Playful Learning with Tangible Coding Technologies
An Invited Seminar with Associate Professor Karen Murcia

Wednesday, 4th September 2019, 12-1.30pm, Jessop West, Room 215(32)

Abstract
In this, the digital era, it is evident that digital technologies are an integral and enduring part of childhood. Educators are increasingly discussing and negotiating young children’s access to digital technologies in early years learning environments. Educators are questioning how young children can be playful and creative learners rather than passive consumers of digital technologies. It is emerging from research that educators’ technological pedagogical content knowledge is key to the quality of learning experiences with digital technologies for young children. The aim of the research was to use a grounded theory-based approach to identify and document how four educators working in a University’s Early Years Learning Centre see and understand learning opportunities for young children, as they played with tangible coding technologies (TCT’s) or ‘robots’. An outcome of this research was an innovative early years’ digital technologies (DigiTech) framework, which aims to assist early childhood educators to see and respond to learning opportunities for young children as they playfully learn to code with tangible technologies. In addition to the DigiTech: Creative Coding framework, examples of children’s play with TCT’s and early childhood educators’ inquiry pedagogy will be shared in the presentation.

Associate Professor Karen Murcia’s teaching and research interests span the intersection between learning theory, learning design, and professional development. She is a specialist in STEM education and the early years of children's learning. Through her ongoing research in pedagogical interactivity and technology enhanced learning environments she has investigated the impact of ICT integration on young children living and growing in the digital age. Dr Murcia’s leadership in the early years sector includes being Chair of the Child Australia Board. This organisation supports professionals working with children, families and the community. We focus on children’s well-being, learning and development through service delivery in Western Australia and the Northern Territory.