Child's Play

KinderLab robotics

Newsletter

Dear reader,

Welcome back to Child's Play, the monthly newsletter from KinderLab Robotics. If you're reading this for the first time, we're looking forward to sharing some of our thoughts, experiences and successes in child development, programming and robotics with you.

If you were a Kickstarter backer, you likely have your KIBO by now. We hope you and yours are loving it. Next time your robot is all dressed up, please send us a picture on Twitter or Facebook. We look forward to seeing more KIBOs in the wild!

Are you an educator who is considering introducing KIBO into your classroom? We are looking for thoughts on our Ambassador for Education program, which will be coming in 2015. If you'd like to let us know any ideas about to how introduce you and your class to KIBO, please do – we want to build a program that best serves you as educators. Send us your thoughts and get in touch via email here.

Don't forget, there's one day left in our KIBO giveaway. Please enter here. We'll be picking a winner on Christmas Eve.

We hope you enjoy this month's edition, and are having a very merry holiday season.

With warmest regards,

Mitch Rosenberg

Co-founder and CEO, KinderLab Robotics

Reboot

Recently, Marina and I spent a weekend in New York City for the 2014 [Makers Faire](). We had the opportunity to connect with consumers and we put it to good use. We asked 198 attendees about their attitudes towards young children coding. The results were eye-opening:

- Most adults (65%) feel that coding fundamentals are **incredibly important'** for young children

- However most (54%) are also
  worried about their ability to properly teach programming concepts

- Of those unconcerned, 27% describe themselves as **technical professionals**

This is precisely why we created KIBO. Its accessibility reaches beyond children aged 4-7 to teachers, parents, grandparents and others. We understand the boundaries that complicated technology can create, and so we made it our mission to break through them.

As the world continues to become more and more technical, the education of STEAM - science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics - is becoming more crucial for kids at earlier ages.

To learn more about our poll, please see the full release [here.]()

View from the classroom

Kennedy-Longfellow Elementary School

Now that KIBO has made its way into homes and classrooms, we are connecting with customers and sharing their experiences using KIBO and the impact it is having.

Recently we caught up with Sue Cusack, an assistant professor at Lesley University and the co-leader of the Kennedy-Longfellow / Lesley University partnership. The Kennedy-Longfellow elementary school in Cambridge MA is benefiting from innovative grant work conducted by Sue and her team at Lesley. Through this program, they've been able to successfully embed technology into childhood education in a way that is meaningful and supports various student outcomes.

After some research around ScratchJr, an educational application created by our co-founder Marina Umaschi Bers, Sue came across KIBO. Each year, the work being done by Lesley University at Kennedy-Longfellow has different core focus, and this year was robotics - it was a perfect fit. Following some use of the prototype KIWI, the first KIBO kits officially arrived just in time for Hour Of Code events.

For the full story, please see our blog here.

Bits, bytes and (wooden) blocks

While many of you may already know my co-founder and KinderLab Robotics' chief-scientist Marina Umaschi Bers, I wanted to take a moment to formally introduce her.

Marina is a professor at the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Study and Human Development and the Computer Science at Tufts University. She heads the interdisciplinary DevTech research group at Tufts.

Our robot kit is created following more than 15 years of research led by Marina. Her research involves the design and study of innovative learning technologies that promote positive youth development.

If you'd like to see more of Marina's research, you could pick up one of her books: 'Blocks to Robots: Learning with Technology in the Early Childhood Classroom' or 'Designing Digital Experiences for Positive Youth Development: From Playpen to Playground'.

Or, you could ask her. If you have any questions on child development and how to integrate technology, fill out our 'Ask Marina' form here and she'll be in touch.

Where's KIBO?

Lately KIBO has been making the rounds in holiday guides and publications big and small, near and far.

Take a look:

Project Lead The Way's super STEM gifts of 2014
Quartz's complete guide to buying a robot for your kids
The Boston Business Journal's top 15 holiday gifts from MA-based startups
Creative Child's holiday gift guides – editions one, two and three
The Improper Bostonian's Imperatives section
Code.org's 'beyond one hour' list of educational coding resources
The buzz of the week from VentureFizz
Ed Tech Times' review of KIBO being used at Cambridge Elementary Students
A great robot roundup in the Boston Business Journal