**[Karen Hope]:** As a way of framing our conversation tonight, it might be useful to give some time to considering a definition of the term digital technologies. I think the attendees at this webinar will be interested to know what you mean when you refer to this term in the context of very young children.

**[Anne Kennedy]:** Oh, thank you, Karen, and first can I say it's lovely to be here with my VCAA colleagues and with all of the participants from Victoria and from beyond Victoria. It's great. Yes I am curious about this topic and curiouser and curiouser, I have to say, as I do some more reading and some more thinking. I think when we're talking about very young children, most people whose work I've been reading refer particularly to the technologies that can be swiped or touched. So tablets and phones, but there's a whole raft of other technologies that educators might use, or that children might have access to like digital cameras, digital projectors, digital recorders, digital smart watches whatever. So yes, there's a huge range of technologies, but some of those won't be used by very young children because they're not appropriate to be used by young children and others, are of great interest to young children and there's a possibility for their use. So I think everyone would be familiar with most of those technologies these days. Some services would have access to more of those things than others, I guess. Yeah.

**[Karen Hope]:** And I think just that reminded me about, I've seen children use digital microscopes in, very young children using microscopes underneath plant life for near ponds and the learning opportunities that they throw up are many. And I also think we probably need to get more comfortable with letting children use those materials. Sometimes we think that very young children can't use digital cameras, but if you actually give children cameras, it's quite amusing and insightful to see what they think is worth photographing during the course of the day, it would probably not be what we would might think is worth photographing.

**[Anne Kennedy]:** Yeah, no, I mean, if you think back, we didn't give babies and toddlers books for a long time. So there were no books for very young children because we were worried they'd eat them or destroy them or be rough with them. But we've learned that if we introduce them with respect, we model that respect for the equipment or the tool or a source. Children catch those behaviors too. They catch the behaviors we want them to have, so that's treating things with respect. Yeah.

**[Karen Hope]:** You just reminded me then, I remember being a young teacher and there was a big debate about when we had books that you could take in the bath, bath books and purists, if you like, saying you can't read a book in the bath and why have children got books in the bath. Moving away from this idea that they were special, but in fact they were actually making them accessible.

**[Anne Kennedy]:** Yeah, Exactly. I think the earliest books for babies were rag books.

**[Karen Hope]:** Yes.

**[Anne Kennedy]:** Cloths books, and they're still available and people still make them for young children. So, fast forward to today and then we've got this explosion of devices that can be used by very young children and that's some of the things we'll talk about tonight, I think.

[Copyright Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority](https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Footer/Pages/Copyright.aspx) 2021