ELEARNINGNEWS ARTICLE

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eLearning applied to children: the advantages and methods of use

Online learning, when used responsibly, can also be effective for teaching children. Let's discover techniques and challenges of eLearning applied to children.

We are often led to associate online training with young people or adults. In an ever-evolving educational landscape, however, digital technology also comes into close contact with **children**. In fact, they too could take advantage of the many advantages that characterize this type of learning, if directed in the right way and thanks to the use of multiple supports dedicated to the little ones and developed in order to support training through games, fun tests and suitable for every age group.

Often, however, doubts or hesitations arise, which push parents and trainers to give up the possibility of letting their children experiment with eLearning. The biggest fear linked to the possibility of introducing children to online education is the **risk of exposing them to isolation** and the negative effects that occur when spending a lot of time in front of a screen. But also for this reason there are simple solutions to implement, to prevent eLearning from transforming from a positive resource into a negative weapon. Adult guidance, the choice of an appropriate learning path and the support of training methods that also involve in-person socialization are excellent practices to implement to allow children to enter the world of digital learning.

Why use eLearning with children?

Children, like adults, have personal learning needs, from a practical, didactic and educational point of view, which traditional training often cannot fully guarantee. In this sense, important help can come from the digital world, which allows children to take advantage of some advantages useful for developing an educational path suited to their needs and learning requirements. Using eLearning with children, therefore, can be a winning solution, as long as this training method is used correctly and supervised by an adult.

Here are the main advantages of online learning applied to children:

1. **Memorization and problem solving**: as with adults, digital training platforms can also help children improve their study skills. The various types offered by eLearning can be useful for children to more easily memorize the notions of the different lessons. Furthermore, digital media, thanks to the various tools at their disposal, can simulate real situations and problems that the child must solve. In this way, problem-solving ability is also improved.
2. **Personalized learning**: each student has a different training need and eLearning offers the possibility of personalizing the education path. Technology, in fact, allows you to adapt the content and pace according to the needs of each child. In this way, learning is focused on the individual user, without the constraint of a precise program to be completed in a set time, but with the possibility of focusing on the interests and preferences of each child. Technologies, in fact, allow the learning course to be developed at different levels, various paces and different methodologies, so as to be able to adapt to the needs and requirements of individual students.
3. **Accessibility and inclusiveness**: eLearning has the ability to break down physical and geographical barriers, which even for children can represent a difficulty in accessing learning, especially in the most backward areas and neighborhoods or for **children with serious physical disabilities**. The use of online platforms allows everyone to access learning and "enter the classroom" thanks to new technologies, with which it has become possible to connect distant places from each other.

For it to be an effective and positive resource for children, eLearning must be mediated by adults, at least at the beginning. To do this, schools can invest in the use of tablets or computers, installing programs suitable for different age groups, to be used in class with the guidance of the teacher. Likewise, at home this role falls to parents, who have the task of ensuring that the time spent in front of the screen is constructive for their children and does not completely capture the child's attention, which must also be directed to other activities.

The techniques

eLearning is also a good resource for children, but to be used best it must be adapted to their needs and needs differentiation by age. To achieve this goal, the following measures can be implemented:

1. Choose the **right tools**: there are numerous digital platforms aimed at training, but not all of them are suitable for little ones. Not only. In fact, a differentiation must also be made between children, depending on the different age groups. For this, it is necessary to choose a learning platform that adapts to the age to which the training is aimed. A simple design and the use of colors can be useful in attracting the attention of young users and making it easier for them to navigate the site. Even from a content point of view, it is necessary to think of a path in line with the child's growth.
2. Think about **engaging activities**: children need stimuli to be able to concentrate on an activity, which is why it is important that learning is also seen by them almost as a game or a moment in which they can carry out new experiments. The interaction, quizzes, role-playing games and virtual simulations made possible by eLearning are very useful for creating new learning methods, to be alternated with traditional ones, so as to make the training moment full of new stimuli and more engaging increasing student motivation.
3. Don't forget **quality**: even if it is a product aimed at children and not adults, quality cannot be lacking in eLearning for the little ones. Relevant and engaging content, engaging and easy-to-use interface and innovative evaluation possibilities can help the course creator understand its effectiveness. A quality product, whoever the recipient is, will allow users to learn more quickly and effectively, using new ways than they are used to. Even children can distinguish a better quality course from a low quality learning path.
4. Introducing eLearning to children requires the **mediation of an adult**, especially at the beginning. For this reason, both teachers and parents, who are called to play this guiding role, must be able to use digital training tools carefully, in order to shape the learning path based on the needs and requirements of the students. little students. Taking this step certainly requires familiarity with technology and the apps used by children, so that they are able to solve problems that may arise on the platform and help children use it in an informed and responsible way.

The challenges of eLearning applied to children

The fear that often prevents or raises doubts about the use of online learning for children is linked to various reasons. The fear is that of replacing traditional education, which also has an important social aspect, with digital education, which isolates the younger generations. These potential disadvantages, however, immediately transform into **challenges** to be grasped and faced, with the aim of preventing the negative aspects of digital exposure from affecting young users. In general, there are two most widespread fears:

- **Too much time in front of the screen**: eLearning increases the time children spend in front of a computer or tablet screen. To prevent this from posing a risk, it is important for adults to monitor the time children spend on digital devices. Teachers can alternate offline learning with eLearning, while parents can act on the time spent at home, encouraging their children to also carry out outdoor activities or activities that do not involve the use of devices. Creating the right balance between learning and play goes precisely in this direction and is essential to ensure that eLearning does not turn into a disadvantage.
- **Isolation**: the fear of losing the social aspect linked to traditional education can stop teachers and parents from using eLearning for children. To avoid this risk, some measures can be implemented. The first consists in maintaining the virtual training path alongside the traditional one, so as not to reduce learning to just online lessons. Secondly, digital technology also allows the creation of virtual socialization environments, which allow students to stay in touch with other classmates, despite the physical distance that separates them.

To make the most of the advantages of eLearning for children too, some measures are necessary that do not allow the little ones to face the risks that exposure to screens can cause. A moderate use of online training offers the possibility of exploiting a further useful tool for teachers, who can thus enhance traditional classroom settings and offer students new, engaging and innovative ways of learning.