Highlight
**UNESCO Bangkok supports Thailand’s second decade of education reform using project-based learning and ICT**
UNESCO Bangkok has collaborated with Chiang Mai University to train teachers from ten schools in Chiang Mai province in the north of Thailand. The objectives of the training workshop were to improve Thai teachers’ ability to facilitate student-centred project-based learning that includes ICT-enhanced collaborative learning, referred to as “tele-collaboration.”

**News & Events**
**The first ever Asia Pacific Education Leaders Forum convened in Thailand**
This forum, organized by Microsoft in co-operation with UNESCO Bangkok, was held on 10 March 2011 in Phuket. Focusing on the theme ‘Driving national competitiveness through ICT-led innovation and skills development in education’, the inaugural Education Leaders Forum brought together over 60 education policy leaders across the Asia Pacific region.

**Celebrating best practices in the classroom**
In conjunction with the Asia Pacific Education Leaders Forum, Microsoft organized the Regional Innovative Education Forum (RIEF) held also in Phuket, Thailand, from 7 to 10 March 2011. Over 200 teachers and school leaders from more than 14 countries gathered and competed for the Asia Pacific Innovative Teachers’ Awards to celebrate best practices in the classroom.

**Malaysia: Vision 2020 for a digital workforce**
Starting 2010 and expecting to last till 2020, pedagogical practices will be reviewed so that the “Smart Schools Programme” can “involve the use of ICT in teaching, learning and in school management”.

**High-level Debate of the ITU: Why are young girls rejecting careers in technology?**
The High-level Debate of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) held to commemorate 100 years of International Women's Day tackled the issue of declining female participation in the information and communication technology industry.

**Call for nomination: WISE prize for education**
The WISE Prize for Education will reward an individual or team for an outstanding, world-class contribution to education. Nominations are invited until the end of April from individuals and institutions such as universities, schools, NGOs, teachers’ organisations, the media and private corporations.

**Job Vacancy**
UNESCO is seeking a qualified candidate for the position of the Programme Specialist for ICT in Education based in Bangkok. The deadline for application is 4 May 2011.

**Programmes & Projects**
**Global Teenager Project**
This project is providing thematic learning circles to elementary, secondary and vocational schools, including special needs education.

Resources

A bridge too far? Explaining beginning teachers' use of ICT in Australian schools
The paper discusses some of the findings from a recent longitudinal study that examined how 35 beginning teachers used ICT in the first three years of their teaching.

Children, wired: For better and for worse
What are the implications of technology on children’s learning and children’s brains?

E-course on social and economic policies
UNICEF and the Economic Research Foundation (ERF) invite you to participate in a new e-learning programme focusing on socio-economic policies for child rights with equity. This free, self-paced online course is available to all development partners at UN agencies, governments, universities and civil society organizations.

ICTs and environmental sustainability
This publication includes seven thematic reports, dealing with the global ICT footprint, emerging research agendas, sustainability, e waste, smart technologies, green grassroots technologies, and building advocacy networks, as well as an institutional overview and a consideration of green indicators.

Children’s Technology Review
This online magazine is designed to keep parents, teachers and librarians up to date on the latest developments of children’s interactive media products. The database contains 8,800 reviews, ranging from websites, video games, mobile phone apps to Facebook plugins.

News & Events

UNESCO Bangkok supports Thailand’s second decade of education reform using project-based learning and ICT

Thailand has recently launched its Second Decade of Education Reform with principal strategies reflecting the intention of the government to harness the potential of information and communication technology to build the capacity of Thai students, enabling a culture of knowledgeable use of ICT and communication for the development of future education. The ultimate goal of the education reform is to instill learners with skills that are essential to thriving in the 21st Century society, i.e. creativity, higher-order thinking, and citizenship.

One of the ways to achieve the Reform goal is through teachers, by strengthening their ability to incorporate pedagogical approaches that promote desirable qualities in students. Learner-centred teaching methods and project-based learning (PBL) are part of such approaches. In Thailand, the concept of learner or student-centred teaching was much emphasized on since the first decade of Education Reform back in late 90s. Yet, there persists
a gap between government-directed attempt at moving away from traditional instruction and actual abilities of teachers to incorporate problem-solving and students’ thinking skills into classroom activities.

Recognizing the need to reduce such discrepancy, UNESCO Bangkok has collaborated with Chiang Mai University to train teachers from ten schools in Chiang Mai province in the north of Thailand to integrate project-based learning and tele-collaboration into their teaching. The objectives of the training workshop were to improve Thai teachers’ ability to facilitate student-centred project-based learning that includes ICT-enhanced collaborative learning, referred to as “tele-collaboration.” The five-day training, titled Capacity-Building Workshop on Project-Based Learning and Tele-collaboration took place on 14 – 18 March 2011. A total of 40 participants, both teachers and principals, from ten primary and secondary schools participated in the workshop.

In the hopes of fostering higher-order thinking skills and ICT literacy essential to the 21st Century learner, the teachers designed and would later implement project-based learning activities which address issues of interest in the local community with students from the participating ten schools. The participants were introduced to a combination of theoretical approaches and examples of PBL to reorient them towards more meaningful PBL planning and practical implementation plan among students. They were also encouraged to incorporate elements of ICT into learning activities and aim for tele-collaboration on all “3Is” levels, i.e. inter-disciplinary, inter-school, and inter-cultural.

An important aspect of the workshop was the support of the implementing partner Chiang Mai University (CMU) and UNESCO Bangkok. With extensive hands-on practice and feedback opportunity throughout the duration of the workshop, CMU and UNESCO Bangkok experts guided schools in refining the PBL design. In the end, participating teachers completed five project designs. The fact that PBL project implementation remains a relatively new concept to some educators in Thailand, UNESCO Bangkok also aims to collect innovative practices in collaboration with CMU and use lessons to compile a whole-school support strategy for project-based learning as a reference for other teachers in the country.

This workshop was part of a series of trainings under the Korean-Funded UNESCO Project “Facilitating Effective ICT-Pedagogy Integration.” The Project operates in six countries in Asia and Pacific Region. In relation to the capacity building aspect of the project, UNESCO Bangkok offers schools the opportunity to submit their PBL proposals for financial contribution as incentives for teachers to commit to project implementation and international school partnerships among the target countries.

Further information:

- [Facilitating Effective ICT-Pedagogy Integration Project](#)
The first ever Asia Pacific Education Leaders Forum convened in Thailand

The first-ever Asia Pacific Education Leaders Forum (ELF), organized by Microsoft in cooperation with the UNESCO Asia Pacific Regional Bureau for Education, was held on 10 March 2011 in Phuket, Thailand. Focusing on the theme ‘Driving national competitiveness through ICT-led innovation and skills development in education’, the inaugural Education Leaders Forum brought together over 60 education policy leaders across the Asia Pacific region for a highly intensive and interactive meeting focused on how innovation in
information and communications technology (ICT) can transform teaching and learning at schools.

On Microsoft’s strong commitment to elevating the quality of education globally, Neil Jackson, Senior Director of Education, Microsoft Asia Pacific said: “Providing quality education to the young is a key critical pillar in enhancing a country’s national competitiveness and accelerating its economic growth. The high enrolment rate for primary education in the Asia Pacific – with four countries ranked in the top 10 globally – attests to the region’s emphasis on education. Governments have a common aim to nurture and develop their young to be tomorrow’s leaders and this is underscored in the increasing quality of education offered to students.

“We hope that this forum will excite delegates about the possibilities that ICT can unleash in the classroom, and help them glean the best practices for teaching delivery. Ultimately, we hope delegates will bring new ideas and insights back to their own countries and classrooms, to enhance the learning experience and benefit students,” he said before the event.

The Director of UNESCO Bangkok Mr. Gwang-Jo Kim reiterated the need to prepare young people for a changing world. “We’re living in a time of rapid technology and labour market changes. Employers and the industrial sector need people with creative and higher order thinking skills…. The young generation, especially those who enter the job market for the first time, have to keep pace with these changes.”

Mr. Kim also stressed the importance of sharing successful innovations to help countries cope with development challenges and to use them to leapfrog the various stages of development whenever possible.

Real-life working solutions, policy examples and practical strategies were presented at the forum, demonstrating how governments and improvements in education systems can help teachers improve their teaching practices.

Further information:

- [Microsoft Education](#)

Related links:

- [Microsoft Partners in Learning announces 2010 Worldwide Innovative Teacher Awards](#)
Research project to focus on the role of technology in innovative teaching and learning
Innovative teachers learn about integrating Education for Sustainable Development into teaching and learning through ICT
Learning from national ICT/education agencies
UNESCO, INTEL connect ICT in Education policymakers

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:

- UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter

What do you think about this topic?

- Visit our on-line forum and share your views

Celebrating best practices in the classroom
In conjunction with the Asia Pacific Education Leaders Forum, Microsoft organized the Regional Innovative Education Forum (RIEF) held also in Phuket, Thailand, from 7 to 10 March 2011. Over 200 teachers and school leaders from more than 14 countries gathered and competed for the Asia Pacific Innovative Teachers’ Awards to celebrate best practices in the classroom.

At the Regional Innovative Education Forum and as a lead-up to the Asia Pacific Education Leaders Forum, the key lessons and milestone achievements of two Microsoft-supported global student collaboration programs – SHOUT and DeforestAction – have been shared and discussed.

The global SHOUT program is designed to encourage teachers to use technology to help students explore, connect and act to address some of the world’s most pressing environmental issues while gaining important 21st century skills such as collaboration, critical thinking and social responsibility.

RIEF participants also had an opportunity to be inspired by latest updates of the DeforestAction initiative, a global project born out of the SHOUT program. Since its launch, young people around the world have been involved in buying back land in Borneo,
commencing a re-growing project, running fund raising and awareness campaigns and collaborating on global action plans.

“Education and the environment are two key global issues, particularly for the fast-growing economies in the Asia Pacific. Microsoft is harnessing the combined power of innovative ICT solutions and our partnerships with communities and like-minded stakeholders to address these issues. There’s a worldwide quest to develop 21st century learning techniques, and by taking an active role to facilitate this endeavor in the region, Microsoft aims to contribute to developing quality education systems that will, in turn, enable people and organizations to advance a country’s economic and social development,” said Jackson.

The collaboration with UNESCO on these two events emphasized the importance Microsoft places in education and sustainable development. It especially underlines the synergy with three major UNESCO’s programmes: Education for All, Education for Sustainable Development and ICT in Education.

Further information:

- Microsoft Partners in Learning

Related links:

- ICT in Education - UNESCO Bangkok
- Education for Sustainable Development - UNESCO Bangkok
- Education for All - UNESCO Bangkok
- Microsoft Partners in Learning announces 2010 Worldwide Innovative Teacher Awards
- Research project to focus on the role of technology in innovative teaching and learning
- Innovative teachers learn about integrating Education for Sustainable Development into teaching and learning through ICT

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:

- UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter
Malaysia: Vision 2020 for a digital workforce

Back in 1991, Malaysia released a Vision 2020, a roadmap for the creation of a knowledgeable and technology-literate workforce, said Datin Dr Siti Zaleha binti Abdullah Sani, Director of Educational Technology, Ministry of Education (MOE), Malaysia.

To transform the nation into the proverbial knowledge-based economy, the country decided to go through 4 implementation waves in a “smart school programme”.

Having identified 88 pilot schools in 1992, then equipping 10,000 schools with an appropriate computer infrastructure in 2002, MOE then went on to “build on the capacity of teachers and resource personnel and school administrators”.

Starting 2010 and expecting to last till 2020, pedagogic practices will be reviewed so that it can “involve the use of ICT in teaching, learning and in school management,” said Abdullah Sani.

To date, 250,000 teachers have attended courses to raise teacher literacy on ICT and to provide a platform for teachers to share their pedagogic skills on using ICT in the teaching and learning process.

“As part of the training module, teachers are informed about the availability of online and offline resources, and centrally prepared teaching courseware and e-materials for use by teachers and students,” Abdullah Sani said to FutureGov Asia Pacific magazine.

Through the Smart School Qualification Standards (SSQS) instrument, the success of the use of ICT in schools is monitored. Weighing the weight of domains like utilisation, human capital, applications and technology infrastructure, a percentage is used to judge a school’s achievement.

Said Abdullah Sani of the project: “ICT in education is viewed as an enabler for learning, to enrich the curricula, and to enhance pedagogies. With appropriate e-management systems, it enables school administrators and principals to become more effective school managers. Through the establishment of Smart Schools in Malaysia, learning is more dynamic, lively and interactive through the use of multimedia technology and worldwide networking.”

In 2010, the SSQS results in 2010 has 91 per cent of 8955 schools achieving a smart school status with “3-star ranking” and above.
Further information:

- Malaysia: Vision 2020 for a digital workforce (FutureGov)

Related links:

- Training workshop on facilitating effective ICT-pedagogy integration in USM Penang
- How will ICT change the future of education?
- The conditions and level of ICT integration in Malaysian Smart Schools
- Malaysia: ICT education for a “creative society”

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:

- UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter

What do you think about this topic?

- Visit our on-line forum and share your views

High-level Debate of the ITU: Why are young girls rejecting careers in technology?
The High-level Debate of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) held to commemorate 100 years of International Women’s Day tackled the issue of declining female participation in the information and communication technology industry.

It’s a little-known fact that women were the original programmers of ENIAC, the US government’s first ever computer. But while teenage girls now use computers and the
Internet at rates similar to boys, they are five times less likely to consider a technology-related career.

It wasn’t always so. In the US in the 1980s, for example, young women were earning 37% of computer science degrees; today, that number has fallen to around 20%.

That lack of trained female professionals in turn means that in OECD countries, women now account for under 20% of ICT specialists in OECD countries. It also means that most developed countries are forecasting an alarming shortfall in the number of skilled staff to fill upcoming jobs in the ICT sector. The European Union calculates that in 10 years’ time there will be a lack of some 300,000 people to fill ICT jobs in the region; globally, the shortfall is closer to 1.2 million.

With computer and information systems managers consistently ranked among the top 20 best-paying jobs – on a par with surgeons, orthodontists, airline pilots and lawyers – why are young women turning their backs on technology?

ITU’s High-level Panel of experts from government, the ICT industry, the education sector and the media agreed that major problems include a poor perception of the industry among girls, and a lack of inspiring role models.

Finnish Communications Minister Suvi Lindén spoke of a culture of negativity around science and maths that is affecting girls as young as primary level. Educator Inal Uygur of the International School of Geneva noted that teachers unwittingly or even deliberately put girls off technology as a career, often with a misplaced sense that they are acting in the girl’s best interests. Professor Anastasia Ailamaki, who leads the DIAS Lab at the prestigious Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, observed that male teachers’ envy of young girls’ talents can also sometimes play an insidious role.

Industry representatives Alethea Lodge-Clark of Microsoft and Victor Agnellini of Alcatel-Lucent affirmed that encouraging more girls into technology careers was important to the ongoing growth of the ICT industry, particularly in Europe and the US. Both highlighted their own companies’ initiatives to redress the problem, such as the Digigirlz programme managed globally by Microsoft, and female-oriented initiatives managed by the Alcatel-Lucent Foundation in countries around the world. Aurora Velez, Chief Producer of the Learning World series at Euronews, pointed to some of the innovative approaches her team has uncovered around the world, and hosted the screening of two Learning World stories created for this year’s International Women’s Day, both focused on encouraging girls to think about careers in technology.

Dr Speranza Ndege, Director of the Institute of Open, Distance and e-Learning at Kenya’s Kenyatta University, told of the strong resistance she met from male colleagues when she crossed over from the traditional female academic domain of social sciences to ICTs. ITU’s own Gitanjali Sah, who works as an ICT analyst focused on development issues, brought a regional perspective, noting that ICT training for girls was very popular in much of the Asia region, because of its perceived prestige.
And Serbian Minister Jasna Matiã, who has earned an international reputation as a passionate champion of technology education for women, proposed a concrete way forward with the creation of a Girls in ICT Day, to be held on the fourth Thursday in April every year, where governments, private industry and the education sector will be encouraged to team up to promote technology as an attractive career choice for female students.

The event was attended by around 100 representatives from UN agencies, national missions, the ICT industry, the education sector and the general public.

Further information:

- Why are young girls rejecting careers in technology?

Related links:

- ICTs and gender
- Video on Women in ICT: 'ICT is wicked'
- Are girls really excluded from ICT, or is this just a misconception?
- Gender-based issues and trends in ICT applications in education in Asia and the Pacific
- Gender and ICT
- Technology-based vocational skills training for marginalized girls and young women
- Gender and ICTs for Development: A Global Source Book

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:

- UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter

What do you think about this topic?
Call for nomination: WISE prize for education

Five prominent international figures will select the winner of the world’s first major international prize for education.

The WISE Prize for Education was announced by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, Chairperson of Qatar Foundation, at the conclusion of the second World Innovation Summit for Education in Doha, Qatar, in December 2010. The first Laureate will be named at WISE 2011 in November.

The Jury members are:

- Dr James H. Billington, Librarian of Congress, USA
- Prof. Jeffrey D. Sachs, Director of the Earth Institute, Columbia University, USA
- Mrs Fatma Rafiq Zakaria, Chairman of the Maulana Azad Educational Trust, India
- H.E. Naledi Pandor, Minister of Science and Technology, MP, South Africa
- H.E. Sheikh Abdulla bin Ali Al-Thani, PhD, Chairman of WISE, Qatar Foundation, Chairman of the Jury

The WISE Prize for Education will reward an individual or team for an outstanding, world-class contribution to education. The Laureate’s achievements should have had a significant, lasting impact upon education at any level, and should demonstrate an inspiring and visionary approach.

The Prize will support the WISE mission of raising the status of education internationally by establishing an award of similar standing to those that already exist in other fields such as science, literature, peace and economics. The winner will receive $500,000 and a gold medal.

Nominations are invited until the end of April from individuals and institutions such as universities, schools, NGOs, teachers’ organisations, the media and private corporations.

From mid-July to mid-September 2011, the Jury will examine the candidacies of 15 finalists pre-selected by a committee responsible for screening all submissions.

Dr Abdulla bin Ali Al-Thani, Chairman of WISE, Qatar Foundation, explains: "As Chairman of the Jury, I am pleased to welcome this group of eminent people to form the WISE Prize for Education Jury. They have been selected because of their international vision, professional achievements and expertise. I believe their rich experience and diverse competencies will enable us to identify a Laureate of the highest calibre, and the WISE Prize for Education will become the world standard for achievement in this field."
Qatar Foundation inaugurated the World Innovation Summit for Education - WISE - in 2009 to harness the knowledge, skills and experience of multiple stakeholders in addressing the challenges facing 21st-century education.

Further information:

- WISE Prize for Education

Related links:

- 4th Netexplorateur Forum took place in February at UNESCO
- Projects in Ireland and the Philippines receive honourable mentions in ICT in Education prize
- Wenhui Award for Educational Innovation calling for nominations
- UK and Venezuelan ICT experts awarded UNESCO King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa Prize
- Microsoft Partners in Learning announces 2010 Worldwide Innovative Teacher Awards

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:

- UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter

What do you think about this topic?

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Programmes & Projects

Global Teenager Project

The Internet changed the way of communication in every kind of way. Checking out the weather in your hometown via webcam, ordering tea from India with just one mouse click, almost everything is possible. There are also more significant new opportunities.
Communication through the internet offers the chance to improve education. Students all over the world can get connected and do research on their own in a very easy and convenient way.

The Global Teenager Project (GTP) initiated by IICD in The Hague, Netherlands in 1999, offers a lot of activities for over 10,000 students every year. The basic idea is to connect students from developed countries with those from developing countries. This structured environment gives them the chance to engage in exchanges that promote intercultural awareness. During the last decade the number of participating classrooms rose from 3 to 350, zoned in 32 countries on 5 continents. GTP offers a platform to arrange Learning Circles for basic, thematic and special learning to elementary, secondary and vocational classes including special needs education in six languages: German Spanish, Arabic, French and English. The GTP Learning Circles on collaborative global learning are offered twice a year starting in September and February. However, thematic Learning Circles are organized all year.

These thematic Learning Circles use the Internet for virtual communication. During 10 weeks the students have the possibility to study together with other participants, either teachers or students, to create ICT-enriched learning in a global context.

Just image how interesting and more informative topics like saving the rainforest or globalization could be if there is the possibility to involve students and teachers from that particular area. It would give the pictures and the facts a real face and a voice.

Let us take a closer look on one of GTP projects and its outcomes. School classes from Suriname, a small country in South America with a population of only 0.5 million, started to take part in the project “GTP English” in 2003.

Since the schools didn’t have any computers back then, the students had to go to cyber cafes to participate in the projects.

In the first years there were only 5 classes taking part rising to 12 classes participating in 2 Learning Circles, now “GTP Dutch” in 2008. This trend went on and in 2010 there were already 48 schools working and learning together in different 7 Learning circles.

Furthermore, in 2009 33 teacher, 7 students and 3 coordinators were invited to visit the Netherlands for a one-week study trip. In return a couple of Dutch teachers went to Suriname in January 2010, the only time of the year where it is bearable in the non-air conditioned classrooms. Nowadays a number of schools have been sponsored to have their own computer lab to participate in online projects. 12 Dutch schools also managed to raise 2100 euro for the Internet connection of Suriname and Telecom Telesur is sponsoring new participating schools in GTP with an ADSL connection and a couple of computers per school.

But how can interested parties find a Learning Circle that fits? The GTP Homepage offers a Learning Circle Selection Tool, where you can enter Age, Language, Platform and the Type of Learning Circle you are looking for. After providing the tool with all the necessary information, it will show you the results.
There are over 40 Learning Circles covering topics like “Eco friendly schools”, “Health in our Community” and “Water is Life”.

If you find a project, which might be of interest to you, you can get some further information and see in what kind of phase the project is at the moment. There are two Platforms for Learning Circles. Either it is a Wiki or it is E-Mail based. Most of the projects use Wiki as a platform. If you want to participate with your class just contact the GTP Country Coordinator in your Country and ask him to sign you in.

The project was launched by the IICD, the International Institute for Communication and Development. At the end of December 2010 they announced that they are not able to financially support the project anymore.

Since then the GTP depends even more on donation and funding. You have the chance to support the project; only 250-500 euro will guarantee the Internet connection of one school for a year, in return the GTP will put your name on their website.

Further information:

- [Global Teenager Project](#)

Related links:

- [Project-based learning and tele-collaboration launched in Thai schools](#)
- [UNESCO launched project-based learning and telecollaboration in Chinese schools](#)
- [UNESCO Bangkok kicks-off new ICT in Education project funded by Korean government](#)
- [Workshop builds telecollaboration capacity of Sri Lankan teacher educators](#)

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:

- [UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter](#)

What do you think about this topic?
Resources

A bridge too far? Explaining beginning teachers’ use of ICT in Australian schools
This paper published by Frank Bate of University of Notre Dame, discusses some of the findings from a recent longitudinal study that examined how 35 beginning teachers used information and communications technologies (ICT) in the first three years of their teaching.

The research, set in Western Australia, adopted a mixed method approach to help understand the role that ICT played in the evolving pedagogical practices of the teachers involved. The study found that beginning teachers articulated pedagogical beliefs that aimed to engage their students in active meaning making. It also found that these teachers were competent in the use of a basic suite of ICT software.

However, pedagogical beliefs that resonate with contemporary learning theory and operational ICT competence did not translate into practices that synergised pedagogical, content and technological knowledge. The teachers involved in the study did not use ICT in ways that were consistent with their stated pedagogical beliefs.

The relationships between teachers’ beliefs and their pedagogical and technological knowledge are discussed within the contexts of different school settings. A framework is presented that emphasises the need for teachers and school leaders to make connections across pedagogical and technological domains.

Read the paper:

- A bridge too far? Explaining beginning teachers’ use of ICT in Australian schools

Related links:

- Education the winner as NICTA and ACS award Australian ICT student prize
- Pre-service teacher education and ICT integration for a better world
- Government of Australia invests $40 million (AUD) for teachers’ ICT training
- How will ICT change the future of education?
- Australian students win award for an innovative educational tool
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What do you think about this topic?

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Children, wired: For better and for worse
Children encounter technology constantly at home and in school. Television, DVDs, video games, the Internet, and smart phones all play a formative role in children’s development.

The term “technology” subsumes a large variety of somewhat independent items, and it is no surprise that current research indicates causes for both optimism and concern depending upon the content of the technology, the context in which the technology immerses the user, and the user’s developmental stage.

Furthermore, because the field is still in its infancy, results can be surprising: video games designed to be reasonably mindless result in widespread enhancements of various abilities, acting, we will argue, as exemplary learning tools.

Counterintuitive outcomes like these, besides being practically relevant, challenge and eventually lead to refinement of theories concerning fundamental principles of brain plasticity and learning.

Authors of the paper: Daphne Bavelier (University of Rochester, USA), C. Shawn Green (University of Minnesota, USA), and Matthew W.G. Dye (University of Illinois, USA).

Read the paper:

- Children, wired: For better and for worse

Related links:
What is reasonable to expect from information and communication technologies in education?

Technology to the rescue - Can gadgets in the classroom enhance learning?

The 21st Century Classroom – Alfie Kohn

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:

- UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter

What do you think about this topic?

- Visit our on-line forum and discuss this topic

E-course on social and economic policies
UNICEF and the Economic Research Foundation (ERF) invite you to participate in a new e-learning programme focusing on socio-economic policies for child rights with equity. This free, self-paced online course is available to all development partners at UN agencies, governments, universities and civil society organizations.

- Course description: This programme is a foundational course on economic and social policies to promote equity and child rights. The topics covered include: the human rights-based approach to development; equitable macroeconomic and sector policies; public finance and social budgeting; multidimensional poverty; social protection, migration and climate change.

The e-course aims to provide evidence-based arguments and advocacy skills needed to promote equity and children’s rights in public policy, in the context of recent developments such as the economic crisis or high food prices.

- Course duration: The course is self-directed and may be completed at your own pace.

- Registration: This course is being offered free of charge to ensure maximum outreach. Upon completion of each module, a test is administered and a certificate will be issued to all who reach successful completion.
Visit [policyforchildrights.org](http://policyforchildrights.org) to get started.

Further information:

- [Policies for Child Rights –elearning programme](#)

Related links:

- [Asia and Pacific Database on Education launched - Giving policy makers and practitioners evidence for action](#)
- [ITU launches initiative to protect children online](#)
- [Child online safety in the developing world](#)

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:

- [UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter](#)

What do you think about this topic?

- [Visit our on-line forum and discuss this topic](#)

**ICTs and environmental sustainability**

The Global Information Society Watch group released the “2010 - ICTs and Environmental Sustainability” report last year. The report includes seven thematic reports: Dealing with the global ICT footprint, emerging research agendas, sustainability electronic waste, smart technologies, green grassroots technologies, and building advocacy networks, as well as an institutional overview and a consideration of green indicators.

Environmental challenges provide an opportunity to place sustainable development at the core of our thinking and practice. In the developed world, the ubiquitousness of ICTs means that they have become almost invisible, and this “invisibility” extends to their potential for harmful impacts on the environment, while it is only just the beginning stage for us to
realize the rapidly expanded ICT infrastructure in developing countries and their controversial influence on local community and environment.

Sustainable development involves consideration of economic development, social development and environmental protection. To understand the sustainability of ICTs we must look at the devices themselves, from the sources of raw materials, through production, use, and finally disposal.

The report aims at both beginners and experts in the fields of ICTs and climate change, electronic waste, and the use of ICTs for environmental good generally.

There are six regional reports, from South Asia, East Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, Europe, North America, and Latin America and the Caribbean, which precede 53 individual country reports – five more than last year, despite the relative novelty of the topic.

These reports deal with electronic waste as their core discussion, the rest focusing on climate change, or a combination of climate change and electronic waste. Taken together, they cover the full range of ICT implications for the environment: from production, to markets and procurement, to use, reuse and disposal.

Read the publication:

- [ICTs and environmental sustainability](#)

Related links:

- [Sustainable ICT in further and higher education](#)
- [Information technologies vital to tackling climate change – UN Secretary General](#)
- [Launch of climate change education web portal](#)

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:

- [UNESCO “ICT in Education” Announcement e-newsletter](#)
What do you think about this topic?

• Visit our on-line forum and discuss this topic

Children’s Technology Review
Children’s Technology Review, an online magazine, is designed to keep parents, teachers and librarians up to date on the latest children’s interactive media products. The database contains 8,800 reviews, ranging from websites, video games, mobile phone apps to Facebook plugins.

These are mostly commercial products, with copyright dates that range from 1985 to 2010. At Children’s Technology Review website, you can access to their YouTube channel to watch various evaluation videos about latest children’s interactive media products. They review all forms of interactive media of interest to children, from early childhood to 15 years.

Usually, Children’s Technology Review favours software that is easy to use, child controlled, has solid educational content, is engaging and fun, is designed with features you’d expect to see, and is worth the money.

Children’s Technology Review adopts six categories to review and rate a children’s software including Ease of Use, Childproof, Educational, Entertaining, Design Features and Value. For instance, for educational category, the software will be rated by questions (What can a child learn from this program? What do the walk away from the experience with that they didn’t have when the first came to the experience?) The review outcome help parents, teachers and other target groups keep in mind what it takes to make a quality children’s software title.

Summaries of the reviews are posted for free on the website. The more detailed reports are listed in a review database that can be accessed by subscribers. In addition, monthly PDF newsletter and paper magazines are also provided on a subscription basis. The cost is $24/year for access.

Further information:

• Children’s Technology Review

Related links:

• Practical use of animations in teacher training
• Thailand develops e-content to align pedagogy with ICT
• Awesome library
• The Super Book of Web Tools for Educators
• TeacherMate: Individualized, teacher-assisted instruction
• The dangers and opportunities of girls in cyberspace

Previous issues of the e-newsletter:

• UNESCO "ICT in Education" Announcement e-newsletter

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