Early STEM Learning: A New National Priority

Building on the momentum from the Early STEM Learning Symposium presented by the White House in April, New America and the Joan Ganz Cooney Center hosted a STEM and early learning conference in Washington, D.C. May 31–June 1 with a focus on fostering positive STEM trajectories for America’s children.

Gathering experts in research, policy, practice, and philanthropy, the purpose was to craft an action agenda ensuring that new investments—particularly publicly financed research—find their way into early learning programs and elementary schools. Learn more. »

Making Science and Math Fun for Young Learners in Spanish and English

Funded by the National Science Foundation, PEEP is a television series and website that stars a wide-eyed chicken named Peep, a robin (Chirp), and an irascible, endearing duck (Quack)—all of whom live in a large urban park, a place of endless wonder, adventure, and mystery.

Every day, thousands of preschoolers, parents, and educators use PEEP to explore math and science. But PEEP’s audience is unique in one important way: more than 20% of PEEP’S users are Spanish-speaking. Learn more. »

Win a Free Copy of Tap, Click, Read

We’ve teamed up with our friends at Jossey-Bass for a Goodreads giveaway! Enter for a chance to win a copy of Tap, Click, Read: Growing Readers in a World of Screens by Lisa Guernsey and Michael H. Levine now through July 8, 2016. Enter now. »

Can’t get enough Tap, Click, Read? Don’t miss brand new tip sheets and tools for educators, parents, and policy makers—plus a reader-generated summary video.

Catching Up with Inaugural STEM Challenge Winner Derek Lomas

The 2016 National STEM Video Game Challenge is in full swing, with over 500 students registered and workshops happening around the country, from Alaska to Florida.

We recently caught up with 2011 STEM Challenge winner Derek Lomas, whose educational apps have garnered over a million downloads to date. Learn more. »
The Best Children’s Books: Up Close and Personal

In celebration of Children’s Book Week in May, we asked Cooney Center staff to reflect on their favorite children’s books, along with the new stories they’re excited to share with their own children. The result? A reading list you won’t want to miss. »

More From the Cooney Center Blog

The Aprendiendo Juntos Council Welcomes New Voices

The Aprendiendo Juntos Council brings together researchers, practitioners, media producers, and educators in an effort to form a united coalition to advance learning in Hispanic and Latino families. Here are the highlights from their fourth annual meeting at Northwestern University on May 30. Learn more. »

Q&A with Nancy Drew Game Developer Her Interactive

Since releasing their first Nancy Drew adventure game, Secrets Can Kill, back in 1998, Her Interactive has inspired thousands to pick up a virtual magnifying glass and take on the role of amateur detective—including 2015 National STEM Challenge winner Olivia Thomas. Don’t miss insights on game design and story development from Cathy and Jeanne Roiter, the “Twin Sisters of Development”. Learn more. »

LEGO’s Ideas Conference Is About More than Just Bricks

After attending the Lego Foundation’s annual idea Conference in April, Cooney Center Senior Fellow Jordan Shapiro is more excited than ever to prioritize playful learning as an educator and parent. Learn more. »

Celebrating Diversity and Breaking Down Gender Stereotypes in Media and Toys

This April, Sandhya Nankani, founder of Literary Safari, attended ‘Helping Children Explore, Learn, and Dream Without Limits: Breaking Down Gender Stereotypes in Media and Toys’, a day-long conference on gender and diversity at the White House. Learn more about her visit. »

With the toy world abuzz following the recent launch of the newest Barbie doll, modeled after Misty Copeland, the first black female principal dancer at American Ballet Theater, Sandhya Nankani also shared her take on the toy industry’s efforts to create new narratives that empower girls. Learn more. »

Team News

We’re thrilled to welcome Research Associate Alexia Raynal to the Cooney Center team, along with interns Sloane Grinspoon and Julia Spandorfer. We also extend a warm “Welcome back!” to Senior Director and Research Scientist Lori Takeuchi.

The National STEM Video Game Challenge team celebrated Take Your Kids to Work Day on April 28 with a hands-on game design activity for the children of employees at Sesame Workshop. Participants learned about the basics of video game development, and created physical games of their own using household materials.

What We’re Reading

• Getting Smarter About E-Books for Children via National Association for the Education of Young Children

• The Minecraft Generation via The New York Times

• Beyond Digital Immigrants? Rethinking the Role of Parents in a Digital Age via The London School of Economics and Political Science

• Smartphones Won’t Make Your Kids Dumb. We Think. via Mosaic
Upcoming Events

- **Media Mentors: Helping Children Build Literacy Skills for the Digital Age Webinar** | June 16
  Media mentors help children grow into strong, passionate readers skilled at using media and technology of all kinds—print, digital, and everything in between. Join Michael Levine, Lisa Guernsey, and Chip Donohue for a free webinar on media mentorship from 1:30–3pm ET.

- **2016 National Family & Community Engagement Conference** | June 20–22
  This year’s conference is designed to support those committed to high impact, evidence–based family and community engagement strategies. Michael Levine and Lisa Guernsey will host the workshop "Early Learning and Literacy: Let’s All Become Brain Builders” on Monday, June 20.

- **Games for Change Festival** | June 23–24
  The 2016 Games for Change Festival offers two days of keynotes, panels, mini talks, networking events, and workshops. Attendees will meet experts, connect with peers, share and explore groundbreaking ideas, and interact with new social impact games.

  *Find more upcoming events on the Cooney Center Events Calendar.*

We hope that you will join us as an active contributor and a member of our growing community on the [web](http://links.sesame.mkt6458.com/servlet/MailView?ms=Mjg4NjcwOTYS1&r=NTA2OTE4NjMxMjk2S0&j=MTA0MDEwNzY1NwS2&mt=1&rt=0) and on [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com) and [Twitter](http://twitter.com) as we partner with foundations, policy, industry, and academic leaders to advance learning in our digital age!