

Parents' Night Out Apps for Your School-Age Kid - Outline

Intros - 5 mins 6:30 - 6:35

Introduce ourselves

- FdeF: Outline for the evening, explain that they'll have time to play, bathrooms
- FdeF: Explain parent handout

LK: Goals:

- To help you choose apps to support your child as they create, interact with others, and learn.

Group Introductions - 5 mins 6:35 - 6:40

Presenters start and share:

- Your name and age of your kids
- One of your child's favorite way to create (e.g. painting, making up songs, inventing superheroes)

Meat - 10 mins 6:40-6:50

The 3 C's for Choosing Digital Media (Lindsey)

- **Content:** Choose apps that let your child control the activity and where they can engage, explore, express, and imagine! For example, choose an app that lets your child create their own music, rather than listen to pre-recorded songs. Older children may lose interest in apps or ebooks that are too simple for them, but many apps and games have levels or features that allow the app to grow with the child. With function as with content, we want to choose appropriate resources so that children are engaged and even challenged, but not frustrated or discouraged. For eBooks: interactivity should usually be minimal, and must be very well integrated or it disrupts the flow of the narrative. There's much more leeway with other types of apps where linear progression is less important and the interactions can be very engaging. When you're evaluating apps, try to consider whether aspects of the app might be annoying to some people and look for customization options that let you minimize the annoyance factors.
- **Context:** Consider what your child will do before, during and after using apps. For example, if your child will use an app to create something, is there a way for them to show off their creation? If an app talks about chemical reactions, can you do a kitchen experiment together to see one in real life? Take time to talk about what your child experienced with the app.
- **The Unique Child:** Choose apps that will interest your child, are within their abilities, and fit with the other activities in their life. You are the best judge of how to integrate technology into your family's life.

Choosing Great apps - points from the Appy Hour Pasadena library list (Francesca)

- Get to know the app first before showing your child
- Avoid free apps that have popups, advertising, in-app purchases
- Watch out for free 'Lite' version of apps with locked features that you'll have to buy
- Check what settings and parental controls are available
- Be aware of how apps connect to social media

On your handout you'll see a list of sites to go to for reviews and recommendations etc.

Why do we want our kids to play with apps? (Francesca)

- Being able to use technology is a basic skill necessary for living in an increasingly digital society.
- We want kids to experience devices not just as toys, but as powerful tools for creation, interaction, and learning. That's how we've organized this session.

Apps to CREATE - 25 mins 6:50 – 7:15

Lego Movie Maker (Free) - Francesca

- **Jump on your kid's bandwagon – and then go past it**
- Kids can create stop motion animation videos using anything in their vicinity
- Easy to navigate - kids will discover a lot of the functions without much direct instruction

StarComposer (music) (Free) - Lindsey

- Headphones needed to record voice
- Kid friendly introduction to mixing music, you can always step up to Garage Band (\$4.99) if they're really interested
- **It is OK to try out a free app to gauge your child's interest level, before investing in more expensive, higher quality apps**

Big Nate (make comics) (4.99) - Francesca

- **If you want kids to create, don't throw a blank screen at them**
- Has examples under your gallery > Lincoln Pierce
- Uses popular characters to draw kids in
- Three different levels, so your child can start at an appropriate place

Scribble Press (making books) (3.99) - Lindsey

- **Take your creations into the real world go beyond the app**, email, or have your book printed
- Gives error with no internet connection, can't connect to gallery?
- story starters, fill in the blanks to get started, blank book for total control
- Good privacy policy for sharing with the world, but careful of in-app purchases

DoodleBuddy (drawing) (Free) - Francesca

- Show how you can use it to scan worksheets and colouring pages
- Has a big range of drawing options, stickers, stencils, free drawing, more likely that a child can find a way to create something with it
- **Apps can be used lots of different ways, drawing, playing with photos, worksheets etc. Use apps in unintended ways.**
- Take a picture of a person and add a mustache

To Mention from our Annotated List:

- FingerPaint Studio (Free)
- Superhero comic book maker (1.99)
- 123D Sculpt (free)
- MoMA Art Lab (colour, sound, collage, famous works of art) (free)
- GarageBand (Music) 4.99

Play and Share - 5 mins 7:15 – 7:20

Apps to INTERACT - 25 mins 7:20 – 7:45

ChatterPix Kids (animate a mouth on a picture)(free) - Lindsey

- Has demos available to use
- Kids enjoy making pictures of each other, and animating each other
- Kids can email movies to each other, or to far away friends
- Kids can interact in real space, or over email

Sock Puppets (easy to demo) (free) - Francesca

- Demo making one in from of them, knock knock joke
- Designed for two to four people to use together
- **Look for apps that inspire joint creativity, as well as competition**

Rube Works (2.99) - Lindsey

- Very challenging, so parents (or older siblings etc.) can work together
- Challenge means big of accomplishment
- Critical thinking and problem solving puzzles, **encourages discussion and trials of different approaches, open ended apps**
- Good tutorial

StoryLines (free) - Francesca

- **Pass and Play** - works best with more than 2 people
- Telephone with pictures
- EX: siblings in the back of the car
- Make a demo story and save in gallery to show parents during session (Only works with internet, so do a quick 3 person version there and then.)

Williamspurrrrg HD (1.99 US) - Lindsey

- Simultaneous use
- You have to negotiate and collaborate to get it to work
- Up to four people at once
- Demo with 2 people - Lindsey and Francesca
- Silly fun! **It's OK to have fun, play is an important element of learning**

To Mention from our Annotated List:

- Minecraft (6.99)
- Ticket to Ride (\$1.99/iPhone, \$6.99/iPad)

Play and Share - 5 mins 7:45 – 7:50

Apps to LEARN - 25 mins 7:50 – 8:15

Cargobot (free) - Francesca

- Coding for kids interest, not just to learn how to code
- Has an increasing level of difficulty
- **Not teaching a specific language, but the thinking process behind good program design**, how to sequence, logical statements, cause and effect

Meanwhile (4.99) - Lindsey

- Not a flat ebook, gives kids choice over how the story goes,
- **If you're going to use a book app, make it something special**
- Great to draw in reluctant reader
- Teaches narrative structure
- Go through the story, asking the patrons to vote on the options

Barefoot World Atlas (4.99) - Francesca

- Blend of different subjects, from football teams to mountain heights, gives everything a geographic context, **holistic learning!**
- Gives kids a chance to find something they'll get excited about
- Factual information in a visually appealing way
- Gets live data from Wolfram Alpha, eg, population stats.

Colour Uncovered (Free) / Sound Uncovered (Free) - Lindsey

- **Talk about valid sources of information**
- Experience the information as well as read about it
- Video, text, sound, and interactive elements
- Show them See Spots Run interactive feature in Colour Uncovered - keep on for 20 seconds

Marble Math (2.99) - Francesca

- Covers many aspects of math
- **Highly customisable to your child's needs**
- Look out for apps tailored to US curriculum, math is constant but curriculums differ

To Mention from our Annotated List:

- Fantastic Flying Books of Mr. Morris Lessmore (4.99)
- Bobo Explores Light (4.99)
- The Opposites (0.99)
- Daisy the Dinosaur (free)
- Slice Fractions (2.99)
- Mystery Math Town (2.99)

Play and Share - 5 mins 8:15 – 8:20

End/Summary - 5 mins 8:20 - 8:25

FdeF What to take away

- Create, Interact, learn
- Take the experience beyond the device
- 3 C's, Content, Context, Child

LK What the library can do for you:

- Librarians can give you app recommendations, and tips for using them
- Come and try out apps in the children's library (handout of VPL apps)
- We have downloadable audio and ebooks - Overdrive App!

Evaluation - 5 mins 8:25 - 8:30