



In March 2020 PowerApps4Kids didn't exist. All that did exist were a group of people that didn't even know each other yet that believed Power Apps had the ability to educate our children in diverse and entertaining ways. We've come a long way since then. You can find us at our website <https://powerapps4kids.com>, on YouTube, Github, Twitter and we've run sessions that have been well received at the Microsoft Reactor.

What is PowerApps4Kids?

PowerApps4Kids is an initiative to bring Microsoft PowerApps to as many children across the world as we can reach.

What do you actually do?

We run a regular online user group where developers get to demonstrate to children and parents how to build simple apps.

The webinars are supported by the website, where children can download assets, watch videos on the PowerApps4Kids YouTube channel and explore learning paths. The downloads page is arranged so that children not only get to see a project, but also specific videos associated with the skills needed to be successful with the project.

PowerApps4Kids Content Explorer

Step 1 - Choose an Event Type

EventType

Project

Step 2 - Choose an Event

Event

Project #1 Hangman4Kids

☒ Project #1 Hangman4Kids

☐ Project #2 The Story Maker

Step 3 - Work through the content below

Event	Content	Link	Content Description	ContentType	Event URL
Project #1 Hangman4Kids	Hangman4Kids File - Improved	Link	Hangman4Kids File - Improved	Download	Link
Project #1 Hangman4Kids	Hangman4Kids File as per session	Link	Hangman4Kids as per the session	Download	Link
Project #1 Hangman4Kids	Hangman4Kids PowerApps4Kids Project #1	Link	<p>This video shows you how you can create a hangman game using PowerApps.</p> <p>If you're not sure on how certain elements work do make sure that you look up our videos on</p> <p>Reset (to reset our game)</p> <p>Global Variables (to remember data entries)</p> <p>Len (to measure the number of characters)</p> <p>Visible (to make things visible/invisible)</p>	YouTube Video	Link
Project #1 Hangman4Kids	PowerApps4Kids Global Variables	Link	Global variables allow us to store things that are happening within our apps. In this video we take a look at the basics.	YouTube Video	Link
Project #1 Hangman4Kids	PowerApps4Kids Len Function	Link	We use the Len function to measure the length of text. This video shows you how it works.	YouTube Video	Link
Project #1 Hangman4Kids	PowerApps4Kids Reset Function	Link	The Reset function allows us to update controls such as dropdowns or text boxes and set them back to their original state.	YouTube Video	Link

Why do this now?

We are all living in highly unusual times, and one aspect of this is that parents and children are at home together, which offers some very interesting learning opportunities as Power Apps learning needs to be supported by the parents, even if it's just helping them to log on. That said, the project is intended to live on well beyond this difficult period.

Children love to copy their parents. Now that it has been more visible what the parents do (while they are working from home a lot). Being able to do the same as the parent can get children really keen on the building your own things.

Ok, so take me through the first few sessions

The first session was highly experimental, I reached out to Daniel Christian and Reza Dorrani from the PowerAddicts to see if they would like to get involved and we ran a session delivered through the Microsoft Reactor to demonstrate some of our more “childish” projects. At the end we gave the children a challenge to write a story using an app we provided them with.

In session 2 we switched things up and Pieter Veenstra's boys showed us how to build Noughts and Crosses

Session 3 Laura Graham-Brown taught us how to build the “Hangman” word game (minus the hanging), and the delivery was well-paced and at the level that a supported child would understand.

Finally, in Session 4 we packed out the session with a very simple sign language app in addition to building a Rock, Paper Scissors game by Michell Wong along with a little training on the shuffle function.



The banner features a purple background with white and blue text. At the top left is the 'PowerApps 4 Kids' logo with two handprints. At the top right is the 'Microsoft Reactor' logo. The main text reads 'For Big Kids and Little Kids'. Below this, it says 'Tuesday 16th June 6pm -7pm BST' and provides the URL 'https://aka.ms/ReactorPowerApps'. On the left, there is a small image of hands playing Rock Paper Scissors with the text 'Rock Paper Scissors Game'. On the right, there are three portrait photos of the speakers: Michelle Wong, Pieter Veenstra, and Rory Neary. A large '#4' is displayed in a yellow box on the right side. At the bottom left, the social media handle '@PowerApps4Kids' and website 'www.PowerApps4Kids.com' are listed.

PowerApps 4 Kids

Microsoft Reactor

For Big Kids and Little Kids

Tuesday 16th June 6pm -7pm BST
<https://aka.ms/ReactorPowerApps>

@PowerApps4Kids
www.PowerApps4Kids.com

Rock Paper Scissors Game

Michelle Wong

Pieter Veenstra

Rory Neary

#4

In all of these sessions we have either reinforced old skills or showed new ones, but we are acutely aware that it is easy to scare off parents and children, so we're doing our best to be sensitive to this each time.

Is developing for kids not just the same as for adults?

In a way it is, but where adult quite often fake their understanding and google for answers when they are on their own. Children ask for more details. When teaching children, it means that you start with the basics and try to simplify the apps that you build. Quite often this is a good thing anyway.

DONAJON



There are many options available for kids to learn how to create program code. Why are you specifically targeting this product?

That's a very good question – so good in fact that we actually answer it during each session. To children we say that this is an amazing multimedia platform for building interactive experiences. To parents we say “There are very few examples of instances where something learned in a school setting is directly transferrable to the workplace – with Power Apps you have a tool that is exactly the same when used in business, albeit for different purposes”.

With both of the above in mind there is an opportunity like never before for both children AND parents to learn to use a tool that has value in both of their lives, and has applications whether your true love is art, science, mathematics or even music.

Why do you feel it is important for kids to learn how to code through Power Apps?

You'll hear many reasons for teaching kids how to code, however this is the first product that we've seen where the skills are directly transferrable to the workplace, and this is just as valuable for the careers of the parents as it is for the children.

Additionally, coding teaches children a 'way of thinking': fundamental skills that are important in anywhere in life, not just while on a computer. While coding you'll encounter challenges and learn how to problem-solve. You'll develop an understanding of logic. After all the app won't run if it's not given the correct instructions or arranged in the correct order. Perhaps, above all

you'll need to use your creativity to design an awesome app and bring your vision into the world.

It is a quite an extraordinary mix of skills that are required to develop an app. Skills that are worth learning and encouraging in our children, and the coding element is just one of them, but an important one.



What has the response been like?

On the whole we're very pleased that having started with nothing more than an idea in mid April 2020 we have a platform, digital presence and a community interest following 4 sessions and an invitation to an external session. People seem to be enjoying the idea that if they've built something that's a little on the silly side, they now have a way of sharing that with others **in addition** to sharing the learning along the way. All too often we share how brilliant we've been, but sharing the knowledge and the eureka moments is where the real generosity lies.

So tell us about the website?

The website is intended to support the live sessions and in due course there is a desire to create "Projects" that require "Skills" so that theoretically a child could plan their own path through the resources. It's a work in progress, so in due course there will be a place for teachers, parents and IT administrators, so that we remove any barriers that there may be at home or at school.

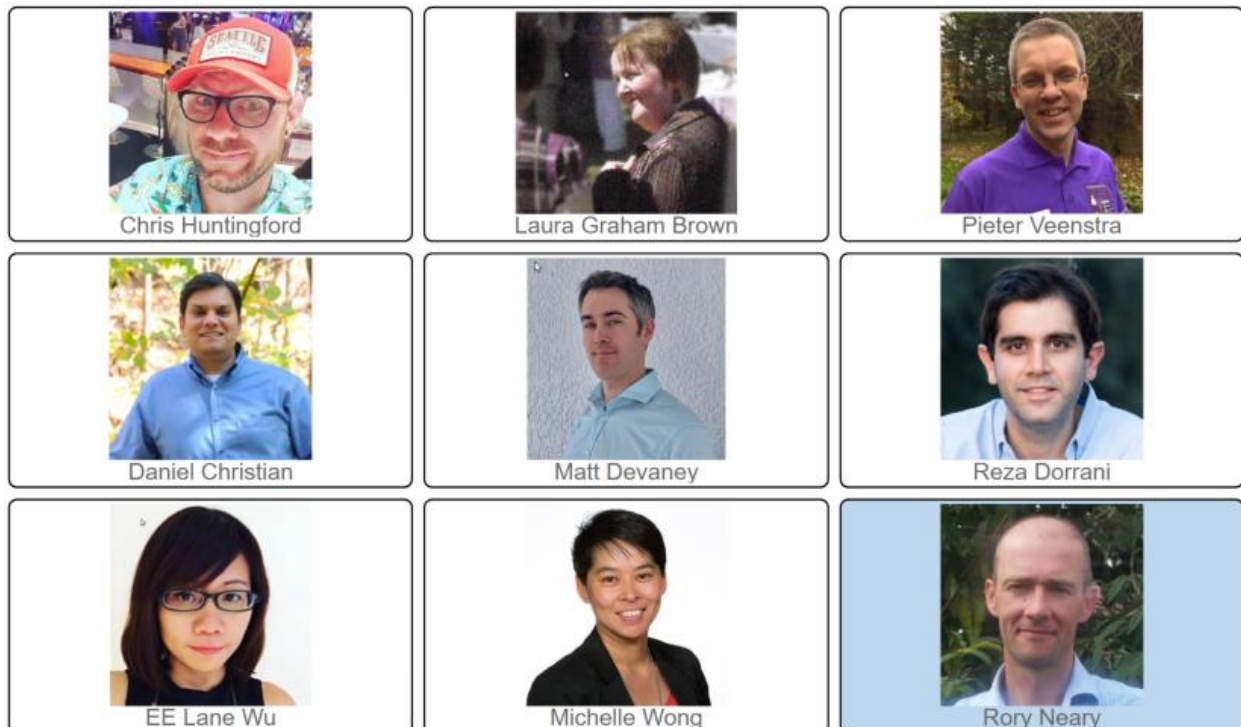
How safe is this for children?

This is a really important point. Firstly, our interaction is a collective or open one (versus one to one) with parents plus their children. Secondly, this is not a platform for making direct contact with children,

and finally, all of the content is in direct control of the founders whether it be on the website, at github.com/powerapps4kids or on the youtube channel. Where developers provide content this is moved to these shared and vetted areas.

Ok, so tell us about the team you've put together?

I guess you'd say that Pieter Veenstra and myself, Rory Neary, would be thought of as the founders, with a number of others that are providing amazing assistance. Matt Devaney has provided guidance in the background to ensure that the presenters hit the high notes so we're looking forward to his session on July 14th. We're also supported by Ee-Lane Wu, Laura Graham-Brown, Reza Dorrani, Michelle Wong, Chris Huntingford and Daniel Christian.



Are you where you want to be with the project?

It is an early stage, but already there is a lot of interest and support from Microsoft and the community for what we are doing.

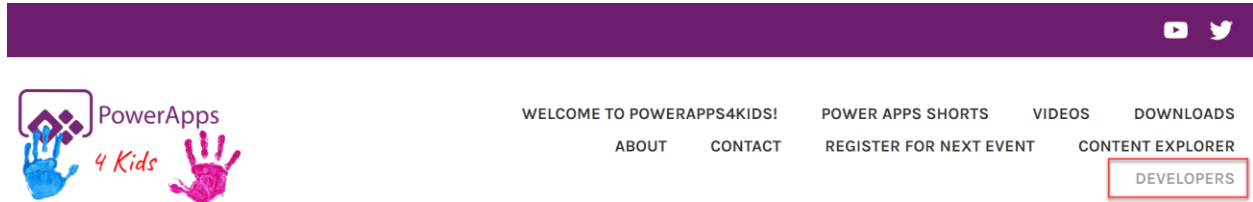
Personally, I've always said, start small in terms of output, but think big in terms of quality and governance in all my projects. This means in practice that we have a website, a YouTube channel, a dedicated Github, a twitter handle and an Office 365 tenant where we can collaborate with other community leaders.

Do you need any help with this?

Definitely, for this to be a true success we need to be able to engage children wherever they are in the world, and for this to happen we need to have high quality, well thought out content that is delivered in a reasonably consistent fashion. As the volume of the content increases, we'll need the navigation experience around the website to reflect this, so we need

- More content
- Quality delivery through video or blog posts
- A simple navigation experience

If you'd like to be involved please contact us via the form that on the developers page shown below:-



You can also contact either through twitter @powerapps4kids or via linkedin to Rory Neary or Pieter Veenstra

What do I need to do to find out more?

I think you're best to head over to the website powerapps4kids.com , have a look around, then head over to the content explorer and pick a project and start building. If you're enjoying yourself maybe take a shot of your latest creation and tag it with #PowerApps4Kids – we'd love to see

Thanks Rory for telling us about what you've been doing, and good luck with the rest of the project.

My pleasure, thank you for having me on - perhaps we'll come back a year from now and we have a retrospective. Here are some links in the meantime.

Web: powerapps4kids.com

Microsoft Reactor <https://www.meetup.com/Microsoft-Reactor-London/events/calendar/>

Youtube Channel - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/powerapps4kids>

Github - <https://github.com/powerapps4kids>

Twitter - [@PowerApps4Kids](https://twitter.com/PowerApps4Kids) #PowerApps4Kids