



eSafety offer a suite of resources for parents and educators working with children in the early years. The Play School team believe children growing up in our digital age have a right to engage with the online world in developmentally appropriate, safe, positive, creative and playful ways - together with the informed grown-ups in their lives. We are pleased to present this offering to encourage all of us to develop good habits in the digital space. Early Childhood Australia (through their [statement on young children and digital technologies](#)) reminds us of our role (as adults and educators) in modelling good technology habits, including being safe and knowing when to turn off the device. We hope that this special episode gives you some ideas on how best to engage in this area.

Background

It's the countdown to Kiya's big birthday party and there is so much to do! Kiya and her Play School family go online to make all the arrangements. As [81% of parents](#) with pre-schoolers say their children use the internet, it is important to build understandings of online safety right from the start. Join Teo, Leah and the Play School crew as we team up with the eSafety Commissioner in this special episode exploring our [National early childhood online safety messages](#):

- Be safe
- Be kind
- Ask for help
- Make good choices

Creating the episode

In this special episode we address the need for young children to build skills in being safe if they engage online. Through stories and play we explore the key messages for children: being safe, being kind, asking for help and making good choices. We see the toys planning for and celebrating Kiya's big birthday as Teo and Leah remind us of safe online practices when we say and share, make and do and watch and explore online.

The Play School team created Kiya's Excellent eBirthday with experts working with the [eSafety Commissioner](#).

Follow up ideas

We Say and Share Online

Leah and Teo make invitations for Kiya's party. Leah models how we can use technology to share information and reminds us not to share information with people we don't know. This habit is something we should ensure children practice from a young age and take care to not share 'personal information' such as their full name, date of birth, address or contact information, or to share photos that identify them. However, there are some great ways we can say and share with technology that are safe including:

- Using video calls to connect with family over distance (as we see in this Through the Windows film).
- Sharing children's artwork, homemade movies or animation creations with friends and family via email, text message or video group chats.
- Having friends or family read books, play games, sing songs or engage in other fun activities with children via video chat.



We Make and Do Online

In the episode we also see Teo and Leah make a play list of music for Kiya's party. Creating a music play list can be a great activity and you can talk about music for different moods, or times of the day, such as music for dancing (and physical activity), music for winding down or music for a great singalong.

Kiya also makes a picture by drawing on the tablet and Little Ted takes photos at Kiya's birthday party Leah makes the important point that it is a good idea to ask someone if they'd like their photo taken. This is an important habit for young children as it demonstrates respect and will be enormously useful as they grow.

Using technology to create is a more desirable way for young children to engage with technologies. It often provides opportunities for problem-solving, critical thinking and trailing and testing ideas. There are lots of ways we can use technology to inspire us to make and do such as:

- Making our own recipe, yoga or instructional videos and share with friends or family.
- Watching episodes of [Play School Art Time](#) to get ideas of arts activities.
- Watch episodes of ABC Kids series '[Dot.](#)' for an idea on how to create and problem solve using technology.
- Creating movies, animations, digital books and photo collages through Apps or online tools.



We Watch and Explore Online

We see a range of ways that children watch and explore online. Teo and Humpty search online to find out how to make a rainbow cake topper and Kiya watches her favourite Moo-Tube videos. These activities are common practices in many families and a reminder for adults to be alongside or close to children using technologies to keep them safe online. In this episode we see Kiya asking for help when her video doesn't play as expected. The most important message for us grown-ups to remember is the way Teo reacts to Kiya's call for help. He doesn't get angry. eSafety advice shows that later in life children often don't tell parents or teachers about things like bullying for fear of getting 'in trouble'. There are lots of other great tips for staying safe online on [eSafety's website](#). As you consider the endless options online there are some amazing activities that you can do with young children:

- Revisit favourite television and radio shows and do some of the things they see or hear in real life (eg through the ABC kids listen apps)
- Collect information and resources about their world (for example Nasa's website allows us to go into space or Apps such as star walk help us investigate the night sky)
- Play games that include a focus on educational content.
- Visit [ABC Kids Early Education](#) for curriculum aligned content.

Play School

Books

In this episode we read a book called *Wombat's Birthday Surprise* by Lachlan Creagh. This is a great book about birthdays. Other books to consider reading when we look at technology and online safety include:

- 'It's a Book' by Lane Smith with a reminder that books behave differently to technologies.
- 'Hello Hello' By Mathew Cordell about families use of technology and Lydia who ventures outside away from the screens.
- 'Unplugged' by Steve Antony about the joys of switching off and getting outside to play and explore.
- 'Goodnight iPad' by Ann Droyd is a great reminder to turn off our devices before bed!

Music

- *It's Fun To Make Things*

Composers: Scott Alpin and Phil Barton

- *Wiggerly Woo*

Composers: Don Spencer and Moira Cochrane

- *Watermelon*

Composers: Arthur Baysting and Peter Dasent

- *It's My Birthday Today*

Composers: Arthur Baysting and Peter Dasent

- *(I Can) Sing A Rainbow*

Composers: Arthur Hamilton

- *Happy Birthday*

Composers: Mildred Hill and Patricia Hill

- *I Like To Sing (Dance Verse)*

Composers: Garth Frost and Peter Dasent



For more online safety advice and resources:

- For [parents](#).
- For [educators](#).

Articles on role of technology in early education:

- [Tech savvy in the early years: ABC Kids team up with the early childhood research community!](#)
- [eSafety Early Years: Online Safety for under 5's.](#)
- [Online safety for our very youngest Australians.](#)
- [Big Ted's tips for 2020: Good online habits start early.](#)
- [Bring on the photo consent debate – our kids will emerge the winners.](#)
- [Tips for parents of children using digital technology.](#)
- [Technology, the future and our responsibility to children.](#)

Credits

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