

CompuChild Chatter

December 2007
CompuChild USA

Holiday time is upon us already—it seems to happen faster and faster every year. We are so proud of all our students, from the children who are just beginning to those who are working on their second PowerPoint presentations! These presentations are about their favorite things about Thanksgiving and will be emailed home to parents when they're finished.

Are Tech Toys the Answer?

The holidays are here. This year, we're seeing TV ads for children's video games advertised as tools to help children master academic skills while having fun. But do we need to buy a special toy just to help our children work their academic muscles? The answer to that question is *It Depends*. Think about these questions:

- ☞ Are you thinking about these games because they're mobile and you can use them in the car or when you travel? If so, look carefully at the features of the product because some require a television. You may be able to use them in a hotel or at Grandma's house, but they may not work in the car. Be an informed consumer.
- ☞ Do you have a computer at home that you can let your child use? If not, but you still want to be able to secretly get your child to practice literacy and math skills, then maybe a tech toy is a good solution for your situation. Some can be had fairly reasonably, and even a budget-priced desktop is more expensive. Just keep in mind that these toys can only be used with the toys you buy for them. Again, be an informed consumer so you have a good idea of the true cost of the toy.
- ☞ Are you considering a video game because you don't know how to protect the important personal information on your computer from your child? To do this, you'll need to create an account for your child AND make sure that your own login account is password protected. No matter what kind of computer you have, you need to be the administrator (you have total control over the computer) and your child needs to have limited access. This means that you'll log in to your account to install games for all users, and your child can run them from his or her account. And don't forget to turn off sharing for your important folders.

If the last bullet really rings with you, then visit our website. Soon you'll find downloadable directions for how to set up a limited account for your child to use. Then, take a little time to check out back issues of our newsletter to find information about free or inexpensive educational (and fun!) software that you can download and install for your child. In addition, soon we'll be posting a parent guide to installing one of the most popular programs we use in class—and it's free!



Please call (841.5268 or 935.1802) or email me (lgardner@compuchild.com) with questions or concerns. Visit us online at www.compuchild-ri.com.

From all of us at CompuChild to you and yours, Happy Holidays! And best wishes for a healthy and happy New Year!



Where can we go today? Check these out!

- ☞ This site is undergoing changes, but can still be a lot of fun if your child enjoys music: <http://www.creatingmusic.com/>
- ☞ <http://www.mamamedia.com> has fun music and fun games, plus it's free to join
- ☞ Do you enjoy cooking with your child? You'll like this site: <http://www.spatulatta.com/index.html>