



Engaging and Empowering Families of Young Children in the Digital Age

Luisa M. Cotto, M.Ed.
Manager of Engagement and Communications

unitedwaycfe.org
ECEwebinars.com



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Center for Excellence
in Early Education

Get to know me!

Luisa Cotto



- B.Ed. in Elementary Education
- M.Ed. Curriculum and Instruction, Instructional Technology
- Worked as a coach and family liaison in two early literacy grants
- Currently work as a manger of engagement and communications at United Way of Miami-Dade
- Love to blog about early childhood and technology and use social media

@luisacotto

Webinar Resources

To access the webinar resources visit:

<http://tinyurl.com/familytechtools>

Engaging Families in the Digital Age

The screenshot shows a Pinterest board with the following pins:

- LearningTogether**: A document titled "EXAMPLE OF MEDIA CONSENT" with a form for consent to participate in a program. It includes fields for Client's Name, Signature of Parent/Guardian, and Address of Parent/Guardian.
- Twitter**: A pin showing a Twitter profile header with a QR code and a profile picture.
- Facebook**: A pin showing a Facebook cover photo with a QR code and a profile picture.
- YouTube**: A pin titled "YouTube Cheat Sheet" showing a YouTube video player interface.
- Pinterest**: A pin titled "Pinterest cheat sheet" showing a Pinterest profile interface.
- Ready Rosie**: A pin titled "Ready Rosie: Family Engagement" showing a graphic with the text "HERE'S HOW IT WORKS!" and "WATCH HOW IT WORKS!".
- mychild**: A pin showing a sign-in page for "mychild" with a QR code.



<https://www.pinterest.com/luisacotto/>

Poll: Who is listening?





Webinar goals



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Understanding today's families



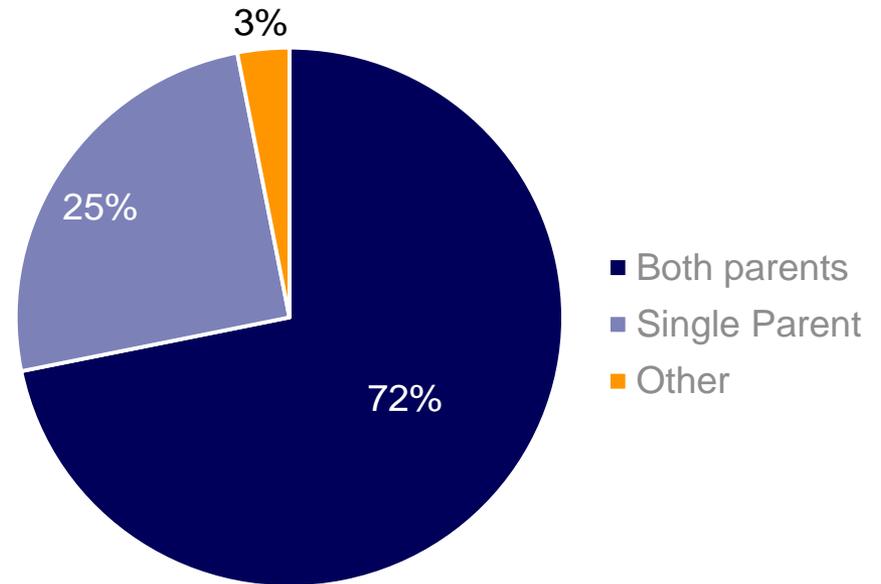
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What is family?

modern *family*



Where children ages 0 – 5 years live



Family

Family: “The people living in the children’s homes who love and care for them.” (Rieger, 2008)

The importance of engaging everyone

Bronfenbrenner's ecological system theory

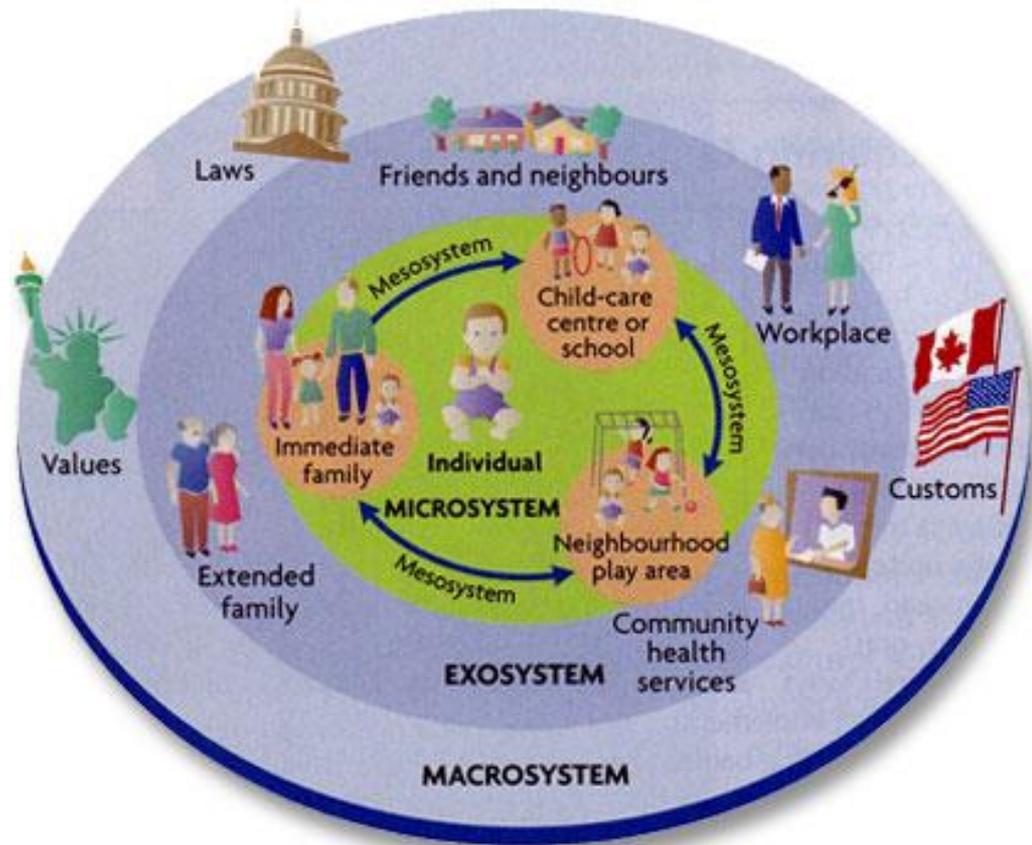


Figure 1. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory
(in Berk & Roberts, 2009, p. 28)



Building relationship with families



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Families have a major influence on their children's achievement in school and through life. . . . When schools build partnerships with families that respond to their concerns and honor their contributions, they are successful in sustaining connections that are aimed at improving student achievement.

(Henderson & Mapp, 2002, p. 7)

Poll

What are some of the barriers you face when communicating with families?

Create a family-friendly environment

Ask yourself these questions:

- Are there any barriers between school and family (e.g. language)?
- Do I have a way to know families preferred mode of communication (in person, email, phone, etc.)?
- Are the scheduled family meetings considering families' input?
- Do families have transportation?
- Can children attend meetings or do I provide childcare at the school during meetings?

Fred Rogers

“It is through
relationships
that we grow best and
learn best.”



Engaging families using a variety of digital tools.



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Lessons from marketing



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Lessons from marketing

Marketing is the way companies interact with consumers to create relationships that are beneficial to both parties.

Family Engagement is the way early childhood programs interact with families to create relationships that are beneficial to both parties.

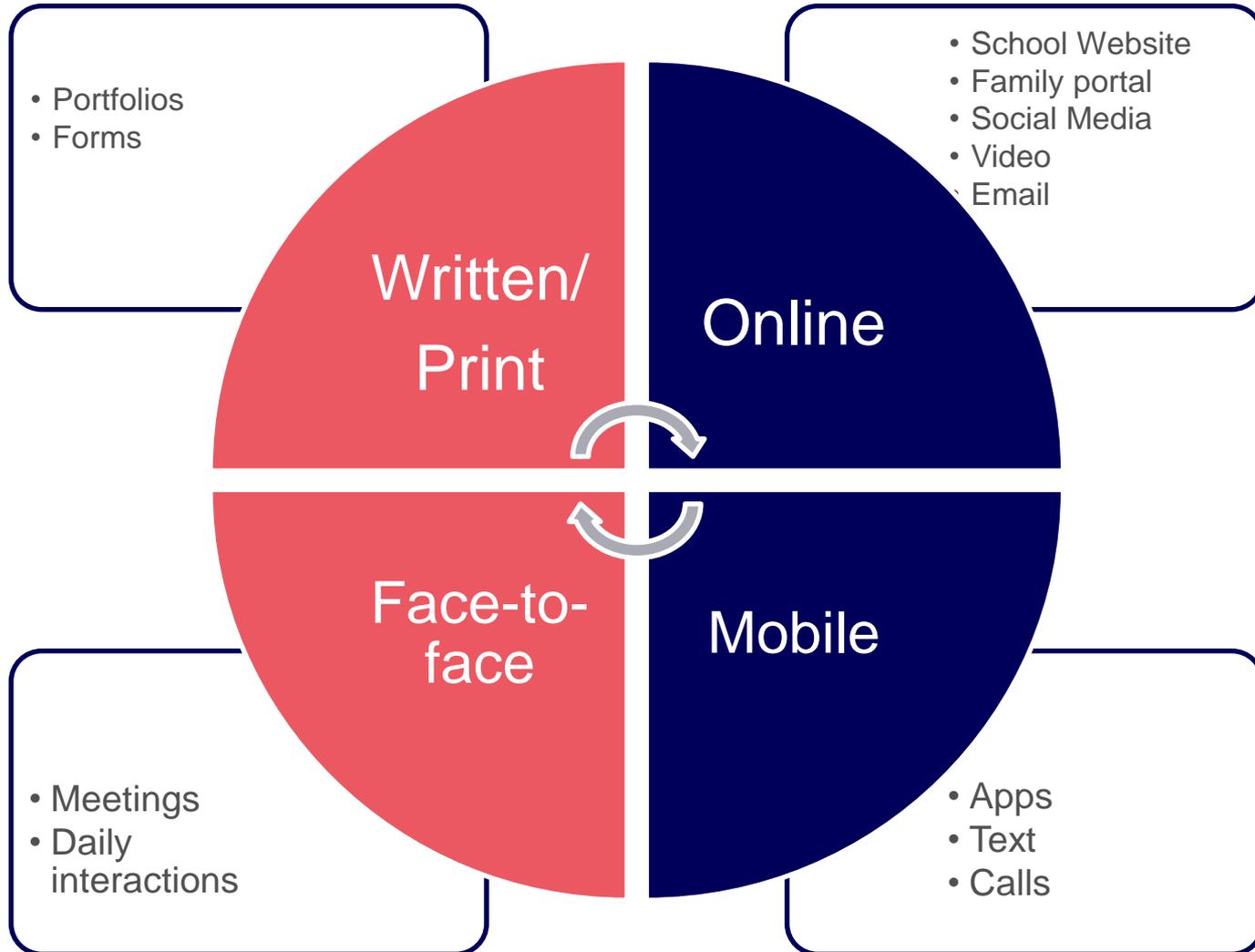
Get to know your ~~target audience~~ families

Lessons from marketing



- All about my child form
- Meetings
- Preferred mode of communication
- Home visit
- Surveys
- Be open to listen

Communication Channels



Poll

What digital communication channel you use most frequently when communicating with families?

Emails



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Email use

204 billion is the number of email sent/received per day.

Email use

Email communication continues to be the most familiar communication channel and people's top online activity.

Email use

Lessons from marketing



- Content must be relevant
- Subject line should be consistent
- Make it visual
- Add a call to action

Relevant Content

Lessons from marketing

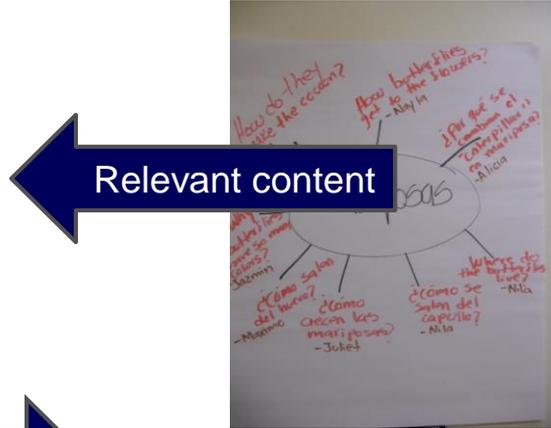
Send	To...	Families
	Cc...	Other teachers, directors
	Subject:	Weekly news: Learning about butterflies

Spread the word

Consistent subject

Hello families,

This week, after reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* by Eric Carle, children got really interested about caterpillars and butterflies. We decided to watch a video on YouTube to learn more and we are planning a visit to the Butterfly garden.



Relevant content

Here is the link to the video:
<https://youtu.be/AZk6nZGH9Xo>

Make it visual

Do you know how to create a butterfly garden? We would like to create one at our Center. Here is the link I found on how to do that: <http://www.wikihow.com/Create-a-Butterfly-Garden> . We would appreciate your help.



Call to action

Mobile Devices



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64% of Americans now
own a smartphone.

63% of them use their cellphones to go online.

Messages from families

- Teachers can encourage family members to leave messages for their children. This will help smooth the transition from home to school.
- Nowadays, phones have the capability of recording audio that can be sent by email.



Eva and his dad, Dan (Tampa, FL)



Families record stories in other languages

Los tres deseos



Adrian and his mom, Jaqueline



Quick Response Codes

ReadingPals 

Home activity

Dear families,

In this packet, you will find the book, *Otis*, written by Loren Long and an activity you can do at home with your child.

Book summary

 Otis is a lovable tractor. He loves his farm and farmer. He particularly loves the little calf in the next stall, whom he purrs to sleep with his soft motor. The two become great friends, romping in the fields, leaping bales of hay and playing ringaround-the-rosy near the Mud Pond.

But when the big yellow tractor comes to the farm and replaces Otis, he is cast away to rust behind the barn—until the little calf gets stuck in Mud Pond. Then there is only one tractor (and it's not big or yellow) who saves the day. It's little Otis!

Activity: Friendship drawing

Objective: Develop vocabulary as they talk about their friendship drawings, as well as alphabet knowledge and understanding of meaning and use of print as they create artwork to depict friendship.

Materials: The book, *Otis*; blank paper; drawing materials such as markers and crayons

Introduction: Show your child the picture of Otis and the calf together at the end of the book. Remind your child that Otis and the calf are very good friends and they like to do many different things and spend time together.

Help your child do a drawing

1. Help your child find a piece of paper and drawing materials. Ask her/him to think about a special friend, like Otis is to the calf. Engage your child in a conversation about his/her own friends and ask him/her to draw a picture of things he/she likes to do with his/her friends.
2. Encourage your child to talk about his/her work. Write on your child's artwork the things that he/she says as caption (for example: "I like to play hide-and-seek with my special friend").

Activity adapted from jumpstart.com





Scan this QR Code to watch a video of the book.

- Create QR codes easily at <http://www.qrstuff.com/>
- Download QR Code reader in app store
- Link to existing content or create new content.

Engaging Families

Seesaw: The Learning Journal



Seesaw is a student-driven digital portfolio that allows children to create, capture and share their learning.

You can share the portfolio with each family and they can add comments.

Engaging Families

Remind



remind

Safely send text messages to families without seeing their phone numbers or sharing yours.

One-way messaging only. This allow you to send updates and reminders.

Integrating Multiple Forms of Documentation

Shadow Puppet



You can choose images, record voice over and share it.

You can share via email, text message, Facebook and Twitter



Integrating Multiple Forms of Documentation

Flipgram



This app allows you to create videos using pictures on your phone. Then you can share with families.

Multi-touch mobile devices

Common Sense Media

The screenshot shows the Common Sense Media website interface. At the top left is the logo for 'common sense media'. To the right are links for 'First time here?', 'Sign In', and 'Register', along with a search bar labeled 'search our site'. Below the header is a navigation menu with options: 'Home', 'Reviews', 'Top Picks', 'Best Apps & Games' (highlighted in green), 'Videos', 'Blog', 'Educators', 'About Us', and 'Donate'. The main content area features a sidebar with categories: 'Movies', 'Games', 'Apps', 'Websites', 'TV', 'Books', and 'Music'. The main article is titled 'Learning Tools: Preschool Prep' and includes a ribbon icon. The text describes the challenges of starting school and lists various educational resources. Below the article is a section for 'Browse Learning Tools: Preschool Prep' with filters for age groups. A featured review for 'Potty Time with Elmo' is shown, including an image of Elmo, a star rating of 2, and a list of platforms. To the right of the article are social media sharing icons and a 'More for you and your family' section with related article links. At the bottom right, there is a section titled 'About our rating system' with three color-coded categories: ON (green), PAUSE (yellow), and OFF (orange).

common sense
media

First time here? | Sign In | Register

search our site

Home | Reviews | Top Picks | **Best Apps & Games** | Videos | Blog | Educators | About Us | Donate

Learning Tools: Preschool Prep

Starting school can be difficult -- both kids and parents can be unsure of what to expect. Sure, it's great if your kids can identify their shapes and colors. But getting by in preschool involves so much more. These terrific apps, games, and websites can help kids build friendships and learn everyday life skills, too -- such as observing the weather, understanding the importance of moving around, and expressing their feelings.

Browse Learning Tools: Preschool Prep

all ages | preschoolers (2-4) | young kids (5-6) | kids (7-8) | preteens (9-11) | teens (12-14)

Potty Time with Elmo

Nice guide to childhood milestone, but needs more Elmo.

AGE **2** ★★★★★ LEARNING

Platforms: iPad, iPhone, iPod Touch, Kindle Fire

About our rating system

- ON:** Content is age-appropriate for kids this age.
- PAUSE:** Know your child; some content may not be right for some kids.
- OFF:** Not age-appropriate for kids this age.

June
23,
2015

So · cial Me · di · a

noun

websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking.



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Facebook



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Most popular social media networks

Facebook



FACEBOOK

SOCIAL SHARING
SITE THAT HAS
1+ BILLION
USERS WORLDWIDE

LARGEST
OPPORTUNITIES



COMMUNICATING WITH
CONSUMERS
IN A NON-OBTRUSIVE WAY

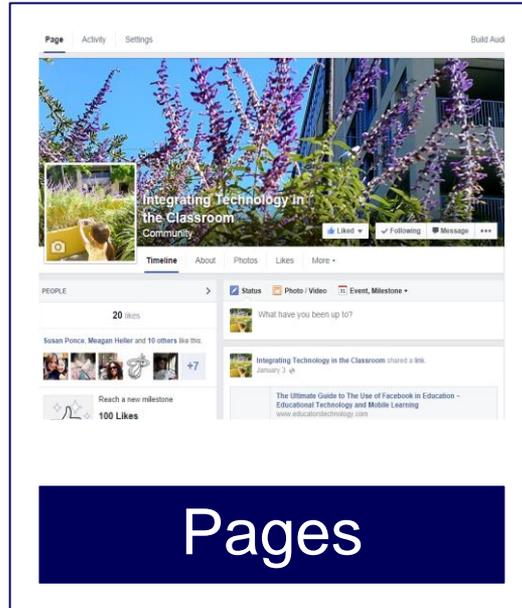
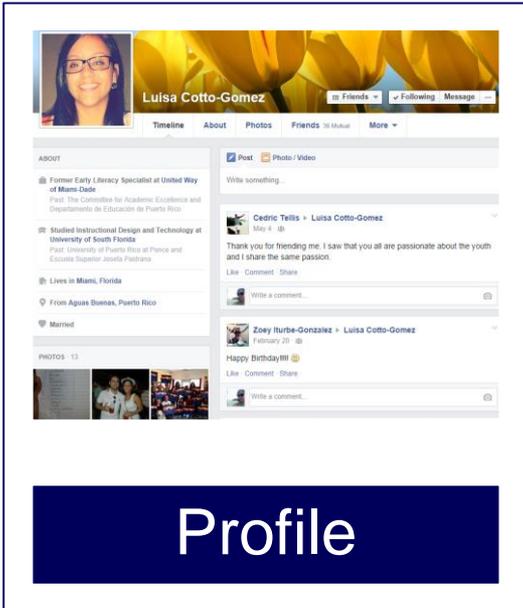
USERS
SHARE 
1 MILLION LINKS
EVERY 20 MINUTES

f



1+
BILLION
ACTIVE USERS

Facebook



Facebook: Pages



- Can act as a central channel of communication in which schools can share the latest news, resources, pictures of school events, and more.
- Each classroom in the school can have a *group* in which they can share pictures with families privately, have conversations, and create polls.
- Video chat with expert and families.
- Use it to collaborate with other early childhood practitioners.

Facebook: Pages



- Can be public or closed
- You can use them to collaborate or share information
- Share files
- Comment
- Reconnect
- Share resources

Facebook

The image shows a Facebook profile page with several educational callouts. At the top, the Facebook logo and name are displayed. Below this, there are instructions for the cover photo (851 x 315 px) and profile picture (180 x 180 px). A QR code is provided for account access, with a link: <http://goo.gl/oYOWOB>. The navigation bar includes links for Timeline, About, Photos, Friends (811), and More.

ABOUT
Here you will find any information you share such as employment history, education background, location and relationship status.

PHOTOS
Here you can see your recent pictures.

FRIENDS
Here you can access your friends.

To update your status use the box below. You can write a message, share a picture or video, a life event (getting a new job, getting married, having a baby). You can also check-in places.

This is your timeline. It allows you to look back at the post you did during different years.

Facebook Feed/Home

Username
9 mins ago
You can share a picture and write a status. You can also use #hashtags

#Hashtags are used to organize posts or create chat rooms within Facebook.

Like · Comment · Share · 13,929 · 1,915 · 1,499

Username
9 mins ago
Here you can see other user's comments

Twitter



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Most popular social media networks

Twitter



TWITTER

MICRO BLOGGING
SOCIAL SITE
THAT LIMITS EACH
POST TO **140**
CHARACTERS

LARGEST
PENETRATION



BUT SPREADING
SLOWLY AND STEADILY

5,700 TWEETS

HAPPEN
EVERY
SECOND



241
MILLION
ACTIVE USERS

Twitter Language

@username – A tweet to a specific person

RT @username – Is a retweet, when you share someone else's tweet

= is a hashtag. Hashtags are used to organize posts or create chat rooms within twitter.

The image shows a screenshot of a Twitter profile page. The header is blue with the Twitter logo and the word "TWITTER". Below the header, there are navigation tabs: Home, Notifications, Discover, and Me. A search bar is visible on the right. The profile header area includes a QR code and a link to "How to open an account" with the URL <http://goo.gl/ALFBT3>. The profile name is "Your Name" and the handle is "@username". The bio section says "A description of yourself." and includes fields for "Your location", "Your website", and "Joined Month Year". There are "60 Photos and videos" and two profile pictures shown. The "Things to follow" section lists: @luisacotto, @unitedwaymiami, #edchat, #ecchat, #ecetechchat, and #techearlyyears. The "Tweets" section shows three tweets: 1) "Your Name @username- Month Date" with a note: "You have 140 characters to post on Twitter, but it is best to use only 120 so that people can Retweet your easily with RT @username in front of your post." 2) "RT @username- Month Date" with a note: "When you forward on someone else's tweet". 3) "@ - Use this symbol to reference another twitter user. For example: @luisacotto Thanks for this useful #cheatsheet." Below the third tweet, a note says: "#Hashtags are used to organize posts or create chat rooms within Twitter." On the right side, there is a "Who to follow" section with three users: @Scholarlic, @HullingtonProff, and @AdeKale. Below that is a "Trends" section with a list of trending topics: #SafeEngineer, #PromotedByExcellence, #anyCarAdvice, You and Anwar, #DearSouthend, #WhyLoveESOS, Teach ID, BlackBerry Passport, Review Price, and #BovDate. A callout box points to the trends section with the text: "Trends are the most popular topics on twitter. These trends usually use a hashtag." At the bottom of the page, it says "Brought to you by United Way Center for Excellence in Early Education—unitedwaycfec.org".

Some hashtags to follow

#TechEarlyYears

#earlychildhood

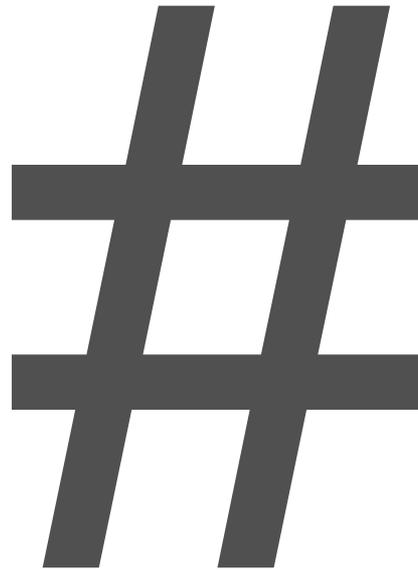
#ecetech

#prek

#preschool

#childcare

#ELL



#earlyed

#naeyc

#naeyccac

#headstart

#ecechat

#dllchat



Pinterest



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Most popular social media networks

Pinterest



PINTEREST

**SOCIAL SITE
THAT IS ALL ABOUT
DISCOVERY**

**LARGEST
OPPORTUNITIES**



USERS ARE:

**♂ 17%
MALE**

**83%
FEMALE ♀**

**20
MILLION
ACTIVE USERS**

Pinterest Boards

The image displays four Pinterest boards arranged horizontally. Each board has a main cover image, a title, a pin count, and an 'Edit' button. Below the main image is a row of four smaller thumbnail images representing other pins on the board.

- Web 2.0 - Education**: 16 Pins. Cover image shows a person writing on a chalkboard with a Facebook 'f' logo in a thought bubble.
- Video Tutorials**: 5 Pins. Cover image shows a person at a whiteboard with a 'Change Cover' button overlaid.
- Technology in the classroom**: 29 Pins. Cover image shows a person at a desk with a laptop and green apples.
- Tools for professional develo...**: 20 Pins. Cover image shows a person at a laptop with a presentation slide titled 'How do you like my presentation so far?' and a bar chart.

Pins

Example from: <https://www.pinterest.com/unitedwaycfe>



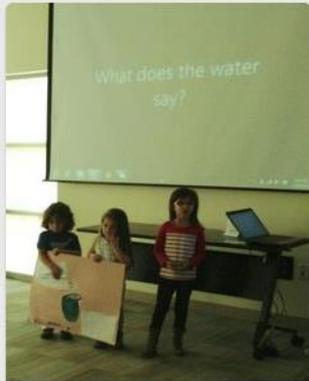
Water Exploration

 United Way Educare ...

9
Pins

7
Followers

Unfollow board



The children discussed ways they could help to conserve water at the school. Using a movie they created about water, the children talked about raising money at the movie premier for a rain barrel that could catch water. The children also created a poster describing the use and importance a rain barrel would have in our garden



A visiting expert, Barbara, donated a rain barrel to the class. In conversations with the children, they decided to paint the barrel to showcase the importance of water conservation. The children created their designs and worked together to paint the barrel.



After our visit to the Laundromat, the children decided to create their own version in the classroom. The children used water and soap to hand-wash clothes and they used clothespins to hang clothes to dry on a clothesline. The children described how to wash the clothes using vocabulary such as 'detergent', 'liquid', 'clothesline', 'wash bin', and 'clothespin'.

Pinned from
[unitedwaycfe.org](https://www.unitedwaycfe.org)



The children visited a Laundromat and made many observations about washing machines, dryers, clothes, water and temperature. The children noticed different kinds of detergents people use and that the dryers were bigger than the washing machines. They loved seeing the clothes spinning around in circles and observed how the water helps move the clothes and soap around in the washer.

Pinned from
[unitedwaycfe.org](https://www.unitedwaycfe.org)



Mr. Thompson from the Water Treatment Plant of Miami-Dade spoke to the children about how to conserve water, why it's important, where water comes, and how water treatment plants help clean the water we drink.

Pinned from
[unitedwaycfe.org](https://www.unitedwaycfe.org)



Pinterest

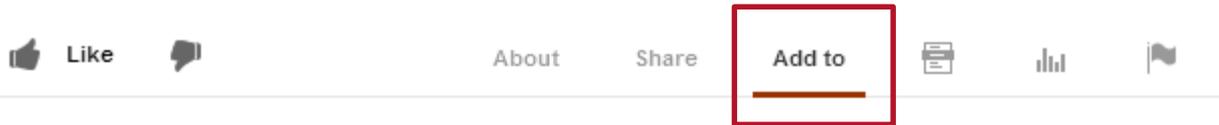
The screenshot shows the Pinterest homepage. At the top is the red header with the Pinterest logo and the word "PINTEREST". Below this is a search bar with the text "Search any topic using this search bar" and a user profile area with "Your Name" and a notification icon. The main content area features a profile picture placeholder (165 x 165 px), a bio field for "Your Name" and "City, State - website URL", and a "Pins from:" section listing users like Dina, Michelle Eliason, and Mr T. A navigation bar below the profile shows "11 Boards", "149 Pins", "1 Like", and "Send Profile". The main grid displays several boards: "Web 2.0 - Education" (16 Pins), "Video Tutorials" (5 Pins), "Technology in the classroom" (29 Pins), and "Tools for professional develo..." (20 Pins). A "Create a board" button is visible on the left. Annotations include a text box stating "You can create as many boards as you want. This helps you organize your pins by topic." with an arrow pointing to the board grid. Another text box explains the "Pin it" process: "When you like something and you want to 'Pin it', click the button and then select the board in which you want to place it. You can always create new boards by typing a new name and click create." This is accompanied by a "Pick a board" dialog box. A third text box says "Also, you can use the + sign to upload a Pin from your computer or the web. You can also access create a board here." with an arrow pointing to the "+ Create a board" button in a dropdown menu. A QR code is located on the right side, with the text "How to open an account http://goo.gl/1lg11o" below it.

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Virtual Field Trip

YouTube

Create playlist on your YouTube channel with your “approved” videos. Not all content on YouTube is good.



Add to playlist

Add videos to top of list

Last updated

A screenshot of the 'Add to playlist' dropdown menu. The menu lists several playlists: 'Favorite videos (0)', 'Flowershop (3)', 'Watch Later (0)', 'Beauty Salon (1)', 'Airport (3)', 'Zoo (2)', and 'Hospital (4)'. Each playlist has a 'Public' or 'Private' status next to it. The 'Airport (3)' playlist is highlighted with a red box.

A screenshot of the 'Airport' playlist content. It shows three video thumbnails: 'MANCHESTER AIRPORT TOUR with Ben Foden' (2:40), 'AIT Passenger Checkpoint Video' (2:24), and 'TSA - Three Simple Steps' (1:01). A large red link icon is overlaid on the right side of the playlist.

Public

Create playlist

Beyond the Classroom Walls

Skype



education.skype.com

[luisa.cotto](#)



Beyond the Classroom Walls

Google Hangout

The image shows a screenshot of a Google+ Hangout page. On the left, there is a large video player with a play button in the center. Above the video is the Google+ logo. Below the video are buttons for 'Start', 'Trailer', and other options. At the bottom left, there is a text input field with the placeholder 'Say something' and a camera icon. On the right side, there is a profile card for the host, Luisa Cotto, with a circular profile picture and the text 'Hosted by: Luisa Cotto' and '96 have you in circles'. Below the profile card is a 'Details' section showing the event was created by Luisa Cotto, is public, and scheduled for today, April 21, from 3:24 PM to 3:54 PM. It also indicates 'Hangouts On Air - Broadcast for free'. Below the details is a 'Viewers' section with 'Message' and 'Invite more' buttons. Underneath, it lists 'Watching (1)' with a profile picture of Luisa Cotto, and 'Not Responded (1)' with a profile picture of Laura Haim.

Recap

Go from micro to macro: A child's learning is influenced by all the people in his life and the experiences he is presented with.

Encourage collaboration: Make sure that children's learning does not stop in the classroom.

Stay connected: To have an effective two-way communication use multiple communication channels.

Keep informed: Use social media to share ideas, learn from others

Q&A



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Connect with us!



unitedwaymiami.org

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<https://twitter.com/UnitedWayMiami>

facebook.com/UnitedWayMiami

youtube.com/user/UnitedWayMiami

Luisa M. Cotto

cottol@unitedwaymiami.org

305-646-7118

Twitter: @luisacotto