

78 - The Importance of 1-on-1 Time with Children

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Purpose: The purpose of the transcripts is to provide readers and listeners with a written version of each episode of the UAGC Center for Early Childhood Education's Early Childhood Chatter Podcast so they can follow along with the audio content. www.uagc.edu/ece-center/chatter-podcast

Audience: Current Active & Enrolled Students

Episode Transcript

Host Dr. Shipley: Hello everyone and welcome to Early Childhood Chatter with Dr. Shipley and Dr. Heald. We will upload a new episode every other week on Wednesdays.

Host Dr. Heald: Twice a month, we come to you with a 10-minute professional development with new ideas to try. Don't forget to subscribe to this podcast to get notifications about future episodes.

I am so excited to have Max Roach with us today. Maxwell is the founder of Ayves Learning Club, a forward-thinking tutoring service that teaches children concepts such as long division as early as the age of three.

Max has a diverse career background, spanning from childcare to music to food technology and education sectors. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Toronto, and is certified as a professional in human resources. This has opened many doors to an eclectic and wide range of opportunities, including performing as a musician, sharing the stage with Beyonce and the Rolling Stones.

I'm going to have a hard time not asking about that one but leading a multi-center childcare organization as CEO and working as an operations director and consultant for e-commerce tech companies globally. Max is a serial entrepreneur who values the need to fill the industry gaps by way of disruption and modern solutions. And I am so excited he is here with us today.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: Hi, Max. You and I were talking before we started our session, and we talked about your John Aves Learning Club and how you were out just teaching right before this started, right?

Max Roach: That's right. Yes.

And again, great to chat with you both on here. I was just chatting to you about that as well. Yes.

I'm going from one thing to the next. Everything is possible to do things by virtual. And so, I can do things anywhere.

And then I'm with these private schools. So, it's really exciting. It's very dynamic.

And I'm just really here to help out and just make sure that children get the time that they need in order to really learn, because I think that's the foundation.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: Right. No.

And that's why I wanted to bring that up, because you were doing that right before this. So that's so cool. Your topic today is the importance of spending one-on-one time with your child.

Of course, that's a very relevant topic today. It's super important for families, but also super important for teachers, because technology and social media is so prevalent, and we've got to decide what we're going to do with our children. And so, I want to know, why is this topic so important to you and what are you doing about it?

Max Roach: Oh, for sure.

So it's interesting because I feel as though one-on-one time is important for everyone, not only just children, not only to myself, but I mean, even if you're in a relationship, if you're married, if you have friendships, if you have your parents, whatever it might be, that one-on-one time is absolutely the key.

And sometimes it's something that we forget when we look in the classroom, we look in the classroom and we say, well, you know, sometimes it's one to 30. So how do we really be able to, you know, get through the boundaries and understand who each child is as they're growing up in this world that is, you know, again, run by social media at this point.

When I was younger, we didn't have these things, to the level that it was now, right? So, it's really interesting. So that's why, you know, this topic, again, it's the foundation of our organization. And the reason why I feel as though this has become the foundation or how John Ayves started in the first place, really it was with our children.

So, my wife and I, you know, we, there's a whole history of, you know, where I come from and how we got to where we are, but when it comes to the one-on-one time, you know, this is how we raised our kids. We were able to get them to learn long division at very early age. They'd been reading from, I don't even know, earlier than they were doing long division and, you know, two years old, they're looking at signs on the street and they can read everything, right? Non-issue billboards didn't really matter because we took the time, and we actually sat with them and taught them.

And here's the thing. There was no time like this, this whole technology time, that we're in right now, having access to artificial intelligence, having access to YouTube, having access to all these things. So, we used to sit our children.

This is one thing that we used to do. We would literally, let's say we had our daughter, I'd pick her up in front of the TV. Now some people may, you know, I may get some backlash for this, but it is what it is, right? So, I'd pick up my child, put her in front of the TV.

And I said, this is what we're going to do. We're going to look at these videos, right? And of course I'm there. It's very much monitored, right? Monitored learning and monitor screen time is very important to us as well because this is one-on-one time, but why not use the tools? So, they would have these videos that would come up, right? We would choose them obviously.

And there would be videos of, let's say they've got these little cute robots on the screen, things like that, but they would have words that would show up. So, let's say a word would be like the word the, right? So, it would show up and it would come on the screen. It would dance around a little bit.

And then it would take the word, and it would put it into a sentence, and it would have a whole landscape in the background, a little, you know, skip that would be happening, right? Just a photo of it. And then it would use the word the in there, or it would use the word, you know, mission in there, or it would use the word, you know, cow in there or whatever it is. So, we would actually pause the videos, and we would point to the words and read them for our children.

Then I would take my daughter's hand and point to the words and read with her. And long story short, suddenly she would be doing it by herself. Magic, right? I mean, not really, it's just a process.

So that one-on-one time has made it, that foundation has been key. So now when they go out into the world, my daughter's now in grade three, she has no problem reading anything, right? So, we did this with mathematics. We did it with a bunch of things and we did it with our son as well.

He's six and he can do, he's better than me at some things at times, right? So I think that's why the one-on-one has been so important to us and how it really has shaped how John Aves has sort of been, I guess, moving into the future and how it started in the first place.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: Very cool.

Dr. Stephanie Heald: And Max, you bring up a really great point that I wanted to spend a little time with.

We have the capacity as parents, as educators, as grandparents, as friends to be mentors and almost the learning partners alongside of our children. Now, as you said, we are busy, and our society as a whole just tends to be very busy and very overwhelmed with all the stimuli and everything. What is a way that we can do exactly what you're telling us to do? And manage the busyness of life, and those roles that we have, those caps that we wear while also doing, just like you said, the very important piece of spending that one-on-one time.

Max Roach: So, this is tough. This is actually very difficult. And I feel for parents, I feel for all the adults in the world, especially in Western culture where we are now, because not only are we plagued with the issues of needing to find more money in our pockets, we now need to find more time.

And unfortunately, that's not granted to us. So, as an example, I live, well, I used to live in the Toronto area of Ontario and Canada. So, what that meant was you would be working in the city.

So, well, what happens? Well, you know, real estate prices go up, right? Prices of everything goes up. And so where are you going to live at some point? Are you actually going to pay rent in the city or are you going to start moving out? Well, you're going to start moving out of the city. So now you just, sure, you may have potentially put a little bit more money in your pocket, by paying less rent, but now you've decreased your time.

And that's really unfortunate because you have to commute to work now, and you have to commute back home. And then this starts to compound on top of each other. And I really feel for us, I think in general, that are trying to really make it with our children and make sure that we spend as much time with them because it went from being home at 530 to being home at like seven o'clock, 730.

So, this is a big problem. Now, my number one option for really being able to find more time, is to eliminate the things that take time that are not required. And again, I know this is difficult.

For as an example, being on TikTok takes up a lot of time, right? Being on Twitter takes up a lot of time. And, you know, I'm sure there are a lot of people that are thinking, oh, yeah, but it's my downtime. You know, watching Netflix takes up a lot of time.

But here's the thing. You're going to have to sacrifice something if you want to be paying attention to your children. And for myself personally, the sacrifice now, wow.

Like, I'll tell you now, the fact that my children, my son's in grade one, my daughter's in grade three, I put in, both my wife and I, we put in the time early. In their lives, in order to make sure that they know all of their times tables, that they know that they can divide mentally, that they can do all of these things, that they can read fluently. And now I'm not even worried about the curriculum.

So now I can focus on my business, which is amazing, right? I think that's incredible. Maybe now for some people it would be, hey, I can take some more leisure time, right? But I don't have to worry about my children because I'm finding that right now, it's very difficult. It's hard to also sit with your children and try to teach them things when they've grown up a little bit too, right? Because they've already solidified their learning patterns and how they learn.

So, I think really, if you can, try to disconnect a little bit from those, the social media yourself, because you're going to find that you have so much more time. We all have more time than we think we do.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: I can agree with that 100%.

I want to go, now that you've said that, to the aspect of in the classroom. I'm sorry, because we do know that we have so many students in there. And I know how I did my one-on-one time with my students.

Do you have any little tips or tricks that teachers can do in their classroom to get that one-on-one time with each child?

Max Roach: Well, so I mean, the one option that I would say is come to JonAyves Learning Club, because what we're doing here, right, is we're actually doing this with schools, right? Is that we do this on a virtual kind of side of things,

right? But within the classroom, effectively, I would say I've seen a few techniques where it comes to, and I'd love to discuss this with you as well, breakout groups, right?

So, you would have breakout groups just depending on the skill sets of certain children, right? So maybe you may have some of the stronger students who are maybe working on a certain project that may be a little bit ahead. And then maybe you may have one of those students that are one of the stronger students to go ahead and come and work with some of the weaker students as well. Or you'll have just a small group of some of the weaker students in a certain subject or topic.

And let's say there's like two or three that you can really focus on, while the other ones are in separate breakout groups doing collaborative projects. And you can focus on, let's say it's, you know, they're having trouble counting by threes, right, with the three times tables. And really just breaking down the concepts, specifically for what those kids need.

Because at the end of the day, what I found is that even though every child learns differently, and this comes from the, this is the music side of me, right? I graduated from music school. I went through that whole thing, right?

And what I realized is learning from my professors, everything comes down to what I. So as, let's say you're playing a musical instrument, you're playing piano, or you're playing, I use drums because I come from drums, right? And it's actually a very physical instrument. You can picture it.

So, if I want to, if I have two drumsticks in my hand and I go right hand, left hand, right hand, left hand, that's all you need to do for a really long time until you can do it very quickly. That's the basis of playing drums. So, it's the same thing with multiplication tables, as an example.

If you can count by twos, then you can multiply anything by two. If you can count by threes, then you can. And if we can break this down for the students, for them to know in small, small groups, then this is one tactic that I found works.

And again, the basis of the whole private school side of my business here. And I think that that would help a lot in the classrooms as well. But I'm curious as to what techniques you've used as well in order to really facilitate this.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: So same thing. I taught three, four, five, six-year-olds, but clear up to third grade. So, I would have them busy in either centers or different work groups that they were working together.

And I would pull in either small groups of children or one-on-one. I did this every single day for one hour. It completely changed my classroom community.

I got to know the students better. I mean, I was able to assess them quicker. It was amazing.

So, I think that one-on-one time as a teacher in the classroom is a must. And you have to figure out how to do it. So, I think you're so right.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: You know, and to comment, to piggyback on both of those comments, differentiated instruction is something that we know works for our children, right? We have to put them where they are. And very often when we differentiate our instruction in the classroom, whether it be in a TK class, a pre-K class, infant, or second grade, you know, that is our time to really meet our children one-on-one. And then those are those opportunities, like you were saying, Max, to really capitalize on their strengths, to capitalize on things that you notice about them, to point out those strengths so they can have a level of confidence and just also recognize the areas of opportunity.

And, you know, everything you're saying really goes to the old quote by Theodore Roosevelt that children or "people, he said people, people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care". And when you have that one-on-one time, man, you're building that relationship. You're giving them that level of comfort, that level of buy-in.

And ultimately, we know the outcome, the student outcome is going to be greater, right? So, I love what you're doing. I love it.

Max Roach: Yeah, no, that's great.

I really appreciate that as well. And both of your comments, really fantastic. I mean, obviously we run into, again, I come from business as well, right? I've worked with multi-million-dollar companies in software and whatnot.

And one of the main sort of ideals and one of the main issues that always comes up when we're looking at products and building a company is the scalability, right? How does this scale when you go into the future? So, yes, I mean, listen, I think it's incredible that you've been able to do this so, I guess, religiously as well, not to use a religious term, but, you know, in a way that's such that you can sit with these students for an hour a day. Listen, I would, I'd love to be in your class. I think that's the best way to go about it.

I would, I'm sure that there are listeners that are listening saying, well, this can't happen in my classroom. It's not possible, all of these things. But I'll tell you right now, you don't need to spend all that time.

If you did this for five minutes, twice a week, the kids will learn so quickly because once you have that focused attention, they will learn. My organization is a product of that. Just give that focused attention.

It doesn't have to be an hour long. Listen, if you can do an hour, wow.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: Okay, Max, hang on.

Let's say, it wasn't an hour per child, but I had an hour so that I could get each child to me. Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. I was kind of jealous of that too.

I was thinking. So, I had them out doing their own thing and a lot of times I had parent volunteers in and so they were out, they were in the cooking center or they were at a, you know, housekeeping center and I would bring children over to me and work with them and I bet that the time was probably one to two minutes with that one-on-one, but it was every single day.

Max Roach: You planned it out and I think that's really what's important.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: You have to have it planned in your daily schedule, every single thing you do. So, yes.

Max Roach: Amazing.

Incredible.

Dr. Stephanie Heald: Yeah. And I think this leads us to, as we wind down, just Max, picking your brain for three takeaways that we have for our listeners.

Max Roach: For sure. Takeaways. Okay.

So, I have about a thousand takeaways, but let's try to break it down just to three. So, okay. There are a few things with our organization that I found has really been the foundation for us and one of them is we have this idea of the three L's, right? So, we call it love it, learn it, and then live it, right? And the reason why we have this is because you can't learn anything unless you actually love it first.

So, imagine you need to learn how to do your taxes or something, right? We all have to do it. It's fine, right? Until you actually love the fact that, yes, the taxes are going to be, it's going to be difficult to do. It's going to be time consuming, but there's a reason you're doing it because maybe you get some money back, right? Then you start to understand that there's a love for this, right? Whether it's, let's say we're doing mathematics, and we need to learn how to count by threes.

Once you, one of the tactics that I use is turning that into a money sort of situation. So, a dollar amount, right? Kids love money. They love to talk about money.

So, you want to be able to create a scenario and an environment which allows for children to actually love it that they can learn. And then once those two are in place, then there's no question that you'll be able to live it, right? That's what that is. I guess another takeaway, you know, we really, we do need to aim for one-on-one time with not only our kids, right? Not only the children, not only the children in our classroom, all these things, but with everyone.

And I'm telling you, this is such a, it's something that we need to practice as well is that when we have one-on-one time with people, we need to be there, be present. Not on our phones. Our phones are like, we have our phones all the time, right? When someone's speaking with you or talking to you, I tell this to my kids all the time.

When someone's speaking to you, answer them. Look at them. Listen to them.

Like, it's fine. It's okay to do this, right? So, I think that one-on-one time and having that practice, it also just translates into the classroom and into an understanding that that's how people learn. And then I guess a third takeaway for myself would be, I mean, so I love to learn.

I'm a lifelong learner, no question. And I think that everyone should also strive to be that. Because once you're always looking to learn and you always enjoy the learning, applying that with the three L's as well, you're actually unstoppable.

Because that's the key. It's not the product. It's the process.

Dr. Stephanie Heald: I like that.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: Yeah, I agree too. Okay.

So, as we leave, we like to leave our listeners with a challenge. What is something that you could challenge our listeners to do today when they turn this podcast off?

Max Roach: Oh, well, I mentioned it earlier. If you're turning off the podcast, maybe turn off Twitter and YouTube as well.

Yes, yes.

Max Roach: You know what? And you know what? Here's the thing, right? Sometimes you need a reset. There are ways to reset your algorithm as well.

I know on YouTube specifically, you can clear your history, right? So that you can just reset the algorithm so you can start not seeing the same things that you were seeing all the time. Because sometimes we let the social media think for us. And I think that's a big problem.

That's a huge detriment to society right now is that socials are thinking for us. We want to be thinking for ourselves. So, the more that we can disconnect and take our time back, the more we can take our time and do things that we actually want to be doing, right? So, I would say that's a huge challenge.

That's a challenge for me as well. So, I also challenge myself to do the same thing.

Dr. Tisha Shipley: Okay.

I love it. Max, you're going to have to come back and talk to us again because this has been so enlightening and we want to know more. But thank you so much for being on the show today.

And we will talk to you soon.

Max Roach: Absolutely. Thank you so much.

Great to speak with you both.

Dr. Stephanie Heald: Thanks, Max.