

## WHY TECHNOLOGY SHOULD BE EMBRACED IN EDUCATION

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Personal computers, PS2, XBOX, Wii, Nintendo DS, the list goes on and on.

The bottom line is that our children have been born into a digital world. It is a familiar, fun and non-threatening environment. Unlike many adults, children have no fear of computers and all the other digital devices at their disposal. These devices entertain them and focus their attention. It's not unusual to find two year olds embracing various digital devices.

Is it any wonder that these digital age children, when placed in a classroom with conventional teaching methods, find it difficult, if not impossible to focus on their work?

Instead of shying away from technology we should be taking full advantage of it in education. Assistive technology applications, which up until now have been primarily reserved for students with special needs, have proven to be wonderful educational tools.

Children quickly learn the various functions and features of these programs and with the guidance of an educator with special education experience, they learn how to effectively apply them to their schoolwork. Children are very comfortable working with these programs. The programs help them organize their thoughts and remain focused. When used properly, these programs can help students overcome a variety of learning difficulties. In addition, they greatly decrease the time required to complete many tasks and enable children to complete tasks on their own. As a result, the children's self-confidence and self-esteem greatly improves.

Introducing children to presentation software, such as Microsoft Powerpoint, arouses their creativity. It enables them to easily add pictures, sound, animation and even videos to their work. The overall quality of their work improves greatly and allows children to take great pride in their work.

Indeed technology can help every student. However, it is vital that it is used as a tool for learning. It is also vital that students receive the proper training when introduced to these programs. If so, these programs will retain the students' interest and help them to reach their full potential at school and in life.