



THE DIG CHECKLIST FOR INCLUSIVE, HIGH-QUALITY CHILDREN'S MEDIA

Answer 'Yes' or 'No' to any question that is relevant to the media you are reviewing.

Content: Story, Information, and Activity

High-quality digital content for children supports learning and literacy, reflects diverse experiences, feeds curiosity, develops empathy, and provides accurate information in a creative way.

All Content

- ☐ Who is the narrator? What is the point of view?
- ☐ Can kids select or customize the point of view?
- ☐ Is the content, including the setting and characters, free of stereotypical representations?
- ☐ Does the content include atypical settings and/or underrepresented life experiences which both allow more kids to see themselves in the media?
- ☐ Can kids explore an unfamiliar location, region, or situation?
- ☐ Does the content introduce experiences in ways that entertain and teach about a topic in a creative way?
- ☐ Does the media include links to additional content or opportunities within the media itself for curious families to learn more about a topic, setting, culture, or experience which is new to them?
- ☐ Are characters diverse in their culture, ethnicity, language, gender, age, social classes, physical features, sexual orientation, and ability, reflecting today's diverse families?
- ☐ Are diverse characters meaningfully integrated as individuals?

Type of Content

Stories and Tales

- ☐ Is the story original or is the story a retelling of a traditional tale?
- ☐ If the story is a retelling of a traditional, indigenous tale, is a member(s) of the team an authority on the subject?

- ☐ Do the creators have permission to retell the story, if applicable?
- ☐ Does the story diversify the media offerings for children? Or is it similar in its setting, plot, characters, activities, and information to what is already widely available?
- ☐ Does the media offer historical, cultural, or social context for the story that is different from the traditional offerings?

Non-fiction/Informational Media

- ☐ Is the content accurate?
- ☐ Is a member(s) of the team an authority on the subject?
- ☐ Are references included and easily accessible?
- ☐ Does the content provide a different perspective on a topic or share information in a new way?
- ☐ Is the content updated to reflect current research?
- ☐ Does the content support critical thinking skills?
- ☐ Is the content searchable?

Activity/Game

- ☐ Does the activity's setting(s) include multiple living situations, playspaces, or other meeting places? Or does the media acknowledge in some way that the one setting is one of many alternatives in a creative way?
- ☐ Is the activity unique to a particular audience? Are there appropriate instructions for those unfamiliar with the activity?
- ☐ Does the activity encourage creativity, making, and self-expression?
- ☐ Does the activity encourage multi-generational coviewing, coplay, and joint media engagement?
- ☐ Does the activity inspire connection with family and/or community members?
- ☐ Are there recommended resources, books for example, included with the media that extend the activity's learning experience?

Art

High-quality images, illustrations, video, and animations help create a richer experience for the user.

- ☐ Does the media include authentic visual representation of culturally and ethnically diverse characters, environments, and experiences?
- ☐ Do the artwork and images provide historical, social, or cultural context for the story, information, or activity?

- ☐ Do the artwork and images align with the text and narration?
- ☐ Do kids see themselves, their families, and/or their communities authentically depicted in the artwork and images?
- ☐ Are characters with different body types and abilities featured in various roles?
- ☐ Can kids customize characters' appearance?
 - Can they create their own avatar or choose from multiple characters?
 - Can they choose ethnicity, physical features, clothing, and accessories?
 - Can they choose gender or create a gender-neutral character?

Audio

High-quality digital media features music, narration, and sound that enrich the media experience.

- ☐ Does the media include multiple language options which are spoken/written by native speakers?
- ☐ Can children easily select and change languages while using the media?
- ☐ Does the narration align with the text and illustrations?
- ☐ Does the app feature a voice record option to support family participation in a variety of home languages?
- ☐ Does the media include music or sound effects culturally appropriate for the content?
- ☐ Does the music have any historical, social, cultural context?
- ☐ Can the music and sound effects be turned on/off to modify the experience for individual children?

Audience

High-quality digital media provides age-appropriate experiences for the intended audience. Some media addresses the specific needs of a particular, underserved audience while other media aims to include a wider audience in a common experience.

- ☐ Who is the intended audience?
- ☐ Are diverse families authentically represented in the media?
- ☐ Does the audience have opportunities to see themselves reflected in the content of the media?

- ☐ Does the audience have the opportunity to learn about and experience another culture, region, language, or ability in the content of the media?
- ☐ Does the media address the specific needs of a particular, underserved audience?
- ☐ Does the media include a wider audience in a common experience?
- ☐ Are the experiences age-appropriate for the intended audience?
- ☐ Are diverse families used in advertising/marketing images and messaging?
- ☐ Are the media's descriptions and ads available in multiple languages?

Purpose

- ☐ High-quality media aims to inform, entertain, teach, connect, and inspire all kids from all backgrounds.
- ☐ What is the media's purpose?
- ☐ Is authentic representation of diverse backgrounds, traditions, abilities, and rituals a part of the purpose?
- ☐ Is accessibility addressed in the media's purpose?
- ☐ Is the purpose, at least in part, to encourage multiple kids or multiple people to explore, learn, share, and create together?

Functionality & Navigation

High-quality digital media for kids includes technical features that support accessibility, successful learning, privacy, customization, and joint media engagement.

- ☐ Is the media glitch-free?
- ☐ Are in app-purchases, sharing features, and external links locked behind a "parental gate"?
- ☐ Is the media free of advertising?
- ☐ Is the media easy for kids and their grown ups with diverse abilities to use? Can they access all of the content?
- ☐ Was Universal Design for Learning a part of the overall design process?
- ☐ Does the media integrate age-appropriate cues for meaningful interactivity?
- ☐ Is the functionality connected to any representation of backgrounds, traditions, rituals and if so, is that representation authentic?
- ☐ Does the media allow the user to change settings or other elements, allowing the user to customize the experience?
- ☐ Do the technical features encourage coviewing and shared play?

- ☐ Can kids navigate to specific parts of the media, for example the home screen, favorite page or scene, specific part of a puzzle?

Instructions, Guides, and Support Materials for Grown-Ups

High-quality digital media for children includes tips, instructions, or a guide for grown-ups with suggested activities that make the media more accessible to more kids and potentially increase the educational value.

- ☐ Does the media offer grown-up tips, instructions, extension activities, or a guide?
- ☐ Are the tips, instructions, extension activities, or guide available in multiple languages?
- ☐ Do the supporting materials provide tips for encouraging bilingual development?
- ☐ Do the instructions and support materials feature a range of diverse characters?
- ☐ Does the guide offer suggestions on how to use the media to teach kids about diversity of all kinds?
- ☐ Do the instructions and support materials provide any historical, social, or cultural context for the content?
- ☐ Does the media protect kids' privacy?

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- ☐ Does the media protect kids' privacy?

Creative Team

A diverse team of creators, designers and developers with an array life experiences may design and develop a broader assortment of content that feature a variety of perspectives, characters, and settings.

- ☐ Who are the members of the creative team? Who is the author, illustrator, developer, educational or cultural consultant?
- ☐ Is information about the creators easily accessible?
- ☐ Is the artwork, story, music, and functionality created by a diverse team?
- ☐ Is a member of the team trained in Universal Design for Learning standards?

The DIG Checklist was created by Claudia Haines, Youth Services Librarian and creator of *Evaluating Apps and New Media for Young Children: A Rubric*. This tool has been fine-tuned with input from J. Elizabeth Mills (University of Washington), Tamara Kaldor (TEC Center at Erikson Institute), Kevin Clark, Ph.D. (Center for Digital Media Innovation and Diversity, George Mason University), Chip Donohue, Ph.D. (TEC Center at Erikson Institute), Warren Buckleitner (Children's Technology Review), Carissa Christner (Madison Public Library), Daryl Grabarek (School Library Journal), and Karen Nemeth (Language Castle). Stay tuned for more updates.