**A Parent's Guide to Digital Literacy**



**Parents, Let's get Digital!**

Today our children are immersed in a world of technology; smartphones, computers, tablets and even wearable technology. Yet despite all this technology, and the notion that kids are naturally included to use these tools masterfully, there is a very real learning gap that exists with students and technology. While our kids can unquestionably use technology as entertainment, creating Minecraft cities, spend countless hours on YouTube or chatting with friends on Snapchat, they are struggling to use technology as a tool for learning.  Here at NGE we are hoping to equip our students with the digital skills that will enable them to use technology confidently and purposefully on their educational journey.

**So what is Digital Literacy?**

Simply put, Digital Literacy is the ability to **Learn, Locate and Understand** information from digital sources. So, if you are competent at using a smartphone to send an email, use a smart watch to make a call or a laptop to create an online presentation, these are all examples of Digital Literacy and demonstrate your ability to successfully understand and use technology to achieve a goal.  In this age, being well versed in these types of skills is an extremely valuable skillset that can promote more engaging and interactive experiences that not only leads to greater productivity, but more importantly, greater knowledge of *how* things work and *why* they work in the manner in which they do.

**How can I teach my Child to become Digitally Literate?**

Learning is a partnership between schools, parents and learners and there is a lot you can do to help with this type of learning! If you are adept at using the Digital Devices in your home, you’re already halfway there. Firstly, we strongly recommend that you ensure that your child has a well-balanced technology 'diet' in place in which they are able to [use digital devices to learn through play](http://www.fundamentallychildren.com/parenting-tools-advice/balancing-the-play-diet/). That being said, we’re not talking about word processing and spreadsheet entry, we’re talking about learning *algorithms, robotics, coding programs, websites design* in addition to teaching the skills behinddigital literacy.

Now even if you, as a parent, feel that you are not the most ‘tech-savvy’, and you hear from your child that they are learning X,Y, Z in school, there’s no need to feel overwhelmed by the technical jargon that your child has picked up on, in fact, the program we are running at NGE will help support you and your child as we provide FREE resources, links and activities that will hone these digital literacy skills (no experience necessary) and we encourage you to learn along with them. Therefore NGE's digital literacy program is an excellent opportunity to develop your skills in computing as well!

**Ahead of the Curve**

Recently, Digital Literacy and Coding have quietly come to the attention of politicians, business leaders and educators. This is in part due to BCs technology sector now employing more workers than forestry and mining combined! As BC's redesigned curriculum is implemented there is a special piece that includes applied design, skills and technology (ADST). This new area of learning aims at making BC students leaders in the world of technology, engineers and computer science. Here at NGE, we don’t want to wait to tackle these exciting new areas of learning. That is why we are educating our Gators in digital literacy, so they can learn, locate and understand the digital world around them, and Coding so that they can use their digital skills to create, explore and design. Know + Do = Understand!

**Some helpful sites to explore:**

Scratch.mit.edu/ Code.org



Gethopscotch.com Tynker.com