**[Dr Suzy Edwards]:** Yes, I did have the opportunity to be involved in the Early Childhood Australia Statement on Young Children and Digital Technologies. If people haven't heard of this Statement before, it was released in 2018, it's widely available, it's easy, just search for 'Statement on young children and digital technologies', it will come up quite easily, and there's a summary version as well.

The reason that ECA decided to progress the work on the Statement on Young Children and Digital Technologies, which you would've seen as that slide came up, a great range of issues that young children, families, and educators are encountering all the time as the world's becoming more and more digital, and our interactions with other people, and information and data, are increasingly digital.

There's a lot of research to show that outside of services, children use the internet. The internet's very high-use for children from very early ages. People can be a little bit uncomfortable with that notion, that children might be on the internet, but even if it's not unsupervised use on the internet, children will be using the internet for, exactly like you said, video conferencing with family or friends, accessing digital content, which can be on places like YouTube or more controlled spaces like ABC Kids, digital games, virtual games, there's internet of toys, there's voice-activation devices in the home. If they go down to the shops or they're catching public transport, it's touch on-touch off, paying by phone, paying by card. Then of course, as the pandemic comes, there's lots of QR codes to sign in. So, children today live in a very, very digital society.

One of the things that the Early Childhood Australia Statement does is, it's got an introduction section, and then it's got a nice, meaty section, which we'll come to a little bit later, and then the conclusion. I just wanted to spend a little bit of time reflecting on what the introduction of the Statement does. Here it is, beautifully appearing for us. So, here’s the introduction, it's got the introduction, it's got the conclusion, obviously, and then the meaty bit I was talking about canvases four main aspects of young children's lives concerning digital technology: their relationships, their health and wellbeing, citizenship, play and pedagogy. We'll unpack those a little bit more shortly. I just wanted to spend a little bit of time thinking about what the introduction does.

An introduction of the Statement, it's going to go, well, we have to... the children's worlds are digital, and there can be uses of digital technologies in services, but in that introduction, it also acknowledges that not everyone's comfortable with what and how our children use technologies, and people have different beliefs and values about whether or not children should be using technologies. And if they are using technologies, how and why they should be using technologies.

What we did in the ECA statement is, we explored some different views on technologies. So, you know, Amanda, in early childhood education and care, we're very familiar with different theories of play. So, if I said to you, "Tell me some theories of play," you could probably pop out a few different theoretical perspectives on play. You might tell me about Piaget, or Vygotsky, or Parten, and same with different understandings of children's learning and development.

As we progress through our careers, we become more and more comfortable and familiar with those theories of play. We're able to use them almost like lenses through which we can look at what children are doing. A couple of years ago, when I was trying to research and understand more about young children and digital technologies, I found out that just like there are theories of play, there are actually theories of technology.

I didn't know this. Here I was, blissfully unaware, researching young children and technologies, completely unaware that there were different theories on technologies. So, what we do in that ECA statement is we just very gently point to some of those theories. There's maybe two I'd just like to quickly touch on.

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