

CompuChild Chatter

December 2008
CompuChild USA

CompuChild
Technology Education

We want to let you know that we'll be using Windows Vista on our classroom computers after the first of the year. Most new computers now come with it, so we'll be teaching our students using what they're likely to see at home if families take advantage of some of the great technology deals this holiday season.

We hope all our friends and their families are enjoying a happy holiday season! And we wish you every blessing for 2009!

Yes, Virginia—you can get something for nothing!

Without a doubt, families everywhere are living more frugally and cutting back where it makes sense to do so. During the holiday season, we look for good buys so that we can be generous with those we love.

There are places you can visit on the Internet where you can download and install free, safe, and fun software for computers running different kinds of Windows, Mac OS, and other operating systems. Open Source software has been around for a long time, and is written by people for fun, and because they don't think that people should have to pay for quality programs. Many kinds of programs are available: educational games, word processors, email clients, financial management software, and more. So, what's the downside? Since they are free to anyone who wants them, there is no support. If you don't like a program, all you need to do is uninstall it, and if you need help, you're on your own to figure out the answer. If you feel comfortable with this, then there are literally hundreds of programs out there, and donations are welcome. Here are some of our favorites:

- ☑ Tux Paint—we use it in class and children of all ages love it. There is a guide to parents on our website to download and install this program, though it may be for an earlier version of the game.
- ☑ Tux Typing—we also use this program in class. It's great for younger children to learn their letters, and for older children to begin touch typing.
- ☑ OpenOffice—if you don't have room in the budget for Microsoft Office, this is a wonderful free alternative. The MS Word, Excel, and PowerPoint lessons your child has at CompuChild class can be applied to OpenOffice.
- ☑ Mozilla Firefox—considered by many to be a safer browser program than Microsoft's Internet Explorer
- ☑ Mozilla Thunderbird—an email client program that is considered safer than Microsoft Outlook

Those are only a few of the great free programs that are available to computer users around the world. These programs, and others, are known to be virus-free and safe for download, *but that's not always true. Be careful when you search for freeware—make sure that your own computer is up to date and has current virus and security software to protect you from malware. Use only sites known to be safe.* Two sites that are generally considered to be reliable are <http://www.download.com/> and sourceforge.net. Take your time, and you're bound to find some buried treasure!

Please call (667.0044 or 935.1802) or email me (robin@compuchild-ri.com) with questions or concerns. Visit us online at www.compuchild-ri.com.

CompuChild kids are the greatest!

Did you know that our kindergartners are making memory books this year? In the process, we're learning, reviewing, and using all kinds of skills, including font formatting, inserting pictures, WordArt, and so much more. We'll print them out in the spring to bring home.

Our younger students are learning so much! Have you watched your child handle CDs, or asked him to shut down the computer for the family? Play with them to see what they know!

Give the gift of knowledge!!!
Gift certificates available.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE PARKER FAMILY OF WARWICK - THE WINNER OF OCTOBER'S COMPUTER LEARNING MONTH DRAWING FOR A MONTH OF FREE TUITION!



Where can we go today? Check these out!

- ☞ This site is all about reading for children Pre-K through 2nd grade: <http://www.starfall.com/>.
- ☞ [Playhouse Disney](http://www.playhousedisney.com) has some fun activities for young learners.
- ☞ If your child is into animals, games, stories, videos, activities, and more, you'll enjoy this site: <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com>.