

TECHNOLOGY-BASED PLAY:

What Tech Can Teach Children

The benefits of technology aren't hard to find in the daily life of a parent, from the convenience of saving a date on an online calendar, or simply being able to contact the babysitter quickly, at almost any time, to answer a question.

But how does technology benefit children? And more specifically, how can play that's technology-focused be a productive part of helping children learn and grow?

These are the kinds of questions that are answered every day at the Children's Museum's four area locations — and the answers are as unique and varied as the families who come here to play.

Through play, children are able to enhance both their physical and their mental development in healthy and productive ways — ways that can even help them perform better in school. As they say at the Children's Museum, when children play ahead, they get ahead.

As such, technology-based play can be a powerful part of promoting learning in early childhood and beyond, especially as children start to explore past their earliest forms of play and as technology becomes a more prevalent part of children's lives.

Awareness of how important education in the areas commonly abbreviated as STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) can be for early learners — and, by extension, their families — is growing. At each location of the Children's Museum, the entire family is encouraged to engage in the power of play, knowing that everyone can learn more — and



Playing with technology in a safe, creative and encouraging environment, like the one found at the Children's Museum Fredericksburg, can have lasting positive benefits for children.

learn better — when they play together.

Several current Children's Museum exhibits involve technology and innovation, sometimes presented in unexpected ways. At both the Children's Museum Downtown and Chesterfield locations, behind the splashing and floating that takes place in the popular Water Play exhibit is an opportunity for children to explore mathematical concepts and problem-solving exercises.

At the Children's Museum Short Pump's EyePlay exhibit, sponsored by MEDARVA, a virtual floor projection system gets children

moving and learning, displaying more than 20 learning experiences, including topics that range from soccer to environmental awareness, helping to advance a child's developing pattern recognition skills.

Of course, children may be too busy having fun to notice all that they are learning from technology! Visit any area Children's Museum location to see more exciting ways that technology can encourage learning through play.