

Introduction



This Spring issue provides readers with diverse and holistic perspectives on a variety of topics including the parent involvement in early childhood education and community in online early childhood programs. Moreover, this issue discusses face masks and student engagement, cyber safety, and the utilization of games in telemental health with children. The IJWC continues to be committed to promoting holistic learning and the development of the whole child.

Article #1:

Parent Involvement in Early Childhood Education: Exploring Cultural Beliefs and Practices Through the Figured Worlds Approach to Support Learning Success for All Children
Hyunjin Kim and Susan Trostle Brand

The authors of this article explore the impact of parent involvement in early childhood education in Korea. The work is grounded in the Figured Worlds Approach which states that people's worldview is impacted by their culture, values, and communities. Context is provided for deeper understanding of cultural practices and values, language and communication, and strategies for understanding diverse groups. The author identified many implications for educators such as incorporating traditions, eliminating bias, and supporting learning through a growth mindset. Finally, the findings suggest future research could explore intersectionality, innovative family engagement, as well as policy changes and community partnerships.

Article #2:

The Importance of Community in a Fully Online Program: Establishing Equity, Inclusion, and Access with Nontraditional Students in an Early Childhood Licensure Program
Maryam Sadat Sharifian, Chelsey Bollinger, Shin Ji Kang, Jordan Perlish, Madison Masters

This mixed method study examined nontraditional preservice teachers' perception of community in an online bachelors' program. Previous research supports the idea that nontraditional students face a variety of barriers in higher education including but not limited to feelings of comfortability and financial concerns. This study utilized the Community of Practice theory to best understand participants' experiences. The findings suggest that most of the participants in this online program felt they received support when transitioning into the program in addition to feeling connected to others while in the program. Finally, it is important that preservice teacher programs make meaningful efforts to create a sense of community and culture within the program, disseminate information that provides support to students transitioning, and continually establish opportunities for professional development for faculty.

Article #3:

Facial Masks and Student Engagement in Early Childhood and Exceptional Student Education Classrooms

Anna Frahm, Judit Szente, Sherron Killingsworth Roberts

The authors of this paper examine whether wearing masking affects student engagement in both early childhood education (ECE) and education of students with exceptionalities (ESE). COVID-19 greatly impacted education as schools moved to a virtual format and instruction was split between in person and virtual modes. The authors discuss the specific impacts on individuals with exceptionalities such as inability see visual language cues and social and emotional components of language. Additionally, the use of masks greatly impacted behavior and social and emotional engagement in the classroom as well as interfering with lipreading and literacy. The use of transparent masks and their reduction of barriers is discussed. Finally, the authors suggest opportunities for future research, such as the impacts of different face masks with or without a remote microphone.

Article #4:

The Representation of Differing Abilities in Children's Literature: A Local Analysis

Jaimee L. Hartenstein, Klaire Brumbaugh, Julianna Holguin, Adriatik Likcani

The authors explored representation of disability in one hundred children's books. In this study a content analysis methodology was used to identify the portrayal of medical conditions listed by the ADA in books that are most frequently checked out for ages 0 to 6 years old. The results suggest that library displays and communications better showcase and share books that are representative as well as, more books that have characters with disabilities in primary roles. Finally, the implications of the results suggest that representation is important as it increases the desire to read and contributes to the development of positive self-esteem.

Pictures for Reflection

The Office

Cris Lozon

The author describes how children used toys, collaboration, and play to create an office space.

Tech Talk

Cyber Safety Efforts for Children: Are They Working? What Can We Do?

Nancy Caukin

The author of this article examines the current data regarding internet usage by children. They discuss a variety of measures that intend to create safer internet access including the Children's Online Privacy Protection rule (COPPA), the Internet Protection Act (CIPA), and the Age Appropriate Design Code. The author goes on to discuss areas where protection can be improved such as the use of prevention education and parent involvement. Finally, additional internet safety resources are provided.

Children & Families: Health and Wellness

Games in Telemental Health with Children and Adolescents

Jo Weaver, Jacqueline Swank, Shatoi Scott, Tonya Davis

The authors of this study explore the use of games in telemental health services with both children and adolescents, focusing specifically on how live video, telemental health interactions contribute to the reduction of barriers in terms of access to mental health services. Game play, the use of games in counseling to foster engagement and connection, may be done through a variety of ways including but not limited to, board games, card games, art games, and physical games. Modifications can be made to these games that allow them to be played virtually such as through the use of an online medium (website game, virtual or whiteboard). Additionally, the provider can incorporate talking points throughout the games, certain colors mean sharing about a specific emotion, or specific actions (sinking a ship) means sharing something about yourself. Finally, it is important to bear in mind the providers' technology abilities, HIPPA, privacy, and safety with using web-based platforms.

STEAM

Learning Doesn't STEM from Worksheets: Why STEM Learning Starts Beyond Paper and Pencils Tasks

Rebecca Horrace, Brian Stone

The authors of this article explore the use of worksheets in STEM classrooms. This is viewed through the specific lens of a whole-child, constructivist approach, which suggests that learning is an active process where learners are challenged, and problems are solved through exploration and play. Worksheets create an environment where learners are seeking the answers from the teacher as opposed to creating space where students initiate learning. The authors discuss The National Science Teaching Association's three-dimensional teaching which supports learning through real world applications, engagement that moves from curiosity to interest to reason, and exploration of science, driven by student interest. Furthermore, allowing learners to truly play will help develop a sense of ownership throughout their learning. Finally, the current educational practices that rely heavily on worksheets are doing a disservice to learners and the environment. Moving towards activities that support investigation, experience, and student driven learning will create learners who ask questions and seek answers all around them.

Education by the Numbers

Considering Retention in the Light of the Covid-19 Pandemic

Sandra Stone

The data provided by the author in "Education by the Numbers" discusses retention after the Covid-19 pandemic.

Page Turners: Books for Children

Katrina Bartow Jacobs, Carla K. Meyer, Michelle J. Sobolak, Patricia Crawford, Maria Genest

In this article, different children's books are listed with descriptive summaries on each one. The books include: *A Blue Kind of Day; Most Perfect You; The World's Best Class Plant; Yoshi: Sea*

Turtle Genius; The Hill We Climb: An Inaugural Poem for the Country; Mrs. Peanuckle's Earth Alphabet; A Spark in the Dark; School Trip: A Graphic Novel (The New Kid Book 3); Sharks: A Mighty Bite-y History; and Squished.