

EP exceptional achievement award.(overview of award winning educational toys)

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A TOY OF THE FUTURE

Developed as both a clinical tool and a toy, CosmoBot is nearing its debut and is EP Magazine's Toy of the Future for 2002. CosmoBot has the unique ability to: mimic the actions of child operators, react to their actions, and provide visual and oral feedback.

In a clinical setting, CosmoBot is able to record progress during a session without distracting the child. In a home or school environment, it interactively provides children with disabilities an outlet to experience full control and movement.

Equipped with sensors that the child wears on his or her hands or head, Cosmobot mimics both movements and voice. Also, the child or therapist can record a short story with some movements, then play it back.

CosmoBot's control panel has buttons for arm and head movements, all in real time. It can lift, grab, flap up and down and clap. It can also shake its head yes and no. The joystick on the bottom of the control panel allows the child to "drive" CosmoBot. There is also a microphone that allows the child to speak through the robot's mouth. This is great in helping quiet children become more verbal.

AnthroTronix, a leader in development of controlled electronic devices, is creating a clinical and home version. In a clinical setting, special software allows the therapist or parents to record and analyze data over a period of time. Children, engrossed in the interactivity, will not be distracted by notation actions usually associated with a progressive therapy session

AnthroTronix' studies have shown that when the therapist speaks through Cosmobot with the microphone, the child is more apt to listen to instructions. CosmoBot will also contain interactive games, such as Simon Says. For example, CosmoBot can say, "Simon says, say the word yes." The robot contains speech recognition software that deciphers correct and incorrect answers, reacting to the child's response. When Simon asks for an action, with the sensors on, the child performs the action and CosmoBot responds by saying "Good job."

CosmoBot is expected to be commercially available as early as next year. For more information visit www.anthrotronix.com.