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New Unplugged Digital Challenge for Early Learners

Commissioner for Children and Young People Helen Connolly, has today launched an Early Learners' extension to her Digital Challenge: **Early Learning Unplugged**.

The early learner version has been specially designed for preschool age children (roughly aged 3-5 years) and is available for download free from the Digital Challenge website: **https://commissionersdigitalchallenge.net.au/early-learners-introduction/**

Designed in collaboration with the Australian Computing Academy, the Early Learner edition can be completed at participating preschools, early learning centres, kindergartens, playgroups and libraries in South Australia. Children can also complete the Challenge at home with family.

The activities in the **Early Learning Unplugged** Challenge teach kids core computational thinking concepts without the need for any electronic device. Young learners can remain 'unplugged' as they play a game of hide & seek or create a robot dance routine using cut outs of Challenge mascot **Cody Buttons,** the Commissioner's robot (pictured).

The **Commissioner's Digital Challenge** is all about increasing inclusive digital opportunity, for children and young people in South Australia. Because the Early Learners Challenge is designed to be device-free, children without access to digital devices can easily take part.

The activities are aligned to the national Early Years Learning Framework principles and can be completed in large or small groups, or individually. There is a version of the activities for educators and another for families.

Centres taking part in the Early Learning Challenge receive colourful promotional material to display at their centre and share with parents via their newsletter, on their website and through social media.

Quotes attributable to Commissioner for Children & Young People Helen Connolly:

We know coding and computational thinking – basically how to speak to computers – will be absolutely crucial skills for this generation. But it's less about learning a particular programming language – it's more about learning how to 'think technologically'. And my challenge teaches young children some basic computational thinking skills in a fun and engaging way through play.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Commissioner's Digital Challenge is an initiative of the South Australian Commissioner for Children and Young People to engage and empower young digital citizens and promote inclusive digital opportunity throughout the state.
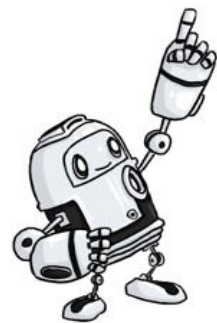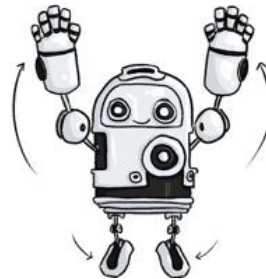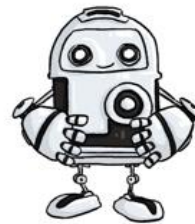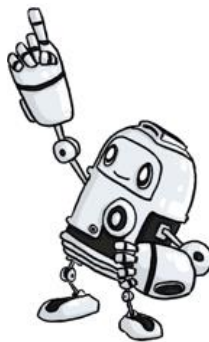
- In its first year the 'Learn to Speak Robot' Digital Thinking Challenge has been well received with 213 schools and 32 libraries taking part, as well as Scouts, Girl Guides and members of Children's University Adelaide. Families can also take part at home or at their local library.

- Each year a new area of the digital learning journey is added. 'Space to Dream', the Commissioner's new design thinking challenge, will be launched in January 2020.

For further information about the work of the Commissioner for Children and Young People visit www.ccyp.com.au

Questions about the Early Learning Unplugged Challenge can be emailed to CommissionersDigitalChallenge@sa.gov.au

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