



DREAMMS for kids

# DIRECTIONS

*Technology in Special Education*

For Parents & Professionals

Vol. 2, No. 5

December 1995

# <http://www.madness>

## Wandering the Wide World on the Web

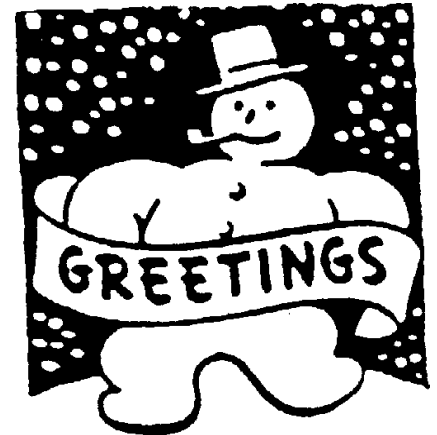
by CHESTER HOSMER

In 1989, six short years ago, the World Wide Web (WWW) was just an idea. An idea like many, that has had more far-reaching effects than ever conceived by its inventors. The concept behind the Web design was to create a system that would allow information to be presented to the user in a common way. This information needed to be retrieved and displayed by virtually any computer in any location, thus providing the ability to exchange and access information in a generic format that included text, graphics, sound, and full motion video.

Today the Web is a universe of network-accessible information that embodies human knowledge. Over 75 million documents exist that span every category imaginable. Information can be found on virtually any topic area, and because of the ease of access and update, this information is more timely than the daily news. Web browsers are designed to display intricate graphics and video, while lightning fast modems provide high speed access and retrieval times.

The unique aspect of the Web is its ability to instantly seek out and display documents that exist on different computers tens of thousands of miles apart. For example, if you're reading a document about Down syndrome on a system at the University of Kansas, and the author references another source of information, you can immediately access that new document wherever it exists. Simply by clicking your mouse! Naturally, this feature makes the Web an incredibly useful and productive tool for finding information on just about anything.

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My Dear Friends,

12/95



It's truly amazing how we can travel miles and miles around the world without leaving the comfort of our homes or offices. Just hop onto your computer, fire up the modem, and you're there! It sure doesn't get any easier than this.... We don't even need to interact with people anymore...

Well, be careful now. Sure, we're getting to the point in this crazy technological world where people aren't really needed once things are up and running, but we don't want to get carried away do we? Last time I checked, computers were not real big on hugs. And, I don't remember ever seeing my Mac with a great big smile (well sortof a smile when it boots, but it doesn't count!)

The holiday season always serves to remind me of how important we all are to each other! Sure, we can't get information from each other as efficiently as we can from our computers, but there are so many things that we *can* get and *need* to get from each other! Hugs, for example, are real high on my list of important things.... I don't believe there's anything as important as a hug. Not a polite, little pat on the back hug mind you, but a great big lift 'em off their feet hug! It truly does wonders for the soul!

So hug someone that you wouldn't normally hug this holiday season. It'll make you feel great!

Happy Holidays! And as always... my kindest regards.

Janet

## CONFERENCES

**Date:** January 18-20, 1996  
**Event:** Technology, Reading & Learning Difficulties  
**Location:** San Francisco, CA  
**Information:** 800.255.2218

**Date:** January 25-26, 1996  
**Event:** 5th Symposium on Literacy and Developmental Disabilities  
**Location:** Chapel Hill, NC  
**Information:** 919.966.7486

**Date:** February 15-17, 1996  
**Event:** Florida Assistive Technology Impact Conference (FATIC)  
**Location:** Orlando, FL  
**Information:** 813.872.5281

# DIRECTIONS

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Vendors - We welcome product news. Please include pricing and contact name with press releases.

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Minutes turn to hours very quickly when 'surfing on the web' or chatting on the "boards". Try setting a timer so you don't spend your whole paycheck in additional on-line charges!!

*WEB Continued from page 1*

The existence of the Web obviously opens up new doors of opportunity for those interested in any area that relates to special needs or education. Finding information on assistive technology, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, autism, hearing and vision challenges, developmental delays, attention deficit, etc., has always been a time consuming effort. The number of books, magazines, published research papers, and other printed materials would usually make your search long and tedious. And, finding the material could truly be a challenge if you live in a beautiful but remote area of northern Montana! The World Wide Web solves the distance problem by bringing a virtual gigantic disk drive right into your home or office! And, the new information and Web sites focusing on special needs are increasing daily.

**The DREAMMS Homepage**

When I was planning this article I was going to focus on destinations that you should visit, but that list of places to visit is just too long. We've developed a better solution. DREAMMS for Kids has established our own Web site to serve the needs of parents and educators of children with special needs. The DREAMMS Web site (or homepage) provides pertinent special needs and assistive technology articles, vendor and resource listings, information about our services, and most importantly an ever increasing list of related Web sites for you to visit. We've organized the list by category to make it easy for you to launch off to sites that you're interested in. And, we update the site continually and do the leg work in finding new destinations and pertinent information for you.

The new DREAMMS for Kids homepage is located at: **<http://users.aol.com/dreamms/main.htm>**. I do believe that you'll be pleased with what you find there!

**Browsing the Web**

The two most frequently questions I get about the Web are: How do I access the Web? How do I find things once I'm there?

To access the Web you will need several things:

1. A modern computer, Macintosh, PC, etc.
2. At least a 14.4 modem
3. A phone line connected to your modem
4. An account with a service provider that has Internet access (i.e., America Online, CompuServe, Netcom)
5. Web browser software (usually provided by your Internet provider)
6. I suggest buying a "Web how-to" book from your local bookstore. There are scores of them available, and the investment is well worth it!

**Finding 'Stuff'**

Finding things once you get to the Web is really very simple. You can search out information in any number of ways. I've listed just a few of them here...

- Access Yahoo at: <http://www.yahoo.com>. This site contains a categorized index to Web sites.

- Access webCrawler at: <http://webcrawler.com>. This site allows keyword searches and provides links to documents that match the search. I ran a few searches today to give you an idea how you might narrow a search. I started by searching on "education technology" it returned 6,333 documents. I then searched on assistive technology and it returned 84 documents. Finally I searched on Augmentative Communication and it returned 15 documents. Try to keep narrowing your domain until you can look at a manageable number of documents

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# Assistive Technology Funding & Systems Change Project Notes

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## SPECIAL EDUCATION - PART II

### **How can students get assistive technology through the school?**

Any special education services, including assistive technology, should be included in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). In order to begin the process, a request should be made, in writing, to the school, for the assistive technology that the student needs. If it is not known exactly what type of device is needed, simply state what the student's need is. For instance, for a child who has a hearing impairment, the request can say that the child needs help understanding what is being said in the classroom. Needs for assistive technology should be determined along with the student's other special education needs in the IEP process, including placement, transportation, and other related services.

Once the request is made, the local education agency has 15 days to provide a proposed assessment plan. This must contain a copy of the notice of parent rights. Parents have at least 15 days to consent to the proposed assessments. Once the local education agency receives the parent's consent, it has 50 days to complete the assessments and develop the IEP.

### **Will the school evaluate the need for assistive technology?**

Yes. Once a request for assistive technology or other special education services is made, the school conducts a comprehensive evaluation of the child's need for the device or services, at no cost to the family. If the parents disagree with the school's findings, they can obtain an independent evaluation. The school district is responsible for the cost of the independent evaluation unless it can show, at an

administrative hearing that it requests, that the school's assessment was accurate, complete, and met the proper legal requirements.

### **What is an IEP, and how does it work?**

The Individualized Educational Program (IEP) is a legal document that is developed by a team. It contains a special education student's goals and objectives, placement, and related services. The IEP team must consist of the child's parent(s), the student (if appropriate), the student's teacher, and a school administrator. In addition, it may include others who provide services, such as speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, or counseling. Each year, the IEP team must meet to develop a new IEP for the following year, based on the child's progress and educational needs. Assistive technology devices and services should be specifically included in the IEP.

The parent must sign the IEP document before it can be implemented. If there is a disagreement about the IEP team's recommendations, the parent should not sign the IEP and should request a due process hearing.

### **What are the criteria for including assistive technology in an IEP?**

The IDEA regulations state that assistive technology can be included in an IEP for three reasons: 1) as part of special education, 2) as a related service, or 3) as a supplemental aid or service to allow the child to be educated in the least restrictive environment. Although these distinctions may seem confusing, the basic criterion is that the student needs the assistive technology to benefit from special education.

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First, assistive technology may be considered as part of a student's goals and objectives for special education. For instance, a student may require the use of a communication device in order to respond to questions and converse with his teacher and classmates. An IEP goal may state, "Using an electronic communication device, John will respond appropriately to questions from teacher and classmates 5 out of 5 times, in each academic subject."

Second, assistive technology may be part of related services (34 C.F.R. 300.16). In this case, it may be the related service itself, or may enable a student to benefit from a related service. For example, a student may need a lift on the school bus in order to ride to school with peers (Davis USD 18 IDELR 696, 1992). A related service may also be training or evaluation to help the student use a device. For example, occupational therapy may involve determining correct positioning to use a computer keyboard or a communication device.

Third, assistive technology may be a supplementary aid or service which enables a student to be educated in the least restrictive environment (34 C.F.R. 300.550(b)(2)). Assistive technology should be considered in order to allow the student to remain in the regular classroom setting before a more restrictive instructional setting is considered necessary. For instance, a listening device which would enable a student with a hearing impairment to participate in general academic classes would be allowable if, without the device, the student might have to be placed in a more restrictive setting.

### **Who owns assistive technology that is purchased by the school for a student in special education?**

Any equipment purchased by the school belongs to the school district. If the student moves to another school district, the equipment remains with the district which made the purchase. A student should be allowed to take the

equipment home, however, if the equipment is needed to benefit from education (e.g., to do homework or to communicate with others outside of the classroom).

### **Can a student take home equipment that is purchased by the school district?**

Yes, if the student needs the equipment in order to fully benefit from its use, and if home use is specified in the student's IEP, it may then be taken home (18 IDELR 627, 1992). Hearing officers have consistently held that, even though the district owns the device, it cannot limit its use to school grounds if a student needs the device at home or in a community setting in order to receive a free, appropriate public education (e.g., to complete school homework or practice functional skills in non-school environments). The IEP team should discuss arrangements for taking equipment home and determine circumstances when this will be necessary.

### **Does the school provide training to use an assistive technology device?**

Yes. The school should provide training for the student, family, and school personnel when necessary in order to ensure proper selection and full use of the device. Such training is included in the definition of assistive technology service in the IDEA, and must be funded by the school district.

### **Who is responsible for repairs and maintenance of assistive technology devices?**

The school district is responsible for repairing and maintaining the devices that it purchases. Parents and school districts should examine all warranties and maintenance contracts that accompany devices for provisions that may cover these services. Training, repair, and maintenance should be discussed with the school district, and arrangements should be agreed upon before the IEP is implemented. The school district should review its property

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# Benefiting from Online Use

by MARGARET KLEINPETER

The time has come to buy new assistive technology... Either because people snicker when you tell them what kind of computer you have at home, or your child's assistive technology device is held together by duct tape and another major function just went out again. Maybe you have just heard of a new input device that will allow one of your students to use a computer independently. Buying any technological equipment is confusing enough for most consumers, and buying assistive technology is even more so. You may have heard the "Acme A1Z" is just perfect for kids with cerebral palsy... But will it work with a child who also has some visual problems?

Whether you are purchasing consumer-oriented equipment and software or specialized assistive technology, using online access can help you make wiser purchasing decisions. First, it can help you identify a larger number of vendors than you may ordinarily be familiar with. Second, it can provide the latest information on a product, including anticipated upgrades not announced elsewhere. Finally, it gives you access to a wide range of consumer information sources. Two of the online areas most potentially helpful to assistive technology purchasers are the Worldwide Web and "Listserv's."

## World Wide Web (aka "The Web")

Probably the fastest growing part of the Internet is the Web, thousands of interconnected sites featuring text and graphics; and, occasionally, sound, animation, and video clips. Assistive technology buyers can expect a commercial site to feature the latest information on the company's primary products, places to ask questions or request additional information, and links to other providers of assistive technology information. While in most cases, the site may not be much more than a cyber brochure, product information on the web is usually very current and reflects the most recent product upgrades.

Additionally, you have the opportunity to compare products for which you may not have access to the printed information.

Everyone seems to have their own Web Site now, a big change in only the last few months. Many of the new fall print catalogues proclaim "Visit our new website at <http://www.xxxxxx.com/>." For example, Prentke-Romich, whose products include augmentative communication devices and environmental controls is just setting up a site at <http://dialup.oar.net/~Pprco/>.

Websites are remarkably easy to set up. Almost anyone who has Internet access can often develop one for little or no extra monthly charge. This means that even the smallest vendors can have a presence on the web. Additionally, universities with assistive technology emphasis, national foundations, and even individuals have websites with helpful assistive technology buying information.

## Lists and List Servers

Lists are e-mail-based groups whose members have some common interest. People send messages pertinent to the list's interests to a central computer location. These messages are then forwarded to all the list members. Many of the disability interest groups have one or more lists. WIDlist - The WIDnet List of Disability List Servers can help you find the right list for your needs. Send e-mail to [WIDNET@DELPHI.COM](mailto:WIDNET@DELPHI.COM) with "request widlist" as the subject.

Some lists may have only a message or two a month. Others may be an overwhelming 100+ messages per day, with most of the messages completely irrelevant to you. If that is the situation, you can set your subscription to "NOMAIL." Whether you are a full-time or an occasional list participant, lists are very helpful when it is time to make a purchasing decision.

*Please see ONLINE on Page 9*

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# Online Fun and Learning for Kids

From Edmark's Education Team

Online services offer an overwhelming array of choices and potential uses. When deciding where you and your child should begin, consider your child's age, the experiences he or she has already had in school and your own experience with the services. The important thing to remember is that each time you try to use a feature, you'll discover something new, become more comfortable with navigating the system and learn what interests you and your child. Here are a few educational activities to get kids started online.

Letter writing is a wonderful way to practice spelling and communication skills and to keep in touch with the outside world. But, while kids love to get letters in the mail, they often need to be encouraged to spend the time and effort to write. Electronic mail through online services is a terrific way to encourage writing, and its educational benefits are similar to those of other forms of letter writing and communications. Kids are more easily motivated to write using electronic mail

because it is novel, quick and easy, and can open up access to a wide array of new friends. With proper supervision, even young children can use electronic mail.

Online services offer children the exciting ability to discuss news, interests and ideas with people across town, across the country and even around the world. Bulletin boards and forums make interesting and current information available on a wide variety of subjects for both parents and students. Opening the world of online services to kids offers a wide range of educational benefits, as varied as the interests of your child. Begin exploring and discover the world of online for yourself. You will find your confidence grows as you go. □

*Edmark® is a publisher of educational software and print materials with more than 20 years of experience applying proven educational concepts to the development of early learning products for the classroom and home.*

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# DREAMMS Bookstore

## Featured Titles



### ***Deaf Children, Their Families and Professionals-- Dismantling Barriers-* by: S. Beazley and M. Moore**

This book is about taking disablement out of the experience of children and their families. It focuses on deaf children and uses a valuable combination of what families say and discussions of topical issues about how disabling experiences can be avoided. Parents and children clearly reveal the social barriers to their lives as ordinary families, and have identified ways in which barriers can start to be dismantled. Professionals and students in the field of education, health and social work are challenged to re-examine their own practices and beliefs with a view to maximizing enablement of vulnerable children and their families.



### ***Computer Resources for People with Disabilities-- A Guide to Exploring Today's Assistive Technology-* by: Alliance for Technology Access**

The computer age offers dramatic possibilities for people with disabilities. This new book by the Alliance for Technology Access shows how to use computer technology to achieve goals and change lives. This book is a comprehensive guide to approaching computer innovations. It provides the information necessary for using conventional and assistive technology at work, at school, at home, alongside other people with or without disabilities.



### ***What Teacher's Do: Developments in Special Education--* by: P. Garner, V. Hinchcliffe, S. Sandow**

This book is about the lives and work of teachers who specialize in the education of children with learning difficulties in ordinary and special schools. It draws on examples of good practice and reflective thinking from more than fifty teachers and places these in a framework of considered argument. It shows the dedication, effectiveness, and innovative skills of teachers.

## DREAMMS Bookstore Order Form

Computer Resources for People with Disabilities, \$14.95

What Teachers Do: Developments in SPED, \$26.95

Children with Language Impairments, \$19.95

Special Needs in the Classroom, \$24.95

Children with Autism, \$24.95

Educating Hearing Impaired Children, \$27.00

Glossary of Special Education, \$27.00

Including Pupils with Disabilities, \$29.00

Learning Difficulties and Computers, \$18.95

Learning Support for Young People in Transition, \$27.00

Deaf Children, Their Families and Professionals, \$24.95

School Children at Risk, \$29.00

Special Education Needs in the Primary School, \$21.00

Special Needs Bridging the Curriculum Gap, \$27.00

Special Parents Birth and Early Years, \$27.00

Teaching Special Needs, \$25.00

The ADD Hyperactivity Handbook for Schools, \$26.00

The ADD Hyperactivity Workbook, \$16.95

The Politics of Special Education Needs, \$33.00

The Special Education Handbook, \$150.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount Ordered \_\_\_\_\_

Florida Residents add 7% sales tax \_\_\_\_\_

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**TOTAL ENCLOSED** \_\_\_\_\_

Mail this form with your check or Purchase Order to: DREAMMS for Kids, Inc., 2763 Tasha Drive, Clearwater, FL 34621

*WEB Continued from page 3*

- Access DREAMMS for Kids at: <http://users.aol.com/dreamms/main.htm>. Select *Other Places* from the Main Menu and link to sites we've provided for you.

### What to Do if Things Go Wrong

I'm sure that this all sounds very difficult and confusing, but believe me, it's much easier than it sounds. Moving from site to site is as easy as clicking your mouse! You are usually unaware that you are moving around the world from computer to computer at breakneck speed! (Unfortunately though, large, complex graphics and pictures sometimes take a bit longer to download..) And, if you get stuck, or your system crashes, just power down and start again. You are automatically logged off, so don't worry about racking up time.

Speaking of time, be sure to watch it closely.... You'll be amazed at how quickly it slips by while you're in cyber-world! Bouncing from one site to the next can (and usually does) hold your interest for hours and hours! But, if you should get bored, you can always go to the I-mall (Internet Mall) and shop for awhile!

Happy Surfing ... ☐

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*ONLINE continued from Page 6*

to purchase, and who sells these products. As you receive messages from your list, you may encounter a "thread" (a group of related messages) describing a situation similar to your daughter's. If you don't see anything related to your interests, you may need to send your own request for information to the list. For instance, you may write "We are considering buying a NuLux Maxi Pro for my daughter. Has anyone had any experience with the NuLux?" Give enough details that someone familiar with that device can give meaningful advice. However, remember that e-mail

is not private, so limit the information you provide.

Remember, the online world is rapidly changing every day. You may search in vain for appropriate product information only to find an extremely helpful website or a list two months later. ☐

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*Margaret Kleinpeter is the Resource Librarian for the Iberia Parish Career Center in New Iberia, Louisiana. This is her first article for DIRECTIONS.*

## Free Subscription

For Students, Parents & Teachers

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- Laura Nelson, OTR



MAINSTREAM provides a great deal of information on equipment options - as well as resource information. The focus on self-advocacy is a good learning tool.

- Darren J. Roberts,  
Staff Supervisor

To begin your free 3-month subscription write to: MAINSTREAM Magazine, 2973 Beech Street, San Diego, CA 92102

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# CAN YOU USE EXCEPTIONAL PARENT?

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If your child has special needs, you have special needs, too, needs that range from expert advice to old-fashioned common sense. *You need information that matters, from people who care.* You need *Exceptional Parent*.

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### MAIL TO:

Exceptional Parent Magazine  
P.O. Box 3000, Denville, NJ 07834-9964

*SPECIAL EDUCATION continued from Page 5*

insurance policy to determine what the policy covers and whether it will cover loss or damage at school and at the child's home.

**Is cost a consideration in whether assistive technology must be provided to a special education student?**

Cost may be a consideration in determining whether to provide a specific device, but only if a less expensive device is also appropriate. In one hearing decision, the hearing officer stated that cost was a factor, yet authorized a \$7,000 Liberator communication device for the student (19 IDELR 355, 1992). Cost may not be a factor if the alternative will deny the student access to a free appropriate public education.

**What if there is a disagreement about the need for or type of assistive technology?**

The IEP team should discuss any disagreements, and attempt to resolve them informally. If either the family or the school district disagrees with the proposed IEP, they can file for a due process hearing with the state Special Education Hearing office.

For persons who wish to secure the full document,

*Accessing Assistive Technology*, contact: Protection and Advocacy, Inc., 100 Howe Avenue, Suite 185N, Sacramento, California 95825, 800-776-5746 (V/TTY). □

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## Online Sources & BBS

Call any of these numbers for information and (usually) a diskette to sign up for free trial online time.

|                      |                |
|----------------------|----------------|
| America Online (AOL) | 1-800-827-6364 |
| CompuServe (CIS)     | 1-800-848-8199 |
| Delphi               | 1-800-695-4005 |
| eWORLD               | 1-800-775-4556 |
| GEnie                | 1-800-638-9636 |

Try any of the disability related Bulletin Board Services listed below. Remember that these numbers need to be accessed through your modem!

|                   |              |
|-------------------|--------------|
| LINCS-BBS         | 408-288-5010 |
| ABLE INFORM       | 301-589-3563 |
| ADAnet            | 205-254-6050 |
| Handicap News BBS | 203-926-6168 |

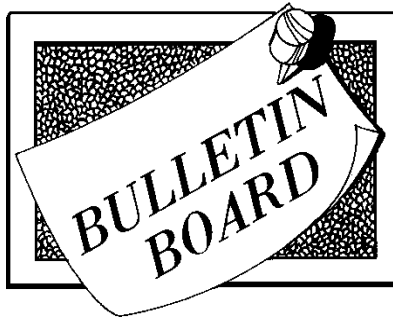


### Trudy's Time & Play House

Edmark Corporation announced the release of *Trudy's Time & Play House*, an early learning software program that offers students in preschool to second grade the opportunity to learn important geography and time concepts. The new program is the fourth in Edmark's award-winning Early Learning House series. Trudy, a charming alligator, and her whimsical friends invite students to build time-telling skills, develop mapping and directions skills, and to "travel" the world learning about continents, oceans and landmarks. *Trudy's Time & Place House* is available on dual platform CD-ROM for Macintosh and Windows. (Edmark: 800.426.9721)

### EBM's Assistive Device Desk

EBM Corporation is pleased to introduce you to their *Assistive Device Desk* designed for individuals who use wheelchairs. The desk surface, 18" x 32", has 9 inches of vertical travel, for adjustment to the individual's requirements. There is an armrest to allow full forearm support, and an inset that moves from horizontal to vertical in 8 steps. For added versatility, a computer workstation and monitor shelf can be added, thus making the desk a complete workstation for school, office or home. (EBM Corporation: 800.815.5719)



### True Friends Computer Program

*True Friends*, a new coloring book emulation program designed by AbleNet for children ages 3 to 8, features engaging animal characters portraying familiar childhood experiences. The computer program is PC-compatible for DOS and includes easy-to-follow instructions. The program can be played by one person using a switch, or by two people alternating turns between a switch and the keyboard. The program also includes an audio option with sounds ranging from simple musical notes accompanying the pictures and user actions, to children's voices exclaiming affirmations about friendship.

Also, to recognize today's leaders in breaking down barriers to inclusion for persons with severe disabilities, AbleNet will present an annual inclusion award. Each year an innovative visionary team of people, who demonstrate best practices to foster meaningful participation of people with disabilities at home, school, work and in the community, will be honored for their exemplary efforts. Call the number below for additional information. (AbleNet: 800.322.0956)

### MathLine Special Needs Video

Howbrite Solutions, Inc. is making their *MathLine Special Needs Video* available for a 30 day free loan program. *MathLine* is an innovative math tool adapted for special education students to aid them in their math. *MathLine* features manipulatives and numerals so students see how they relate to each other during the math process. It is a self contained unit with no pieces for students to drop or teachers to sort. The Special Needs Video can also be purchased for \$9.95. (Howbrite Solutions: 800.505.MATH)

### Destination: Ocean

Edmark Corporation announced the release of *Destination: Ocean*, the newest addition to the Imagination Express series of language arts programs that give students powerful tools to produce interactive on-screen stories and beautiful printed books. *Destination: Ocean* for students in kindergarten to eighth grade, features new movie-making technology that allows students to easily create their own interactive movies as well as stories. *Destination: Ocean* is a rich marine learning environment and powerful multimedia story and movie-making tool for students. It is available on dual platform CD-ROM for Macintosh and Windows. (Edmark: 800.426.0856)