

# Paediatric and parenting technologies: possibilities and priorities

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The use of technology for promoting health 'from a distance' for children, young people and their parents has continued to increase over the last decade and more recently in the global COVID-19 pandemic. This technology incorporates diverse devices and platforms, including smartphones, social media, mobile applications, wearable technology and web-based information sources such as websites or podcasts accessible via laptops, desktop computers or smartphones. These technologies have been used to address a plethora of health-related information for parents and families such as childhood development and behaviour management, improving health literacy and chronic illness self-management, pain management, promoting mental health and psychological wellbeing, and supporting the transition between paediatric and adult healthcare.<sup>1-4</sup>

The global COVID-19 pandemic has also brought a surge in the use of digital health information; however, as these technologies proliferate, research into their effectiveness needs to keep pace to ensure emerging products are credible and evidence-based.<sup>5</sup> For health professionals considering recommending technologies to children and young people, it is imperative to consider whether the technology is specifically designed for the target age group, and to ensure privacy and security of data.<sup>5</sup> Where possible, users should also have the opportunity to test the technology to ascertain their experience, engagement and need for caregiver involvement.<sup>5</sup> Technology development and use should also take into account accessibility and sustainability of use as well as implications for excessive screen time which may have negative impacts on children and young people.<sup>5-7</sup>

For parents, the use of technologies to seek parenting- or health-related information for their children is widespread.<sup>8</sup> For example, parents in a US study searched for health-related information regarding child behaviour, mental and physical health, academic performance and managing parental stress.<sup>8</sup> It is imperative we consider how we assist parents to locate credible sources of health-related technology for themselves and their families. In our current issue, Morawska et al. evaluate podcast use among parents

during the COVID-19 pandemic, finding that parents engaged in thousands of parent podcast plays during this period.

Also in this issue, Shields provides her keynote address from the ACCYPN 2020 conference and Blamires et al. present their review of Australasian clinical practice guidelines for paediatric oral mucositis management.

I would like to acknowledge and express my gratitude for the hard work of the journal editorial team and our wonderful reviewers as well as our support team from Cambridge Media. Thank you all for your support for the journal throughout the year and we look forward to receiving your manuscript submissions for 2023.

Warm regards, Elizabeth

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