceived because of high student and visitor traffic.
FOCUS GROUPS	Focus group members expressed comfort with being on a campus because of access to experts, EMS, IT, and other professionals. Parents did raise questions related to physical safety that is related to cyber safety in instances when individuals with ill intent find locations with children.
	Some parents were confident in the program’s ability to monitor student staff and visitors, but a handful of parents did ask about the orientation process students must complete. It was recommended by one group to change some of the language in the confidentiality policy to make video and photography a stand-alone violation.

Note: ECDC received a 36.9% response rate from families; 26% participation rate for focus groups.

INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY

Several parents described developmentally appropriate technology use as a means to augment a lesson or learning experience and felt confident in their child's teacher's ability to make those decisions. One parent did not perceive Internet monitoring as an issue because she expected there would be supervision from the teachers. Another parent stated, "I support using technology with young kids when it is an exploration of something driven by curiosity (e.g., watching videos of Orcas), and [...] otherwise I think the use of technology is not something that the kids need at school." One parent was concerned, in general, with how technology seems to tap into an individual's most basic abilities and the fear attached was that children may increasingly be more and more addicted to technology at an earlier age. Another parent noted receiving a tablet as a family gift from a relative with educational games and books on it. She related how she sits with the child on weekends to play and answer questions about the game or stories. Another parent felt if technology was used in a classroom it should be less interactive to allow for exploration. This same parent expressed her preference to see children's imaginative play with each other and with toys over computer games as a way to generate creativity and meaningful connections with the environment. Twelve parents, representing 70.5% of respondents,

“It’s quite ironic the topic of risks and social media came up here [at ECDC]. Just a few months ago my elementary aged child ended up viewing content on a computer that was not appropriate for her/his age. It wasn’t a conversation I expected to have yet.”

mentioned they supported using technology to investigate a topic of research in the classroom, there was no need for formal technology integration, and that parents preferred less integration when using technology in school. One parent expressed a belief that ECDC's approach to cultivating social and emotional growth in children will translate later in life by allowing children to make responsible decisions—even about technology and social media platforms. Two parents specifically stated it wasn't ECDC's responsibility to teach appropriate technology use. At least seven survey participants, approximately 41.1%, expressed support for educational integration of technology to explore a subject of interest in the classroom.

Focus group findings on ECDC's responsibility to integrate technology with children: In one of the focus groups, a parent described observing a student employee appropriately navigating technology with a child. The parent told the group she observed a child wanting a phone or iPad and the student teacher instead offered a folded piece of paper. The child proceeded to spend a few hours creating his own computer using paper and art materials. Focus group parents were in



agreement with technology integration in the classroom in a developmentally appropriate manner and feel additional access should be under the care and supervision of their family. One focus group member favored implementing more technology in the classroom if it helped the teachers.

“The kinds of good citizen, caring/sharing, non-bullying lessons ECDC teaches I think provide a good foundation that translates to social media, with the specific technical challenges it entails following on that basis later.”

Two focus group members reiterated integrating technology further or increasing screen time at ECDC wasn't necessary, as children will get more and more technology when they get to elementary school. A group of five parents agreed the combined amount and exposure to technology and media is a good combination. They were not in favor of increasing it. Another parent pointed out she observed more students using their cellphones on campus and perceived interrupting someone on their phone as rude. One parent said the tactile use of objects is important. Parents were in favor of play and interaction with objects to learn. Another focus group member explained they loved TV at home, and it also generated experiences as their family may choose to dance or act as a response to what is being played. These comments from participants coincide with the literature that parents should be involved with and aware of the technologies and programs children are using and accessing.

One focus group member suggested sending information or articles about technology/education topics appropriate to current program goals/objectives. Another member reaffirmed periodic e-mails about technology and children would show parents the program is thinking about

this topic. This practice would be consistent with current means of information sharing via e-mail to and from the program Director. The group was in favor of having a section on the ECDC website devoted to articles/studies on related topics like Technology and Social & Emotional Development. One parent shared a very relevant story about their elementary school age child stumbling upon inappropriate content while on a computer at a grandparents house, a situation the parent hadn't expected to confront in terms of cyber safety. Table 6 describes a summary of the survey and focus group responses related to technology integration and the early childhood classroom.

TABLE 6: SUMMARY TABLE OF TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES

RESEARCH QUESTION	How do parents view integration of technology in the ECDC early childhood classroom?
SURVEYS	Survey responses reflected trust in ECDC staff to make appropriate technology integration decisions. Also, developmentally appropriate technology integration to augment learning is a priority over technology instruction.
	It's not ECDC's responsibility to teach children about technology.
FOCUS GROUPS	Parents expressed support for current technology integration at ECDC and parents were not in favor of increasing technology.
	Parents were in support of the ECDC program sending information pertaining to the topic of technology and safety to parents.

Note: ECDC received a 36.9% response rate from families; 26% participation rate for focus groups.

PARENT-PROGRAM COMMUNICATION

Online technologies are affecting the changing landscape of communication with parents. Survey respondents' preferred method of communication is e-mail. At least seven respondents, representing 41.1% of surveys, either preferred e-mail or did not think e-mail was overused to communicate with families. One survey reported keeping up with all of the communication systems available at ECDC, but e-mail was preferred because it is private unless shared by the user and it can serve as a method to start a back-and-forth conversation with a teacher.

Comfort with and use of social networking sites to promote communication between the program and parents did vary across survey responses. One parent admitted not being aware of an ECDC Facebook presence and two parents were pleased the ECDC Facebook account and blog were not updated regularly. One of the parents specifically commented on how seeing pictures of children on social media, even without attribution, made the parent nervous because of potential privacy issues. Another parent admitted never checking the Facebook page during their tenure at ECDC, but appreciated the alternate methods of communication like e-mail.



In terms of communication systems, parents were content with most formats, but one parent offered the suggestion of using a program called MailChimp, an e-mail/newsletter service. Another parent pointed out that e-mail is great for providing updates and news about the day, but

not good for sharing media. This same parent remembered a Wix blog being used when their child was in the 2-year-old class and loved all the photos and limited descriptors. Another parent advised the ECDC to consider adopting principles for information sharing through technology. The parent thought a clearer understanding about the amount of information that can be shared among stakeholders or viewers would help inform parents.

Focus group findings on parent-program communications: Several focus group participants responded to this topic stating they liked the two-way communication of e-mail. As a parent, they could choose to respond to the teacher/Director initiating the conversation. For classroom purposes, e-mail is used daily to inform parents through a distribution list of what took place during their child's day. There is no identifying information. One focus group member observed pictures from the classroom Facebook account could be saved on their personal device even

“I don't ever want these updates to become a burden to the teachers and distract from the classroom.”

though it is a secret page. Another parent said she would always like more information, but only if it didn't hinder the teachers' ability to do their job. Some parents did say without a daily note coming from the teacher, they'd be less satisfied with the

variety of classroom communication formats (blog, newsletter, Wiki) and how often they are updated/how they are used. The Director explained that the supplemental tools are an assigned project for the Graduate Assistant assigned to the classroom and the tool may change depending on the student's interest/comfort with different communication formats.

During the focus groups, five or six parents seemed pleased with the choices of communication systems. They liked the amount of e-mail coming from the Director and the

responsiveness of their classroom teachers through e-mail. They also appreciated the program’s use of ReachAlert, the supplement to the College’s CougarAlert system, used by the Director to notify parents if school is closed, if there is something occurring on the street to affect drop-off/pick-up, and not used to send reminders about events. It provides added layers of information for parents who are not campus employees and tied to CougarAlert and adds a failsafe in the event one system doesn’t work properly to issue a message. Table 7 provides a descriptive summary of the results from the surveys and focus groups. A complete list of all responses from the parent survey is included in Appendix G.

TABLE 7: SUMMARY TABLE OF PARENT-PROGRAM COMMUNICATION SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES

RESEARCH QUESTION	How do ECDC parents view current parent-program communication systems?
SURVEYS	E-mail was perceived as a preferred method of communication.
	Not all parents are comfortable with social media sites as a method to communicate with the program.
FOCUS GROUPS	Focus group members expressed satisfaction with current communications from the program. E-mail was preferred. They liked the other communication systems like the classroom newsletter or blog, but without the daily e-mail from the teacher communications between the classroom and the parents would be less satisfying.
	One focus group said they were in support of anything that would support program teachers.

Note: ECDC received a 36.9% response rate from families; 26% participation rate for focus groups.



DISCUSSION

One objective of this project was to gain insights about current ECDC policies to decide what, if anything, should be done with them and to determine if additional actions need to take place. The study revealed general concerns about cyber safety, but not always specifically in the ECDC environment. Cyber safety is a concern in the everyday functions of our life, but most parents expressed comfort in the survey responses and the focus groups with how the program handles secure/confidential information and integrates technology in the classroom to support a learning environment. Themes of sharing excessive information and breaching confidentiality were found in the administrator surveys completed by other program Directors. There was a little concern related to platforms like Facebook in that, as a corporate entity, there is no guarantee of

information and photograph safety. Parents' perceptions of risks found during the study related to the literature in that confidentiality and the security of family information is important and should be protected by a child's caretaker(s) (Grey 2011; Heider 2014).

Two campus programs reported having cyber training either in the form of an online class or through the college to assist staff with becoming more knowledgeable. Integrating training is a way to support program infrastructure and to demonstrate to stakeholders a program takes security of electronic information seriously. ECDC does not currently have a cybersecurity training requirement, but the IT department is available to consult on technology issues and operations. ECDC must also abide by other IT policies for ethical Internet and e-mail practices.

Status as a campus program delivered a sense of security by many parents. Survey and focus group responses shared this perspective. Parents may not perceive ECDC as a high risk target for malicious cyber activity because of campus resources, but monitoring of the issue is part of the program's responsibility to families. Access to experts, IT staff, and higher education policies to guide program regulations provided layers of support not accessible to all centers. Program administrators agreed affiliation as a campus program provides added layers of protection. A few survey respondents were unsure if being part of a campus helped the program's security and another respondent said it probably didn't help any more than the state government. The differing views could require additional research to investigate whether or not campus programs are more secure than non-campus programs. What is evident is the level of trust parents have in the institution their children attend.

In terms of physical safety, the ECDC program engages in a continuous process of evaluation and best practices. The program conducts monthly fire drills, a yearly evaluation of

their emergency plan, and has good working relationships with the campus police, fire marshal, and the Emergency Preparedness team. The theme of physical safety echoed in the survey responses in terms of the program's place as a campus program, but one focus group member specifically asked about security and lock-down measures. Technology and social media are intertwined with physical safety in that Facebook, alternate messaging services providing text and e-mail support, and e-mail directly from program administration are all important for facilitating safe transmission of important information.

Many parents appeared satisfied with technology use at ECDC. Parents were in favor of integrating technology to research a topic of study in the classroom. Parents were not in favor of augmenting technology use during preschool years, because children will have increased access to it when they enter elementary school. In both surveys and focus groups, parents expressed their desire for children to continue to use objects and play as a primary means to learn. This finding supports the literature on appropriate screen time consumption and the importance of play (American Academy of Pediatrics 2011). Parents voiced confidence the program would make appropriate decisions relative to technology use and children at ECDC. The campus program surveys shared a perspective that technology should be used as a tool to support the learning experience. Surveys and focus groups revealed a theme of parent trust in the program. The finding was consistent with the literature on the effect strong teacher-parent relationships have on a student and school success (Murray et al. 2015; NAEYC 2016; Wardlow 2015; Yost and Fan 2014).

Effective communication between a family and a school provides the framework to promote healthy parent-program relationships. The focus groups and surveys revealed parents

prefer the use of e-mail, didn't think it was overused, and liked the length and content of the Director's e-mails. E-mail was also a preferred method of communication with families in the administrator surveys. Responses directly corresponded with results from a 2007 survey conducted by the Youth Protection Roundtable, finding a 0% risk for e-mail as a method to communicate with families (Croll and Kunze 2010). E-mail provides families with an additional method to communicate with their school supporting positive effects technology has on home-school relationships. Building strong partnerships was found in the literature and evidence of trust for program decisions was found during the study.

Parent-program communication systems continue to be a work in progress and one focus group expressed their support of a system that helps teachers and the classroom. Some parents in surveys and focus groups expressed some concern with using social media platforms because of the ECDC program's inability to manage the terms of service. One parent was not sure how to become unaffiliated with a classroom Facebook account. Another parent discovered images could be downloaded from a private Facebook page. The observations from parent focus groups and surveys reveal the program's need for ongoing communication with families about online communication systems and how to determine appropriate methods to continue fostering healthy parent-program relationships. Technology and social media can dramatically impact communications, but only if proper guidelines and rules are understood to ensure ethical and safe online practices. The literature suggested clear guidelines with stakeholder buy-in (Simon 2011).

“I love their imaginative play with each other and with static toys; I think it fuels their imaginations and minds better than any game on an iPad could.”

One outcome of the study was to foster communication between the program and staff in order to inform policy decisions.

The greatest risk of children being exposed or exploited online was inappropriate technology use by student employees or program visitors. Uncertainty about the employee vetting process was evident from a few remarks from parents in surveys and during the focus groups.

ECDC conducts student orientations for all new employees, and all students undergo background checks and sign a confidentiality policy which is the same policy used by the College of Charleston Human Resources Department. A copy of the policy is included in Appendix H. Signs are also posted in the building that phones are not allowed in classrooms. Included in Appendix I is a copy of the Confidentiality, Release of Media and Artifacts policy parent's sign annually.

A perceived lack of awareness of a governing policy for parents and staff reinforces the need to educate families through reminders of best practices so parents feel informed to make decisions and about the safety of their children at school. This finding supports the literature that communication is imperative for a healthy home-school partnership to foster a child's ability to learn and grow (Grey 2011; Wardlow 2015). Communication coming from the program provides channels to promote trust with families. Clear policies at the program level provide structure and understanding for all stakeholders. The relationships families make in an early childhood program are ones that support the emotional and developmental growth of the program, families, and the children to ensure learning is continuous.

POLICY AND PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

Descriptive analysis of results provide insights about parents' perspectives of their early childhood program's technology use, risks associated with integrating technology, and understanding current two-way communications systems. Major themes that emerged from the survey data and focus groups were:

a) concern for visitor monitoring and policy, b)



c) concern for physical safety, c) and vague policy language related to social media and technology.

RECOMMENDATION 1: The program should construct a short list of program policies and distribute the list annually to parents. An example of a short list for parents is included in Appendix J.

Focus group participants admitted to signing off on policies in the Spring of each year, but acknowledged they may forget details by the time they get back to school in August. A few survey respondents mentioned they were not sure if there were governing policies related to social media use. In addition, though not related directly to media and cyber safety, physical safety protocols were raised as a concern. The issue raised related to safety indicates a need to revisit how safety and emergency protocols are shared with families.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The program should revise the student confidentiality form to

include language outlining technology and social media use. An example of a revised confidentiality document is included in Appendix K.

Students complete orientation and sign a confidentiality form in the same way parents do. A revision of the form specifically discussing social media and technology use would eliminate misunderstandings about social media and cell phone policies.

RECOMMENDATION 3: The program should revise visitor and observation guidelines to include language prohibiting photographs and video without written permission from a child's guardian.

Monitoring of visitor traffic and use of media and technology is an on-going challenge. The program should update their observation guidelines sent to faculty and students so they are made aware of program expectations prior to their visits. Also, signage can be added to areas like the observation booths and sign-in area.

RECOMMENDATION 4: The program should review and revise its existing social media policy and create a set of guiding principles for campus stakeholders. An example of a revised policy document is included in Appendix L.

Creating a separate Social Media Policy may reduce ambiguity between what can and cannot be done in terms of sharing and posting information electronically off and on school property.

RECOMMENDATION 5: The program office should distribute relevant information/studies/articles to families about technology, security, and technology best practices and issues.

Parents seemed welcoming to the idea of getting information from the program Director and sending relevant articles to current families, which can reinforce the importance of the topic to the program.

RECOMMENDATION 6: The program should evaluate teacher technology interests and implement yearly technology in-services as appropriate.

Staying abreast with new and changing technologies to integrate or use in the classroom, as forms of documentation, or communication systems with parents are all ways to remain invested in the technological landscape. Professional development at the program level is vital for teachers to be the best version of themselves for the students and families they serve.

RECOMMENDATION 7: The program should distribute a short list of policies for student employees at the beginning of each semester.

Orientation and signed policies are all methods to communicate program expectations. Reminders can help guide current and future professional decisions.

RECOMMENDATION 8: The program should annually review social media policies.

Program office should annually review media and technology policies to ensure they remain relevant with the current culture of the organization and its families. Requesting feedback from families is one way to foster community buy-in as a means to reflect the real parent environment.



CONCLUSION

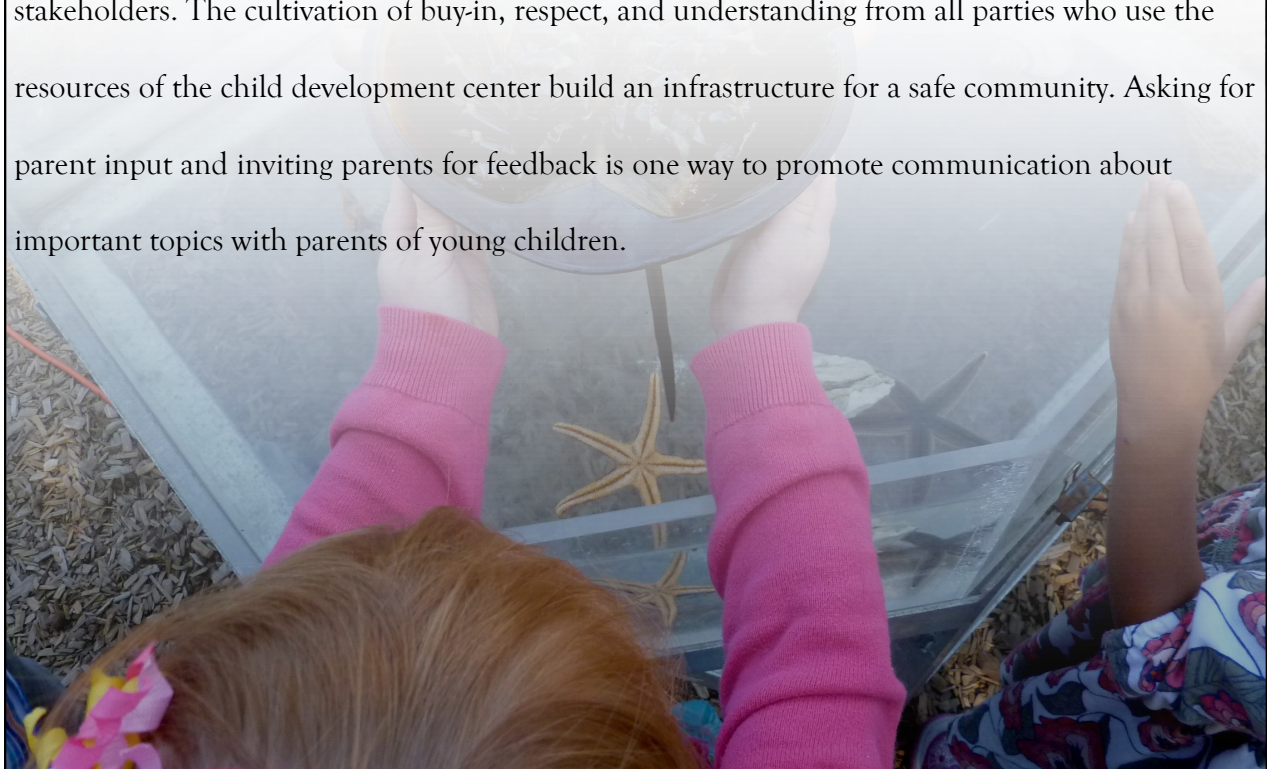
The N.E. Miles Early Childhood Development Center has the unique opportunity to collaborate with campus departments and be protected by current College of Charleston policies. The research conducted at ECDC focused on important issues that influence the education of young children and the ways in which programs communicate with families. The results of this study are not generalizable to all childcare or campus programs in the United States due to the small scale of this project.

Programs actively using social media and technology would do well to re-evaluate policies to ensure best practices are in place as communication systems and parent cultures change. Grey (2011) explains, “cyber risks should not be considered a reason to deny children access to ICT” (77). There are a variety of ways to view risks associated with ICT in the early childhood

setting. Risks should be evaluated and policies adapted to each specific program.

Parents that participated in the surveys and focus groups were pleased with how the program was operating social networking sites, integrating intentional technology use as a learning tool, and monitoring risks at the program level. The responses spoke to the current organizational culture and trust in leadership and technical skills of the teachers entrusted with their children daily. All programs should continue to evaluate policies on an annual basis to stay relevant and ensure best practices are being pursued and to continue monitoring parent concerns.

Education policy permeates all aspects of the learning environment of the child. How programs implement social media, technology, and communications with families can influence successful learning experiences of children and the quality of parent-program relationships. Even with no perceived immediate threats, as a demonstration and laboratory program ECDC has a responsibility to model an ethical and sound policy development process—one that includes all stakeholders. The cultivation of buy-in, respect, and understanding from all parties who use the resources of the child development center build an infrastructure for a safe community. Asking for parent input and inviting parents for feedback is one way to promote communication about important topics with parents of young children.





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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct

Statement of Commitment*

As an individual who works with young children, I commit myself to furthering the values of early childhood education as they are reflected in the ideals and principles of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct. To the best of my ability I will

- Never harm children.
- Ensure that programs for young children are based on current knowledge and research of child development and early childhood education.
- Respect and support families in their task of nurturing children.
- Respect colleagues in early childhood care and education and support them in maintaining the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.
- Serve as an advocate for children, their families, and their teachers in community and society.
- Stay informed of and maintain high standards of professional conduct.
- Engage in an ongoing process of self-reflection, realizing that personal characteristics, biases, and beliefs have an impact on children and families.
- Be open to new ideas and be willing to learn from the suggestions of others.
- Continue to learn, grow, and contribute as a professional.
- Honor the ideals and principles of the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct.

This Statement of Commitment is not part of the Code but is a personal acknowledgment of the individual's willingness to embrace the distinctive values and moral obligations of the field of early childhood care and education. It is recognition of the moral obligations that lead to an individual becoming part of the profession.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

APPENDIX B

ECDC Parents,

Thank you for taking some time out of your busy schedule to respond to this survey about how technologies are used at ECDC. Your thoughts will help guide discussion on this important topic and help us meet the diverse needs and concerns of our parents!

The survey is anonymous.

1. To what extent is cyber-safety at ECDC a matter of concern to you for maintaining confidentiality & privacy?
2. What risks do you associate with technology and social media use in our program?
3. [How] do you think our university setting affects the security of information at ECDC?
4. What should ECDC's responsibility be to demonstrate/integrate appropriate uses of technology with young children?
5. What do you think about the ways ECDC currently uses technologies for home-school communications (e.g., classroom/website blog; Facebook, e-mail, etc.)

APPENDIX C

Dear ECDC Parents,

Happy Friday!

As some of you may know, Catherine is working on the Master of Public Administration (MPA) through the College of Charleston and currently enrolled in Capstone. She is investigating how technology and social media are used for learning and home/school communications. NAEYC states technology should be utilized to enrich a child's learning, but concerns can arise related to best practices, data security, e-safety, and proprietorship of information.

We are trying to determine when we could best schedule focus group conversations with parents interested in discussing various dimensions of this broad topic. Catherine's project has the potential for great practical value to us and I want to encourage as many parents to participate as possible, as what she learns will be very helpful in ongoing development of policy/procedures. She will also be distributing an anonymous survey prior to the meetings to provide direction and focus for the conversation.

We have the opportunity to be flexible in scheduling multiple sessions on different day/times depending on the interest level. We can also provide students to babysit children for \$5 per child. Right now we are looking at the week of Feb 29th - Mar 4th (week before break). Please email Catherine back with the following information IF you are interested in being part of this focus group:

Brown Bag Lunch

Best day of the week:

Time: 12-100 100-200

Evening (not Tuesday)

Best day of the week:

Best time: 5:30-6:30 6:00-7:00 6:30-7:30 7:30-8:30

Need babysitting: yes or no

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to hearing from you,

Catherine Merrow

Administrative Assistant

N. E. Miles Early Childhood Development Center/College of Charleston

91 Wentworth Street

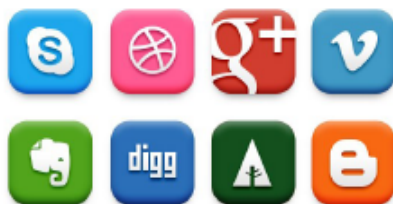
Charleston, SC 29424-0001

p. 843.953.5631

APPENDIX D



**Social Media, Technology, and
Preschool Programs:
The Changing Landscape of
Community Engagement**



When: Feb. 29-Mar. 4

Times: To be determined by you!



**Contact Catherine at merrowc@cofc.edu or
953-5631 with your interest**



APPENDIX E

Hi All,

We have sent out a 5 question survey to our parents to help us develop an agenda for focus group conversations about the use of social media, technology, and cyber-safety. We had added three additional program level questions. Our long term goal is responsive policy-making/strategic planning. If any of you are engaged in this discussion at your programs, and wouldn't mind answering the questions below, it would be so helpful. AND I will post the results of our survey analysis, identifying what seem to be the most pressing concerns of families/centers.

1. To what extent is cyber-safety at your center a matter of concern to you for maintaining confidentiality & privacy?
2. What risks do you associate with technology and social media use in your program?
3. [How] do you think your university setting affects the security of information at your center?
4. What should your program's responsibility be to demonstrate/integrate appropriate uses of technology with young children?
5. What do your families think about the ways your program currently uses technologies for home-school communications (e.g., classroom/websites blog; Facebook, email, etc.)
6. Does your program have a social media use policy or another policy specifying use of information technologies?
7. Does your facility engage in any formal cybersecurity training/professional development? If not, is this something you have considered?
8. What kind of technologies does your program utilize to augment and support parent-family communications

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<http://ecdc.cofc.edu/>

2016 Campus Program Survey Responses						
Survey Questions	Program Responses					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Does your program have a social media policy or another policy specifying use of information technology?	<p>We do not use Facebook and we do not allow student teachers to take photographs with their phones. The classrooms use iPads for observation data collection and researching a topic of interest with the children--that's all.</p>	<p>No, but we are working on creating one.</p>	<p>Yes, we do not allow teachers or students to post about our center on social media.</p>	<p>No but we have discussed it and are considering making a policy. We have a clear policy on use of photos. They may only be taken with a school camera or tablet and used only for assessment, documentation boards, or educational purposes with permission granted by parents.</p>	<p>We do.</p>	<p>I'm very interested in this discussion because we are hoping to embark on some social media/internet adventures for the center this year. Are these the 5 questions you asked parents? I assumed you changed pronouns for the purposes of director responses. My answers wouldn't be helpful yet but if I were to poll my parents we could compare responses for more.</p>
2. Does your facility engage in any formal cybersecurity training/professional development? If not, is this something you have considered?	<p>The college offers training and email guidance on this.</p>	<p>Not yet, that will be part of the new policy.</p>	<p>Yes. One online class.</p>	<p>Not formally. We discuss issues as we are alerted by the IT Department.</p>	<p>No.</p>	

APPENDIX F

<p>3. What kind of technologies does your program utilize to augment and support parent-family communications?</p>	<p>We use email, text messages and Teaching Strategies GOLD--newsletters, weekly planning forms, etc.</p>	<p>Website, regular emails sent from center directors to parents, messages on ProCare. Teachers also may send texts, photos and videos of a child to his/her parent (i.e. video of child's first steps).</p>	<p>Email and text</p>	<p>Email and Teaching Strategies</p>	<p>email, and a texting program that is one way; we test them but they can't text back.</p>
<p>4. To what extent is cyber-safety a matter of concern to you for maintaining confidentiality & privacy?</p>	<p>I'm not very concerned and our families have not expressed concern.</p>	<p>A very big concern. It is too easy to share too much, to fail to get parent permission to share or to allow people who should not have access to info/photos to view them.</p>	<p>It is a very great concern</p>	<p>It is a concern. With parents, lab students, staff, etc. we have had to be vigilant and thoughtful as technology continues to change. We have been hesitant to use social media because it is so challenging to keep it private.</p>	
<p>5. What risks do you associate with technology and social media use in your program?</p>	<p>I do not see risks with the way we use it.</p>	<p>Unauthorized sharing of information and photos of children.</p>	<p>Inability to control what is posted resulting in breach of confidentiality.</p>	<p>Confidentiality, misuse of information, lack of professionalism.</p>	
<p>6. [How] do you think your university setting affects the security of information at your program?</p>	<p>The college is very IT savvy and makes me feel more, not less secure.</p>	<p>UF's IT department is diligent about making sure information shared through email is secure; they have little control over social media postings.</p>	<p>Our campus is extremely concerned about cyber security. They test all of our on-line environments before we can use them.</p>	<p>It holds us to a higher standard than I see in the community. It also gives us a layer of protection, expertise and guidance that others don't have.</p>	

<p>7. To what extent to you believe your program has a responsibility to demonstrate/ integrate appropriate uses of technology with young children?</p>	<p>Parents would always like more information about their children-- for the most part they seem pleased and satisfied.</p>	<p>They would like more information, more easily accessed. They would like a Facebook page.</p>	<p>We use emails and texts as a form of communication which seems to be appreciated by our families.</p>	<p>We wish Teaching Strategies had better family communication features than it does. Our younger families often wish we were more connected to social media. Our older families don't mind. Because communication in general has become so tricky, I did a survey with teachers recently about how they communicate with families and then used that information to facilitate a discussion at a parent association meeting. It was interesting. Some families still like paper and others like email, but the one thing they all agreed on was that they like face to face more than anything. I also gave up my monthly newsletter this year and moved to a weekly Director's Notes email on Friday (or Saturday depending upon what kind of week it is :-) There are quick reminders about upcoming closures, parent meetings, field trips, etc. and usually a resource(s) (eg, transitioning to kindergarten, free things to do over spring break, screen time, etc.). Parents have been really positive about the fact that they can go to one email for information.</p>
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<p>8. What do your families think about the ways you currently use technologies for home-school communications (e.g., classroom/website blog; Facebook, email, etc.)</p>	<p>I do think we do have this responsibility just as we model other appropriate behaviors.</p>	<p>To a large extent. We have a responsibility to keep information and child identity safe. That said, we also recognize that the sharing of info/photos parent to parent is beyond our control and we can only recommend and advise. Our plan is to establish a Facebook page that will only allow Baby Gator administrators to post information.</p>	<p>Our preschoolers do get time on computers, but I resist bringing this increasing this since children already get so much screen and on-line time. We use email and text as a form of communication which seems to be appreciated by our families.</p>	<p>I believe that we need to model appropriate use for our lab students. We have done this with having a computer in the classroom for children to play educational games. We moved away from this and use computers and other technology in a much more intentional way now.</p>
<p>Note: All survey data was assembled in a table to assess responses with questions to determine themes.</p>				

2016 Parent Technology Survey Questions and Responses				
Survey Questions				
	<p>1. To what extent is cyber-safety at ECDC a matter of concern to you for maintaining confidentiality & privacy?</p> <p>#</p>	<p>2. What risks do you associate with technology and social media use in our program?</p>	<p>3. [How] do you think our university setting affects the security of information at ECDC?</p>	<p>4. What should ECDC's responsibility be to demonstrate/integrate appropriate uses of technology with young children?</p> <p>5. What do you think about the ways ECDC currently uses technologies for home-school communications (e.g., classroom/website blog; Facebook, email, etc.)</p>
	<p>It is of great concern to me. I am a techno-phobe by nature, and do not post online the names or locations of my daughters' daycares. I'm not so worried about confidentiality and privacy, I suppose, as I am with the potential risks that come out of releasing information electronically - such as violent people knowing the locations of centers with children.</p>	<p>The accidental release of information like SSNs is a concern for identity security, although I believe that risk is low. Social media always brings the potential risk of unwanted people recognizing children and targeting ECDC for malicious purposes. I'm not sure how high that risk really is, but it seems more substantial than the data release risk.</p>	<p>I think it makes it more secure - as an employee of CofC, I am aware of the protocols in place to keep information secure, and feel assured by those protocols. I also think that if a data breach occurred, the College as an IHE and a state agency would be able to implement a plan to assist affected folks with identity protection, credit freezes, and other preventative measures.</p>	<p>Again, I am a techno-phobe, but I think the less integration children have with technology, the better. If technology is integrated, I actually think the less interactive it is, the better. My not quite three year old can operate my iPhone with greater ease than I, and that bothers me. It's like some of these interactive technologies are designed to respond to our most basic abilities, almost guaranteeing our children will be tech zombies before elementary school. I love their imaginative play with each other and with static toys; I think it fuels their imaginations and minds better than any game on an iPad could.</p> <p>I keep up with each method, but I like email best; it's easy to access, is private unless I decide to share it, and can actually create a conversation (by folks responding to it) rather than act as a newsletter-type communication tool.</p>

APPENDIX G

<p>Significant that we password-protect all our devices, have segregated account for kids' use, and encrypt data but not so strong that we have a home firewall.</p>	<p>Kids will have screen time for most of their lives after early childhood, and I mean almost all of every day. ECDC is such a good place to stave that off and let them just be creative, hands-on learners and players. b. I'm not terribly concerned about my kids' images ending up on social media or anything like that.</p>	<p>a. ECDC no doubt has at its disposal an IT and IA staff that dwarfs that of most public elementary schools and certainly that of independent pre-schools. Thus there should be a more robust than average infosec posture. b. Being staffed with students, on the other hand, each with their own computing device and probably still pretty naïve about infosec do present challenges that a more senior staff would not necessarily, although their education level does offset it.</p>	<p>Even without a lot of exposure to it, simple lessons about security can be reinforced. Just as we show our kids that we lock the car or the house when we leave, kids can be shown that computers and phones should normally be locked and that random people using them is weird.</p>	<p>a. The Butterfly teachers should give classes on how to deliver succinct status reports. I always read daily status updates from them because they're reliably all interesting or cute. b. The use of banner images in email is something that I don't really like because while it works on a desktop, it just clutters the display on a phone. c. I've not really accessed the class website and/or blog in my years as an ECDC parent.</p>
<p>None</p>	<p>None – even the use of social media internally causes me no concern. None.</p>	<p>I do not. I think we experience no more risk at ECDC than we do using any on-line technology for payments, storage of information, etc.</p>	<p>I'm not sure. I support using technology with young kids when it is an exploration of something driven by curiosity (e.g., watching videos of Orcas), and but otherwise I think that the use of technology is not something that the kids need at school. No need to train them on computers, etc. – they will get it eventually (my kids only get iPads when sick or for a very special treat). I also think that the amount of TV consumption that is happening at ECDC is perfect. No need for more, no concern that there needs to be less. It is used very appropriately.</p>	<p>Ya'll do an excellent job! It might make your lives easier to switch from a blog to a system of using a closed Facebook page for every class, to keep a running update to the parents of what is happening. If that's easier for you, I support. If that isn't easier, I do not support. You all are awesome!</p>

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3

4	<p>Since my child's future placement and opportunities can be very effected by any information about her school performance or medical conditions, due to her having an IEP and being designated with a learning disability, the dissemination of information about her and how it is conducted is a concern for me.</p>	<p>a. A fair bit of communication via SMS texting goes on and a high degree of discourse about PTA-type activities secondary to the formal curriculum occurs on Facebook and to a lesser extent on other social media. b. It is unclear if there are any formal policies related to the use of images of students or information about students on social media. There are no strong cultural guidelines for how parents do the same thing.</p>	<p>I imagine it actually improves it a bit because FERPA and information security have consequences and resources behind them. In a private setting I'd imagine they don't have the resources, knowledge, or impetus to address such things and probably follow the best/easiest communication methods without regard for security.</p>	<p>a. I think this population is still in the developmental phases where heavy technology use as a replacement for physical manipulation activities is developmentally frowned upon so probably heavy technology integration isn't a great idea. As such, opportunity to discuss and demonstrate appropriate social media and communications technology is probably not very available. b. The kinds of good citizen, caring/sharing, non-bullying lessons ECDC teaches I think provide a good foundation that translates to social media, with the specific technical challenges it entails following on that basis later.</p>	<p>a. I'm a little uncomfortable because it doesn't seem like there is a governing policy and strategy, which opens up to risk of parent misunderstanding and perceived staff mis-use. But, I personally haven't seen any or at least very many communications that identify and single out students, which I think would be the most uncomfortable for parents. The kinds of broad communication activities I've seen related to activities, events, policies, updates, strike me as fine.</p>
5	<p>I think ecdc does a great job keeping our kids safe. That's very important to us.</p>	<p>I think y'all do a good job, though there is a public ecdc Facebook page with kids in photos. Perhaps make it private?</p>	<p>I love that ecdc is a primary focus of safety if there is a threat on campus</p>	<p>I think today's youth are obsessed with technology. If you put computers in the class that's all they'd want to do. But somehow they need exposure. Maybe a "library day" where they borrow books and can learn to use them?</p>	<p>It's great</p>

6	<p>Minimal concern, personally, although I appreciate and respect that it may be a concern for others.</p>	<p>Privacy, developmentally appropriate activities.</p>	<p>Not sure.</p>	<p>I prefer little to no technology with kids this age. They get much more benefit from manipulating real objects. Plus kids are often getting enough or more than enough "screen time" outside of school. In terms of modeling appropriate behaviors, I think student workers should check their phones at the door so that they're (a) maximizing interaction with kids and (b) not modeling interacting with electronic devices. In terms of using tech for projects with kids (i.e., researching info online), I'm not sure how I feel about this, but prefer using other source materials as much as possible, so kids learn that there are other answers besides "look it up on the computer".</p>	<p>The ECDC blog doesn't seem very active (and I don't seem to get any notifications about new posts) and presumably can be seen by anyone, so necessarily needs to keep personally identifying info at a minimum. This makes it less useful as a method for communicating with currently-enrolled families, but it is a nice venue for demonstrating the program to outsiders. Email is great for news and updates, but terrible for sharing media. I liked the wix blog that happened a couple of years ago in either sunflowers or seashells - lots of photos, no need for names and little description; however it looked like it may have taken a lot of time and could potentially be shared outside the group. Overall, I think it's a work in progress and probably always will be, with how quickly technology evolves. For this reason, it might be prudent for ECDC to adopt some guiding principles for sharing information and media, linking the appropriate amount of detail to share as a function of potential audience.</p>
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7	<p>It ranks pretty low on my list of cyber-concerns, as I have bigger privacy fears as cyber security relates to banking, email, identity theft, etc. Certainly there's the potential for someone to spy/stalk children through social media, but it's not a huge worry to me.</p>	<p>My chief concerns would be someone exploiting children through social media and technology working efficiently during crisis communication. To date, I've been very happy with how ECDC has navigated these challenges, which are common to any school.</p>	<p>You would hope that the information technology resources available through the College would benefit ECDC and information security.</p>	<p>I'm not sure what ECDC should be obligated to so in this regard, but I do support the occasional use of resources like YouTube (via an iPad) to reinforce teaching lessons.</p>	<p>People might have different opinions about the best manner of communicating some of these things, but regardless of the medium, I always enjoy seeing updates from the classroom. That said, I don't ever want these updates to become a burden to the teachers and distract from the classroom.</p>
8	<p>My concerns are not with ECDC specifically, but more with things online in general. I just don't like, personally, having a lot of information out there where I can't control it and don't have ownership of it.</p>	<p>For our family it's not a concern, but I know that for some families, for various reasons, they do not want their child's photo "out there." I could see issues arising if student workers took pictures with their phones and used them without this. But I thought ECDC's policy requires students to put phones away while working?</p>	<p>I feel like it is more secure, because CofC already has a lot of cyber-security structures in place. ECDC has a network of knowledge to draw upon, since it is not a stand-alone school.</p>	<p>I think if you can find a way to use the technology to supplement the great hands on work that you already do (like with maps) then it is useful. I just don't want it to take away from real play. Maybe it would be good to think about teaching technology etiquette and best practices?</p>	<p>I definitely appreciate that the Facebook group is set to private for my child's class. I enjoy seeing all of the pictures, but I still appreciate getting "official" notices by email, because I am on their all the time, but not always on Facebook.</p>

9	<p>Not a concern; I trust you to take necessary precautions.</p>	<p>Not many--I'm guessing the Undergraduate employees are told not to post photos of our children and are encouraged to keep information private, but they would be the only ones I'd worry about and outside visitors I guess.</p>	<p>In terms of equipment/software IT support we are probably better off but because of the level of visitors we are at higher risk (can only guarantee so much!)</p>	<p>I know the teachers are thoughtful about it and try to incorporate it meaningfully as it relates to topics they are studying. Sometimes I wish they did more, but I know I they are mindful of its appropriateness.</p>	<p>My child's teacher uses email exclusively, which is fine for me. I occasionally see things on the school's Facebook page, but it seems to be used sparingly and I'm sure us not shared publicly, but I haven't really thought/asked about that.</p>
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<p>1 0</p>	<p>It is a concern, in that I absolutely cannot permit my child's image to be made public with attribution (his name associated with it). In our case, it's not just a matter of general safety – we have a very specific potential threat that must be avoided.</p> <p>I do not know the methods used for data & information management in your center, however, I trust ECDC and would expect that you would maintain only the highest confidentiality standards. That's why I haven't inquired for more detail.</p>	<p>See answers to 1st and 3rd question.</p>	<p>The student workers. There are so many, and as you know, social media use – often inappropriate – is rampant with college students. It is essential for them to understand that the children's images and information must not be shared. Again, I expect that you all have student workers sign confidentiality agreements & behavioral standards. I do wonder if there is any back-checking that occurs (i.e. the checking of student worker phone upon the end of their shift). Perhaps their phones could be taken from them while on a shift?</p> <p>Less a concern is the fact that many of the parents know each other due to working together at the College in varying degrees of closeness. I feel that we all are very comfortable and trusting of one another, but that it may be easy for parents to remark to others about each other's children being at ECDC. Then others who are not "in the circle of trust" of ECDC families are aware of where those children go to school.</p>	<p>I think you're doing it already – very limited access and for educational reasons only. We only recently got a tablet (from a relative as a gift) for our child, and have loaded some fun educational apps and books on it. He calls it his "game." We allow him very limited access to it on weekends only for small chunks of time – 30 mins at the most at once. I'll often sit with him to play with him and discuss what's going on.</p>	<p>I'm happy with them! I love the daily updates and all the emails from the Director, etc. I feel very connected. I'm a big FB user, however, I am glad that ECDC doesn't routinely update/post on your FB page. Seeing pics of the children on social media, even without names, makes me nervous. Unfortunately those images really aren't private – who knows where they could end up.</p>
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<p>11</p>	<p>I am only concerned with identity theft and the home location of children pictures being accessible.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>IT here is a nightmare, but our payment information is probably pretty safe</p>	<p>I don't think it is ECDC's job to teach children how to appropriately use technology.</p>	<p>good, but a place where we could go (a blog) and look back on announcements we missed or discussions we missed would be helpful.</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>I hadn't thought much about it because I don't think of ECDC as a target. However, overall cyber-safety is very important to us.</p>	<p>The risk I see is that the kids find themselves more stimulated by an iPad video over reading a book on building something with blocks (as an example). And therefore, it becomes their preferred source of entertainment. However, I think a balance is important. Kids need the exposure to it because it's the way of the world and we don't want them behind the times.</p>	<p>I don't have a view.</p>	<p>I don't see it as a responsibility of ECDC to demonstrate use of technology; however, I value the Director's view and that of our teachers as to how best to integrate it at home and would be very open to that input</p>	<p>I love the frequent email communication from the Director and our teachers. I find it very helpful and useful information. I don't feel email is overused.</p>

<p>13</p>	<p>I expect at ECDC that any internet usage is done under the supervision and observation of one of the teachers.</p>	<p>Initially I do not see any risks except in terms of time. My husband and I often tell our children that they will have a limited time to use their imaginations and play, but they will have all their adult lives to use technology.</p>	<p>I would imagine it makes it safer.</p>	<p>It is always helpful to have guidance on what tools for parents could be helpful and useful. Perhaps on apps which actually help the development of reading and writing. By help, I mean based on what is already known in these field. However, I'm not sure I see that as a role for ECDC.</p>	<p>I like them</p>
<p>14</p>	<p>I feel that anything that is sensitive and private should not be put on the internet or posted on social media. Really, there is no privacy on-line. Anybody can see anything and once pictures are out there you don't really "own" them.</p>	<p>One of the things I like best about ECDC is that the children are playing with materials in the real world and not on computers. I think that is a strength of your program. I am not a fan of FB. I don't think it provides any security and it is not my preference for sharing information or pictures of our children at ECDC. Also, once families leave how do you exit the FB group?</p>	<p>I don't really know. I think there are the same risks associated with a larger group such as a university versus individuals. There is no privacy.</p>	<p>I think everything shared should be shared in-house as much as possible such as on email.</p>	<p>I receive a lot of newsletters and updates through mailchimp. My perception is that is much more secure than FB. That is my preference for receiving information from teachers. That and email. Again, I am not a fan of blogging or FB to share information about our children. I don't think it's secure.</p>

<p>15</p>	<p>I feel completely comfortable with the policies in place at ECDC regarding cyber-safety.</p>	<p>As the program is run now, I don't see any risks with the technology and social media used in the program. I feel as though I have an extra layer of comfort, however, as an Early Childhood faculty member within the Teacher Education department [TEDU]. I know most of the students in our programs and so also know most of the students who work for ECDC. My children have attended my classes to volunteer how young children learn/ understand mathematical concepts. Simply put, my level of comfort with my children's exposure within the college community is very high. I don't worry at all about their cyber-safety as it relates to ECDC -- based on my trust and comfort with the College, ECDC, and the Early Childhood TEDU students.</p>	<p>I realize that many students are in and out of ECDC due to the fact that ECDC is a lab school. So, I understand that students may inadvertently share a picture or video from my child's class (even if technically prohibited). However, I still feel comfortable as I know most of the students in our programs and feel as though they are responsible and thoughtful. So while I suppose that being a part of a university setting might negatively affect security, I do not feel insecure at all. In fact, because it is such a small, well-managed school with professor involvement, I feel much more comfortable about the cyber safety than if my children were in a large public school where there were fewer "eyes" monitoring issues such as cyber-safety.</p>	<p>I am a firm believer that technology should supplement learning in a positive way and not just be used for the sake of using. If the staff at ECDC finds that a technology is helpful in expanding their knowledge, learning, motivation, etc., then I support the use of the technology. I do, however, believe that there is NO substitute for children touching, feeling, running, jumping, manipulating, etc. So I still want them engaged in activities that are hands-on. For example, while base-ten blocks and other mathematical manipulatives are cool to have on the Smart Board/iPad and can help with learning outcomes, I still want my children using real, three-dimensional base -ten blocks, counters, unifix cubes, pattern blocks, etc.</p>	<p>I feel great about this.</p>
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16	<p>I always think privacy and confidentiality are concerns. I have confidence that ECDC uses best practice guidelines to protect the children and parent's privacy.</p>	<p>I'm not a huge fan of introducing children to computers, iPads, smartphones at an early age. I think it is important to limit screen time and focus more on social interaction and play. So from that perspective, too much familiarity is not necessarily a good thing in my mind. I really don't think social media has a place. I see college students (girls in particular) who are too hung up on social media and comparing themselves to others. I don't think we need to be encouraging this.</p>	<p>Hmm, I'm generally not too concerned about security. I think the staff follows all procedures and recommendations. The only point I would bring up is that perhaps students are not the most secure. For example, they may not follow guidelines for confidentiality insofar as email and computer procedures, they may also be more apt to gossip? That could leave us not as secure.</p>	<p>I think it is ECDC's responsibility to weigh the benefits of technology use in the classroom and make sure it is not abused for entertainment sake.</p>	<p>I think email and classroom blogs are good (secure). I was not aware of a Facebook presence.</p>
17	<p>It is a concern when any personal data or photos of the children are stored on computer media, but not much more than cyber-safety concerns at any public institution that stores personal data.</p>	<p>Minimal because ECDC is run by smart and considerate people.</p>	<p>I do not think the university setting affects the security any more than the SC Government</p>	<p>The responsibility should be to limit screen time, but not eliminate screen time. The content should not be any different than what is currently presented in books e.g. no Disney movies should be playing during school hours. Educational media; however, should be explored and I trust the teachers to know what appropriate media is beneficial.</p>	<p>I like it. It is helpful to communicate to parents and allows us parents to choose when the information is consumed.</p>
<p>Note: All survey data was assembled in a table to assess responses with questions to determine themes.</p>					

APPENDIX H

COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON

Confidentiality Statement for Student Employees

As a Student Employee, I acknowledge that I may come in contact with information concerning faculty, staff, students, and other organizations. This information is both personal and confidential in nature. Releasing this information to a third party could be damaging to the student/supervisor involved and may be illegal.

Therefore, I will not:

1. Discuss any information with any person or organization outside of my immediate department (without specific instruction from my supervisor).
2. Provide in writing any information to any person or organization outside of my immediate department (without specific instruction from my supervisor).
3. Use any information for personal or economic gain.

My signature acknowledges that I understand the above statements and that I may be reprimanded or terminated if I violate this confidentiality agreement.

Signature

Printed name

Date

APPENDIX I**4.4 Confidentiality, Release of Media and Artifacts (4.E.07)**

Because ECDC is a laboratory/demonstration school, there are many students and members of the community visiting ECDC and doing observations, research, and practicum activities. During these activities, strict family confidentiality is preserved. Children are identified to observers by first name only.

Individual child files and assessment portfolios may only be accessed by

- Master Teachers
- Program Director
- Administrative Assistant
- Authorized representatives of the state DSS licensing agency
- Authorized representative from the NAEYC accreditation team
- Health officials with specific authorization from parents
- The signatory family representative(s) for individual children (4.E.07)

Due to the unique nature of the relationships that may exist between our student employees and family members, many of whom are college staff or faculty, child files are not open to student employees (Graduate Assistants and Student Assistants). Information that Master Teachers deem necessary for planning, instructional, or assessment purposes is shared verbally with student staff members on a need-to-know basis.

If practicum students working in a classroom need to document their work with photographs or work samples, written permission is requested from parents before these items are released to the student for use, with the *Permission to Use Classroom Artifacts* form.

Teachers are expected to use photographs or other media in individual assessment portfolios and reports. Similarly, as a demonstration program, ECDC has a responsibility to share our work with others. We are making increasing use of digital media to create visual documentation of children's work and learning that are presented in hallway displays and posted to the *Projects* page and/or the blog on our website. Parents are given the opportunity annually to sign a release permitting the *routine* use of children's photographs and/or work for these purposes.

Specific written permission will be requested prior to any release of images or child artifacts for campus or public relations purposes to community media and compilation of NAEYC accreditation classroom and program portfolios.

All our staff and parents are required to sign confidentiality agreements. We require that families respect the privacy, not only of their child(ren), but of all other children and families. We encourage open, honest, informal and frequent communication among staff and parents. However convenient, hallways, classrooms, or the playground are not appropriate places for conversations about sensitive matters. A child's teacher or the director may suggest a follow-up phone call or meeting to discuss concerns raised initially in regular conversation that would be more appropriately addressed privately.

We do not ask for private information (social security numbers) that could be used fraudulently by others. For student employee records, ECDC complies with all federal confidentiality requirements as outlined by the university's policies for compliance with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* per the federal FERPA law.

For requests of ECDC for information regarding the children, we use signed releases from parents.

All staff and families are reminded that no identifying information about ECDC children, families, or activities may be posted on personal social-networking sites.

Child and staff files are kept locked in the director's office after hours. ECDC also complies with the CofC policies for record retention, destruction, and archiving.

<http://www.cofc.edu/~rr/types.php>

APPENDIX J

PARENT REMINDERS– SHORT LIST

Building access: Do not let in anyone you do not know. Ask the individual to ring the doorbell and use the intercom.

Building access cont'd: Do not mark doorcards in any way.

Illness: Children must be fever free for 24-hours without medication in order to return to school.

Pick-up: DSS requires you to sign your child in and out daily and only individuals on your Pick-up list are allowed to do so (no current ECDC staff are permitted to pick-up/transport children).

Social Media: No identifying information about ECDC children, staff, families, or activities may be posted on personal social-networking sites.

Tuition: Delinquent accounts will be reported to the Treasurer's Office for collection by the end of each fiscal year.

Parking: College Parking Enforcement (PLot) and City of Charleston (Wentworth St.) will ticket anyone violating restrictions.

APPENDIX K

COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON

NE MILES ECDC

Confidentiality Statement for Student Employees

As an ECDC Student Employee, I acknowledge that I may come in contact with personal/confidential information concerning faculty, staff, students, and other organizations. Releasing this information to a third party is not permitted and may be illegal.

Therefore, I will not:

1. Discuss program information with any person or organization outside of my immediate department without specific instruction from my supervisor. This includes sharing information with anyone except a child’s documented caregiver (e.g. grandparent, designated pick-up person, etc.)
2. Share written information with any person or organization outside of my immediate department without specific instruction from my supervisor.
3. Use any program information for personal or economic gain. This includes but is not limited to the use of personal digital devices (cellphones, iPads, computers) to record audio, video, take pictures and post on any online platform for viewing

I will:

1. Consult with the program Director/Master Teacher about questions related to any program information of a confidential nature
2. Use only program equipment to document program activities

My signature acknowledges that I understand the above statements and that I may be reprimanded or terminated if I violate this confidentiality agreement.

Printed name

Signature

Date

APPENDIX L**4.4 Confidentiality**

Privacy: Because ECDC is a laboratory/demonstration school, there are many students and members of the community visiting ECDC and doing observations, research, and practicum activities. During these activities, strict family confidentiality is preserved. Children are identified to observers by first name only.

We do not ask for private information (social security numbers) that could be used fraudulently by others. For student employee records, ECDC complies with all federal confidentiality requirements as outlined by the university's policies for compliance with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* per the federal FERPA law.

All our staff and parents are required to sign confidentiality agreements. We require that families respect the privacy, not only of their child(ren), but of all other children and families. We encourage open, honest, informal and frequent communication among staff and parents. However convenient, hallways, classrooms, or the playground are not appropriate places for conversations about sensitive matters. A child's teacher or the director may suggest a follow-up phone call or meeting to discuss concerns raised initially in regular conversation that would be more appropriately addressed privately.

Record-keeping: Child and staff files are kept locked in the director's office after hours. ECDC also complies with the CofC policies for record retention, destruction, and archiving <http://recordsretention.cofc.edu/>;

Due to the unique nature of the relationships that may exist between our student employees and family members, many of whom are college staff or faculty, child files are not open to student employees (Graduate Assistants and Student Assistants). Information that Master Teachers deem necessary for planning, instructional, or assessment purposes is shared verbally with student staff members on a need-to-know basis. Individual child files and assessment portfolios may only be accessed by

- Master Teachers
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- Authorized representatives of the state DSS licensing agency
- Authorized representative from the NAEYC accreditation team
- Health officials with specific authorization from parents
- The signatory family representative(s) for individual children (4.E.07)

General Release: Teachers are expected to use photographs or other media in individual assessment portfolios and reports. Similarly, as a demonstration program, ECDC has a responsibility to share our work with others. We are making increasing use of digital and social media to create visual documentation of children's work and learning that are presented in hallway displays and posted to the *Projects* page and/or the blog on our website. Parents are therefore asked (but not required) annually to sign a general release permitting *routine* use of children's photographs and/or work for these purposes.

Release Forms for Specific Purposes:

We have specific release forms that are adapted as needed for different one-time purposes:

- Practicum students who need to document their work in the classroom with photographs or work samples, (*Permission to Use Classroom Artifacts*).
- Targeted intra-campus or public relations events/publications
- Media, communications, and other artifacts needed to document NAEYC accreditation standards in program and classroom electronic folios
- Child participation in research projects/studies

4.5 Technology and Social Media

Technology: The ECDC supports development of meaningful relationships and provides guidelines based on research and field expertise (such as the American Academy of Pediatrics) for families and staff in order to make informed decisions about technology use. As a general rule, children at ECDC have very limited screen time. We model the use of technology as it occurs in the "real" world. For example, children may dictate the text of an email to the Geology Department with a question about rocks, or may watch a webcam of nesting eagles, etc. Teachers use the Internet for research with the children, but devices with entertainment or learning applications are not used.

Social media: This term refers to any platform that promotes online information sharing, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Snap Chat, Instagram, Google+, blogs, etc.

- ECDC prohibits posting ANY pictures or videos of children or adults taken at school on personal social media websites
- All ECDC stakeholders (staff, visitors, student employees) should be cognizant of their professional online identity and presence.
- We cannot prohibit teaching staff, parents, and student workers from connecting online with each other, but we encourage ethical online behavior that complies with College Ethics policies & requirements.
- Not all parents participate in public events (e.g. Halloween Parade, Sottile Tree Lighting, etc.) where photos are usually taken. While we cannot prohibit sharing photos on social media, we advise caution. Please consider secure options for image sharing instead of "tagging" on a wall or blog.



“I am a firm believer that technology should supplement learning in a positive way and not just be used for the sake of using. If the staff at ECDC finds that a technology is helpful in expanding their knowledge, learning, motivation, etc., then I support the use of the technology. I do, however, believe that there is NO substitute for children touching, feeling, running, jumping, manipulating, etc. So I still want them engaged in activities that are hands-on.”