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Computer Technology in Special Education and Rehabilitation

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BREAKING NEWS - Computer system helps students with attention problems

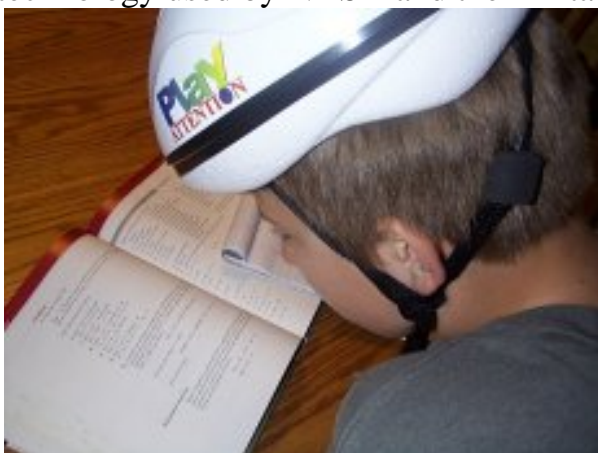
A new computer system that lets users control a computer with mind power alone is helping students with attention problems learn to focus and control restless behavior.



Play Attention is a patented educational system that prompts users to perform tasks on the computer simply by concentrating. The system uses a sophisticated helmet with brain wave sensors that measure the student's level of focus and cognitive processing. Students use the helmet to interact with a variety of fun and engaging educational exercises.

Schools using the system report that it helps students with attention problems increase concentration, time on task, visual tracking, short-term memory, and discriminatory processing. It also helps children modify disruptive and distracting behavior.

Play Attention is based on two decades of brain research from leading universities, including feedback technology used by NASA and the military for pilot training. This sophisticated instrumentation has been adapted to work on personal computers, using a helmet that processes brain output and translates it to the computer screen.



Unique Logic & Technology (ULT), the Asheville, NC-based company that created the system, calls the combination of feedback technology and educational software Edufeedback. The company's president, Peter Freer, says the system works because it lets learners directly observe their own brain's ability to focus.

"Edufeedback technology actually teaches the user how to focus and concentrate, both in and out of the classroom," said Freer, a veteran Master Teacher who has taught many students with attention problems. "These are all critical skills for success in school and in life."

While wearing the helmet, students practice paying attention by making video games respond to brain output, simply by focusing concentration on the screen. In one exercise, they blast asteroids out of space; in another, they build a tower by moving blocks with their mind. "The game format is popular with students," Freer said. "It keeps them engrossed while they practice reaching new levels of concentration."

While brain feedback has been in use for a number of years to help students with attention problems, the cost of the equipment and clinical protocol has kept it reserved for doctor's and specialist's offices. "Play Attention is the first system to put Edufeedback technology in the hands of educators, right in the school, where it can do the most good," Freer said.

"Feedback-based learning empowers individuals to deal with their personal challenges by learning how to use their own mental resources," Freer said. "This contributes to a sense of accomplishment, self-worth and success. The experience of educators at our model school, and at nearly two hundred sites nationwide, verifies the impact of this technology."

For more information, contact Unique Logic & Technology, 1 Botany Dr., Asheville, NC 28805; Phone/Fax 828-299-9836; E-mail uniquelogic@att.net; Web site <http://www.playattention.com/>

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