



Revisiting Online Teaching & Learning

August 13

Notes, Recording, and Link

[Recording Link](#)

Michael Levine (starts at 00:10)

Senior Vice President, Learning and Impact, for Noggin, Nickelodeon's learning service for preschoolers

- Anna says: I am still in disbelief that we are talking about online learning and that so many of our children will not be returning to school as we have known it. When you and I first spoke, you made me feel excited about the potential of remote learning for young children. Tonight we are here to suspend our (my!) disbelief and any discomfort so that we can imagine the future with fresh eyes.
- Strengthening communications is key
- Using technology to add value
- Media can catalyze meaningful learning for children
- Serve and return interactions, human relationships are the most important thing, you need an adult to be crazy about child, technology doesn't substituteTech can be disruptive to human relationships
- What we need now is to take the emerging technologies and use them as relationship drivers

- All tech is not created equal
- Take tech to use it as catapults to use outside of screen
- Joint engagement- take 20 minutes of a tv show and use it for learning beyond the screen-Intergenerational viewing
- Follow up prompts after the experience
- Build interest driven program of learning
- Mistake to stick to delivering content that doesn't stretch relationships in household, imagination...this is the next step for tech-tech needs to be reinvented as a relationship driver, family asset, not something you sit passively in front of
- Digital Wild West right now. We need to teach kids what it means to have a balanced digital diet-Ex. Cookie Monster learning delayed gratification skills-Idea of media mentors can guide and prod a new kind of more healthy and balanced social media diet
- Not all media is equal. Technologies can be used for good and bad. Think about it in terms of Cs:
 - Content quality matters
 - Context in which it is being used (Video chat with grandparents vs parked in front of mindless app)
 - Child. Understand temperament of child. Can they stop and resist the digital media?
 - Culture and community
- Understand where you are introducing the media- use music, games, podcasts-tech as a driver of creativity and innovation
- Wide Open School- Project of Common Sense Media, started in March, Pre-k-12 offering for parents and educators. <https://wideopenschool.org/Noggin.com> New offering free to all schools

Rona Novick (starts at 18:23)

Dean Azrieli Graduate School of Jewish Education and Administration

- [Rona's slidedeck](#)
- We had to pivot so quickly with no warning.
- We should pat ourselves on the back for the work we educators have all done.
- There will always be snow days and opportunities for us to think about how to harness and leverage technology.
- "Online learning" rather than learning that is distance or not real (virtual)
- Three cheers for a field that researches together! Team work makes the dream work!

- As you make decisions about online learning, what have we learned can guide us.
- Challenge of the spring: rapidly changing situation meeting needs of multiple constituencies
- Dealing with a ticking clock today. Need to make decisions now.
- Survey looks at 306 responses, mostly mothers responded. Mostly dual-parent families. Most had siblings living at home. Vast majority were working parents.
- Most were working from home while their children were engaging with teachers' material.
- Children attended online programming daily, willing to join online programming! Not as typical in older children.
- Only parents whose children were registered in preschool during 4th closure completed the survey.
- Discrepancy between length/amount of offerings and actual utilization.
- Children engaging on average for less than an hour.
- Parents extraordinarily positive about everything that you did!
- Vast majority: somewhat, very, or extremely helpful.
- Surprising given the complaints we have heard privately.
- 75% Very much appreciated the offerings.
- What would parents have liked offered for children and parents? Open-ended questions.
- Five themes:
 - More is not better. Brief sessions. Small group sessions with child's regular teacher. Social over academic. In times of shutdown, might schools consider serving as friendship/playdate facilitator? Sending materials home would help. Need recognition of parent schedules. Awareness of materials that can be accesses.
 - The personal matters! Want child's connection with their particular teacher. Maintaining personal connection. Low tech can work (eg greeting cards, sending a drawing you made in the mail).
 - Partnership is appreciated. Recognizing burdens on parents' time. Consider putting together modules now that are ready to go. Something you can pull out at any time and have delivered to families. Vehicle for capturing parent hopes and dreams. Parent coop that would leverage the time some parents can give while others work. Helping children learn about how to be at home—how to interact when parents are working. Can we offer downtime for parents in some way? Think about families and friends—how to engage all of these folks on screen to help and participate.

- Schools are social places, social conveners. Parents miss this! Eg Drop off time schmoozing. How to build and maintain sense of community. Wanting some parent care: Academically geared workshop and social/emotional/mental health. How can tech promote socialization. Eg virtual playdates, family gatherings. Establish mechanisms to share info about families who might be struggling and need attention.
- Money mattered. So many parents wanted recognition that what purchased was not what they got. Being clear and transparent about refund policy. Different financial arrangements or models? While all are tightening belts. All programs will need to demonstrate value added and purpose. What are all the things we offer? Parent survey to see what parents would value most? Paying regular tuition most amenable when they feel they have access to 1-1 interaction. Preview: Parent stress levels were incredibly high, but despite that the parent-child relationship remain strong; parents identity as parents endured.
- Affix your masks first; please take care of yourselves. You are so important!

Carla Goldberg (starts at 38:50; consider using the “video presentation” link below for optimal quality)

Director, Akiba-Schechter Jewish Day School, Chicago

- [Video presentation](#)
- Talks about caddies for loose parts, yoga, recycling, and art that the school made for summer families.
- Children built while we were together online. Did this in breakout groups of ten, with two teachers in each.
- Built habitats for animals in the Lincoln Park Zoo. Made and studied bridges. Amazed by the children’s excitement and willingness to engage.

Jesse Tobin (starts at 42:18)

Curriculum Director, Temple Beth Shalom Children’s Center, Needham, Massachusetts

- In the spring, Daily Zooms, pre-recorded, weekly virtual playdates in small groups, doing 1-1.
- Magic started to happen when teachers started thinking outside the screen and began combining online learning with an in-person component.
- Eg one teacher missed challah baking. She delivered dough to each family and they made it together online.
- One fours class decided that to carry on the sewing project they do each year, the teachers got all of the materials together. Invited families to join in this small

group. Delivered materials to children's homes. Supported the learning over many weeks. Eventually the items were outside the teacher's home and the children would come and pick them up. Made an in-person connection safely.

- One teacher on a virtual playdate with a student and heard student's brother having a hard time in the bathroom. After ending the playdate, she drive to family's house and turned up music to have a dance party together (but socially distanced). Connected with someone else in the family and face the support the family needed.
- Driveway visits were a big hit.
- Chalk tag was a big hit. Leaving drawings on a driveway. "TBS loves you." Special moment to see that teacher or friends were thinking of them. Then would pass it on.
- Maintaining deep connections and relationships. If and when we return to this online learning, how can we think about it in relation to the human connection? How to really make the relationship that much deeper and meaningful.

Josh Rifkin (starts at 48:10)

Pre-K Educator, Denver JCC Early Childhood Learning Center

- Reggio Inspired Learning in a Virtual World?
- How to take this out of the regular classroom and plant in the virtual classroom.
- Will there be space to embrace the emerging interests of children?
- This is the truest test of our philosophy.
- Can it hold up under stress and strain?
- Story that gave me glimmer of hope in the cedar tree classroom.
- Voice of a child: I unmuted myself. T is grinning at me. Playful power struggle over the mute button. T's victory with the mute button is unleashed, contagious.
- Evidence of real learning. These kids were teaching each other how to use Zoom!
- What does it mean to put a child on mute? Loss of voice or agency?
- How might Zoom be like clay or another tool for learning? Do we need to scaffold like we would with any other tool?
- We asked T to teach other children to draw with virtual crayons.
- Kids started creating virtual collaborative murals.
- Co-constructing knowledge of Zoom together.
- Disappointment that families thought this was chaotic. Wish I had said: this is what real learning looks like! Messy. Utilizing all the 21st century skills.
- Future success would depend on us setting the stage. Preparing ourselves and families to embrace discomfort. Would need to remind selves that discomfort and challenge are the engines that propel us forward.

- Mr. Rogers. Connecting, and safe space. Space between cameras and viewers a sacred space.

Melissa Hume (starts at 56:40)

Assistant Director and Twos Teacher, Stephen Wise Free Synagogue Early Childhood Center, NY

- [Document Meslissa shared on screen](#)
- Small group learning experiences where we had mentality of “Is there a way for us to reconstruct the feeling and way we learned together in person?”
- Ultimately we shared with parents our thinking: Sent a week in advance. Expectations, timing. Wanted to introduce small group work to our repertoire. Will wait and observe children’s responses rather than full-speed ahead with a program.
- Rotated among teachers.
- Started out with small group.
- Sometimes even needed more than 30 minutes.
- Meaningful play opportunity with common materials.
- Didn’t know what families had access to. Tried to be flexible.
- Flexible with timing, offered different options.
- Found that it started feeling like classroom life. Used spotlight to say “I notice that x child is doing y.”
- Children made connections with own structures and dollhouses they had. Started to talk about this. Third child, when we next met, showed us a cardboard dollhouse she had made. Extended beyond what happened in our calls.
- This gives me hope! Thanks, Melissa!

Stephanie Slater (starts at 1:03:50)

Director of Early Childhood Development and Family Support, Adas israel Congregation, Washington D.C.

- Works in early identification and intervention, toward inclusion.
- Children with learning needs are struggling.
- More than ever, thinking about front loading. Preparing with materials in advance. Always doing this in inclusion work and especially now.
- Preparing visuals comes naturally to us. Maybe not to families. Re: what is next, what to expect.
- “Lesson Pix” enables you to make visuals so that parents could create visual routines for the children.
- Looked at daily routines in blocks. Morning and afternoon.
- Part of the importance of these is some ownership and agency for the day.

- After breakfast and morning meeting, showing parents to use two visuals as a choice for the child as to what to do next.
- Parents need coaching through the Zooms. We cue the children when in person. Would speak to parents in advance to give a preview so that they would know when to help child in that Zoom meeting.
- Parents not prepared to be teachers. Suddenly engaged in power struggles to get children to watch Zoom meetings.
- One teacher would send weekly video suggesting how to get the children engaged.
- Parent would play each part during the week when activity was offered.
- Sending this video to the family every week set the child up for the week without the struggle.
- Puppet character allowed me to create a social story to introduce a new concept. Her name is Rosie and Rosie would share how she got a new mask. Our intention was for Rosie to show how to go through a health check/screening.
- Made in PPT.
- Help parents think about designing a space for Zoom classroom.
- Teaching parents about movement, natural movement. Having children get up to go get something during Zoom.
- One-to-one virtual playdate.
- Remember your students who need extra supports by front-loading!

Alana Gelnick (begins at 1:17:19)

Associate Principal, ELC, SAR Academy, Riverdale NY

- Inviting all of us to do better this year, to reflect, to think about making time.
- Zoom and Gloom? Or Zoom and Bloom?
- Growing children in a COVID world.
- When first began, all wanted a circle time.
- But what the children wanted to do was come over, have a chat, show things to a friend.
- Quickly realized that first needed morning chatting before community building activities. Circle times needed to be shorter than in person.
- I might do it in my classroom one way, and might do it differently on Zoom.
- Every student has small group or one on one each day.
- Relationships grew significantly when we did things that way.
- Sitting and chatting on Zoom. Talking and coloring. Unstructured time for chatting, “Just” coloring. The stuff from classroom life where real growth happens.
- Sending everyone seeds for planting together, watching our plants grow.

- Having children sharing what they are doing.
- Daily challenges: Using household materials. Same children doing over and over, eventually having these children lead them.
- Back then, we were scrambling, This year we will have supply cases ready to go. Families can pick up should we have to go virtual. Teachers and families will have materials.
- WE'VE GOT THIS!!