

CompuChild Chatter

June 2007
CompuChild USA

Has another school year gone by already? They seem to rush by more quickly every year. Soon we'll be saying a summer good-bye to some of our students, and we'll see them in the fall. Others will be starting camp activities such as digital scrapbooking and making movies. Still more will be continuing classes through the summer. We wish a great summer to all our students and their families.

How Much Tech Is Too Much Tech for Youngsters?

Parents and educators are wise to think carefully about the role technology plays in the lives and education of young children. The question "How Much Tech is Too Much Tech" is a good one, and there is no single right answer. The truth is that computers are playing a significant role in all facets of our society, and that role is increasing all the time as we find new applications for these complex tools. They're in our cars, our vacuums, our pockets, our toys, and not just on the desk in the family room. We use self-pay registers at chain stores of all types, order photo reprints using kiosks at the drug store, digitally record our TV shows, check ourselves in at the airport, interact with our cars if we drive a hybrid, and never leave the pump when we buy gas. We take them for granted in many ways. Our children don't know life without them, even if they just watch us.

Unlike a TV, computers beg us to interact. They make us think, allow us to create even if it's not with scissors and paste, make it possible for us to have friends all around the world, help us solve problems and explore new ideas. But there are questions we should ask ourselves where our children are concerned to help us put these tools in the proper perspective:

- ☞ Are we placing limits on the amount of time our child uses the computer, and also encouraging physical play, both alone and with others?
- ☞ Are we encouraging our child to learn when he or she uses the computer?
- ☞ Are we using this tool in a way that encourages the use of imagination and creativity?
- ☞ Is our child learning skills that enhance his or her productivity with this complex tool?
- ☞ Are we mentoring when our child uses the computer, or we using the computer the same way we sometimes (and perhaps all too often) use the DVD player and the TV? As an electronic babysitter?

CompuChild classes teach children skills they need to use a computer properly and to be productive when they use it. We should all promote using those skills to learn, create, and explore the world, but as complementary activities to physical play, learning, and growth.

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



These are some questions to ask your CompuChild (some are more advanced):

- ☞ What's a thumb drive?
- ☞ Should I ever eat or drink near the computer?
- ☞ How can I change my font color?

Where can we go today? Check these out!

☞ It is the beginning of hurricane season, so this site might be of interest to families who are making or revising a family emergency plan: <http://www.fema.gov/kids/>



☞ More and more families are going green at home. This site lets kids age 2 and up have fun while also learning about being good to the earth.

<http://www.juliasrainbowcorner.com/html/funandgames.html>

☞ <http://www.fun4brains.com/> is a place for 6-11 year olds to learn and have fun. It's connected to the site listed above.

☞ The parent site for both sites listed above is found here:

<http://www.juliasrainbowcorner.com/>. There's also a parent's area you might like.