

Why Technology Based Activities Are Beneficial

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Technology plays such a major and important role in today's world that I refer to children that have been born in past twenty years as "digital babies". The fact is that technology has been part of these children's lives from birth. As a result, they are comfortable with technology and very competent with its use, seeing technology as a "friend". Technology entertains them, assists in their learning, fascinates them and most importantly never scolds them. This "friend" allows them to develop many important skills including: executive functioning, application of logic, development of artistic abilities, performing investigative procedures and research and much more.

Although most of us, as parents, are alarmed by the amount of time our children spend playing games on their various devices (and in some cases rightfully so), the fact is that many games today involve making sound and logical decisions in order to progress. Without realizing it, those who play these games are exercising their executive functioning and their decision making skills.

With the development of technology, many applications now allow children to express their artistic side. Photoshop allows them to process pictures and add their own captions and effects and there are a slew of applications that enable them to process and edit videos in hundreds of ways. From the earliest days of Windows, programs like Microsoft Paint have been available and today there are a multitude of graphic design programs. Although some of these applications may be beyond our comprehension the fact is our children embrace them.

With the development of the latest camcorders and webcams, children can write, produce and create their own videos, even creating Youtube accounts to proudly share their productions.

As wonderful as many of these things are for children in general, they are fabulous for children with Special Learning Needs such as ADHD and LD's. Technology fascinates children. They will

sit and maintain their focus for hours. Hence, it is important that we take advantage of technology. If we encourage our children to be creative with technology I assure you the results will amaze you. I have worked with identified students for fifteen years and have been very successful in encouraging them to strive to reach their potential. One of the things I credit for my success is the fact that I have the passive form of ADHD and a learning disability. I know firsthand how technology, when used properly, can stimulate self-confidence and self-esteem in these children.

Teach them how to program a computer game and watch them strut around the room proclaiming their accomplishment and wanting to proudly show their creation to everyone. Have them build and operate a remote control robot and observe the excitement. Allow them to storyboard, direct, film, act in and edit their own video and observe the excitement as they share it with others. In addition to the huge confidence boost, in the case of the producing a video they must also work well and willingly with others. I know this sounds somewhat incredible, but in order to accomplish their desired goal, they will work as part of a team.

Finally, teach them how to produce exciting Powerpoint presentations including animation, transitions, video and music and they will wow their teachers and friends. All of this I have done over the past eight years.

During the school year I work exclusively one-on-one with children. During March Break and the summer I run Science, Technology, Entertainment and Music Camps. Over the past eight years I have watched hundreds of children regain their self-confidence and come to the most important of all realizations: "I can succeed I am intelligent, I can accomplish many things on my own and I know it's alright to ask for help if I need to, my ADHD and/or LDs will not prevent me from succeeding."

People always ask why I work with these children and the answer is simple. When I see their heads rise, their chests go out and they start walking with confidence I have gained the greatest reward any educator could ever imagine.

Our children are the future, ensure they are given the opportunity to excel and make our great country even greater.