Apps for learning together

The app market is full of shiny new things. The following list provides suggestions of apps with educational value that are available in English and Spanish.

Kids 0 to 5 years old

Endless Spanish
bit.ly/eSpanish
Kids review new words in context.

Miximal
bit.ly/miximal
Kids build monsters one syllable at a time.

Name Play*
bit.ly/playname
By practicing their name, children build their own identity.

Peep and the Big Wide World*
bit.ly/emdpeep
Kids experiment while reading science stories.

Kids 4 to 8 years old

Breathe, Think, Do
bit.ly/breathetd
Kids practice self-control, planning and task persistence.

DragobBox Numbers
bit.ly/dragonbox4
Kids practice math with puzzles.

Parents Play and Learn
bit.ly/pplSPAN
Parents and kids learn everyday math and literacy together.

TodoMath
todomath.com
Kids solve patterns, sequences, and operations.

Kids 4 to 11 years old (advanced)

Bedtime Math
bit.ly/matedorm
Families read math problems that look like bedtime stories.

BrainPOP Jr.*
jr.brainpop.com
BrainPOP publishes cartoons and exercises with lessons in science, health, environment, math, and more. Their Spanish site, esp.brainpop.com, has resources for kids ages 8+.

* The app is only available in English but their website includes Spanish content.

Fold here.

> **Remember: When we use apps to "babysit" our children, we miss out on opportunities for learning. The best way to use them is together as a family.**

Additional resources

Colorín Colorado
colorincolorado.org
Offers tips, books, activities, and educational resources for bilingual families.

Vroom
juntosconvroom.org
Facilitates ways to integrate lessons into families' everyday routines, including through their own app.

Thank you!

Abriendo Puertas/Opening Doors
ap-od.org
Their program offers evidence-based training for Hispanic parents developed by and for the parents.

Common Sense Media Latino
commonsensemedia.org/latino
Prodices videos and articles to guide Hispanic parents though topics like education, technology, and privacy.

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FOUNDATION FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT

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Please take a brief survey: bit.ly/aefsurvey

Family Time with Apps

A Guide to Using Apps with Your Kids

Technology is everywhere. As family leaders, parents can transform technology into an ally to support their children's development.

How much tech is too much?

What matters most is sharing it, not how long you use it for. Instead of focusing on schedules, the *American Academy of Pediatrics* (AAP) recommends using technology responsibly as a family. Parents play a key role reading and playing with their children as they use their screens, regardless of the time.

> Visit *Healthy Children* (bit.ly/plandepantallas) to create a media plan based on your family's needs.

There's too much to choose from. Where do I start?

Step 1. Identify your child's needs
Which skills must they practice? What are their favorite or least favorite subject matters? What are their favorite games, characters or activities?

Step 2. Go searching in the right place
Android: In Google Play, select Family and activate the Education category.
iPhone: In App Store, go to Categories, select Education and click Apps for Every Grade.

Step 3. Read app reviews before downloading any apps
Not everything with an "educational" label has been tested. When you find an app that you're interested in, read the app reviews from *Common Sense Media, Tech with Kids, Parents' Choice* or *Teachers with Apps* to find out if experts recommend them.

> **Remember: Parents are children's earliest role models. When we use technology in a respectful and fun way, we teach our families important lessons.**

the Joan Ganz Cooney Center at Sesame Workshop

advancing children's learning in a digital age

How can we put these tips to practice?

Experts suggest we consider the app's **Content**, the **Context** in which we use it, and our **Child** when selecting and downloading apps. The following activities illustrate ways to accomplish these **three Cs** while using screens with kids two years and older.

Play games together

Benefit: Playing games together helps kids describe the goals, rules and challenges of the game. Knowing the parts of a game allows them to make better decisions.

Content: Find games that review educational concepts, from soccer and memory to math and science.

Context: Pair your app with a similar physical activity, like playing soccer, finding patters or creating a recipe.

Child: Find and download your child's favorite board game in their screen.

Read together every day

Benefit: Reading together for 15 minutes every day helps create a love of reading. Apps can help you achieve those fifteen minutes anywhere, anytime.

Content: Find "simple" e-books (illustrated but with fewer animations). Animated e-books can be distracting.

Context: Pause often to talk about what happens in the book and how it connects to your life.

Child: If your child likes to read stories, record your own versions of the book using video or audio apps.

Remember: Cousins, siblings, and grandparents can also be good partners. If you're too busy to engage, encourage them to do these activities together.

Prepare them for new experiences

Benefit: Some apps can help you talk through difficult topics, like the first day of school or haircut.

Content: Find friendly apps located in potentially scary settings, like the dentist or stylist.

Context: Sit with your child as he or she uses their app to show your love and support.

Child: If your child enjoys taking pictures, find apps that allow them to create profiles or use their photos.

Connect with distant family

Benefit: Videochat helps us connect with loved ones who live far away. *FaceTime, Skype* and *WhatsApp* expose our children to new experiences and helps strenghten ties.

Content: Find apps to play or create things together from afar, like *Kindoma Storytime, ustyme*, and *Words With Friends*.

Context: Create an environment where everybody feels comfortable speaking in English and/or Spanish.

Child: Encourage your child to share personal accomplishments in your calls, like crafts or drawings.

How can we use technology as an ally?

- **Promote growth**. Review what your kids learn at school to help them think creatively about their classes, develop self-control and awaken their curiosity.

- **Communicate**. Use apps as a starting point for other conversations to help them develop language skills and express their feelings.

- **Conect experiences**. Use apps to reduce distance between people, places and experiences. Sharing traditions helps our kids feel more confident.

Remember: Many free apps have in-app purchases or inadequate ads. Don't be afraid to invest in quality apps. It may be worth spending $3.99 on good apps rather than downloading many more poor quality apps.

How can you determine the value of an app?

Good apps allow your child to learn and grow.
- ❑ Does it encourage my child to explore and deepen their interests?
- ❑ Does it help them engage in creative play?
- ❑ Does it encourage my child to be active?

Good apps facilitate communication.
- ❑ Does it provide opportunities to talk?
- ❑ Does it offer ways to create together?
- ❑ Does it help the family have fun together?

Good apps connect experiences.
- ❑ Does it bridge activities across spaces (like home and school)?
- ❑ Does it prepare us for new experiences?
- ❑ Does it connect us to distant friends and family?