

# Fred Rogers Center announces Partnership with TEC Center at Erikson Institute

April 20, 2015

The [Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning and Children's Media](#) at Saint Vincent College will formally partner with the Technology in Early Childhood (TEC) Center at the Erikson Institute in Chicago to release an inaugural report on technology and interactive media for young children, it was announced by Rick Fernandes, executive director of the Rogers Center.

Beginning in 2016, the Rogers Center and the TEC Center at Erikson Institute will release a report exploring key issues, the latest research and best practices for the use of technology with young children.

Building off of the recommendations of the National Association for the Education of Young Children-Fred Rogers Center joint position statement, the technology and interactive media report will take a whole-child approach to the research, especially focusing on social-emotional development.

As a resource for educators and families, the report will examine how and why technology tools and digital media should be used to support healthy child development and provide recommendations on selection, use, integration and evaluation.

Given the leadership role of Dr. Chip Donohue, director of the TEC Center and dean of distance learning and continuing education at Erikson Institute, in the writing of the 2012 position statement, and the strong influence developmental psychologist Erik Erikson had on the principles that shaped Fred Rogers' career, the partnership is a natural fit for deepening both organizations' roles as leading voices for best practices.

"Partnering with Dr. Donohue and the TEC Center on this project is a good fit for the Fred Rogers Center," Fernandes commented. "We have a shared vision and values and are informed by Fred Rogers' approach. This is an important opportunity to address digital media literacy for children, families and educators as an essential skill for 21st century learning. We will explore teacher workforce development and issues of access and equity."

"The TEC Center and the Fred Rogers Center are thought leaders at the intersection of child development, early learning and children's media, so bringing together the talents and experience of both teams expands our reach and increases our influence," Donohue added. "Together we will provide guidance to the field about what we know, what we're learning and what matters most for young children, parents, families and educators in the digital age."

This collaboration, funded through a recent grant from The Grable Foundation, also forms a strong foundation for an Early Career Fellow in research. The fellowship will provide an opportunity for a graduate student to be chosen on a two-year term to assist with the research on the technology report under the supervision of Donohue.

The TEC Center at Erikson Institute and the Fred Rogers Center are known for their commitment to professional development for early childhood educators. New innovative, technology-mediated approaches to professional development are expected to emerge from this research.

Report findings will be unveiled at the 2016 Fred Forward Conference with opportunities to showcase breakthroughs, changes and what can be done to increase attendees' collective effectiveness through best practices, particularly focused on helping children grow on the inside – socially and emotionally. Speakers, discussions, associated documents and multimedia resources will make the information applicable to researchers, early childhood educators, media creators and policymakers.

The TEC Center at Erikson Institute empowers early childhood educators to make informed decisions about the appropriate use of technology with children from birth to age 8. Through carefully selected resources and real-world examples, the Center strengthens educators' digital literacy and their ability to intentionally select, use, integrate and evaluate technology in the classroom and other early childhood settings. The TEC Center was launched with the support of The Boeing Company. Further information is available at [teccenter.erikson.edu](http://teccenter.erikson.edu).

The nation's premiere graduate school in child development, Erikson Institute works to improve the lives of young children and families through graduate education, professional training, community programs and policy research. Further details are available at [www.erikson.edu](http://www.erikson.edu).

Established at Saint Vincent College in 2003, the Fred Rogers Center enriches the development of current and emerging leaders in the fields of early learning and children's media by supporting the professional advancement and mentoring of the next generations of Fred Rogers through the Early Career Fellows program; educational opportunities for undergraduate Fred Rogers Scholars; research and special collaborations by Rogers Center Senior Fellows; and resources and information on the developmentally appropriate use of media. The Center is the official home of the Fred Rogers Archive as well as a straightforward, understanding and compassionate voice for the healthy social and emotional development of children birth to age 8. For more information, visit [www.fredrogerscenter.org](http://www.fredrogerscenter.org).

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PR2015-136