Title of local project: MakEY Finland
Location of team: Playful Learning Center, Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Helsinki
Names of team members: Kristiina Kumpulainen, Alexandra Nordström, Heidi Sairanen, Sara Sintonen and Jonna Kangas

Makerspaces in the early years: Enhancing digital literacy and creativity

Aims of project:
This study investigates maker activities among children aged 3 to 8 in Finnish early childhood (ECE) centres and libraries

Leading research question:
How do children’s maker activities promote their digital literacy and creativity?

Methodology:
3 case studies
9 children and 2 teachers in ECE centres
12 children and 10 teachers in libraries

The data consist of:
- Observational data
- Interview data
- Visual data (videos and photographs)

Emergent/ key findings to date:
The enhancement of children’s digital literacy and creativity in makerspaces require;
- multimodal maker activities that re-mix tools, means and contexts.
- strong pedagogical expertise from the ECE professionals valuing children’s agency, awareness of digital possibilities, and creativity and imagination.

Key questions/ steps for the next stage of the project:
- Analysing the data
- Writing two articles
- Disseminating the outcomes with other researchers, teachers and educators in cultural institutions and SMEs