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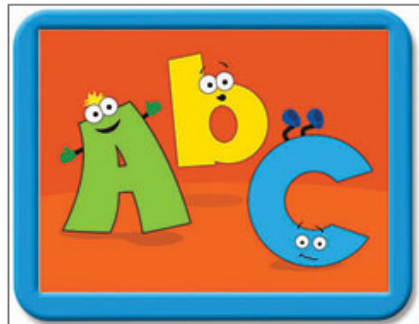
## Entertain baby on your computer

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**CyberSpeak**  
Jinny Gudmundsen



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'Giggles Computer Funtime for Baby - ABC's & 123's' encourages babies to touch or bang the keyboard.

### ■ 'ABC'S' AND 'ANIMAL FRIENDS'

Score: **5 out of 5 stars**

Best for ages: 6-24 months

Platform: Windows/Mac

Publisher: Leveractive

Win/Mac \$19.99 each

the keys, babies can make it rain cats and dogs, fill the screen with colored bunnies and play peekaboo with groundhogs.

In an activity called "My Trip to the Zoo," if you push down on a key, the screen will scroll around the zoo showing different animals. And if you click the mouse, you can help your baby take a picture with the camera-shaped cursor and then select to have the picture printed.

Both software titles are meant to provide parents or caretakers with a fun way to interact with babies using the computer. It's up to you to enhance the interactive experience by commenting on and pointing to things happening on the screen. The software provides the images, but you do the talking. You are also in control of what music plays in the background as babies see the different objects magically appear on the screen. Babies can listen to classical, jazz, traditional children's songs and even ragtime.

If your baby hasn't discovered the computer yet, don't feel pressure to buy this software. It was created by a computer professional whose son loved nothing more than to sit on his daddy's lap and bang at the keys of his computer. However, if your little one likes laptime at the computer, then these two titles will help make that time special for both of you.

Gudmundsen is the editor of *Computing With Kids* magazine ([www.ComputingWithKids.com](http://www.ComputingWithKids.com)). Contact her at [gnstech@gns.gannett.com](mailto:gnstech@gns.gannett.com).

If your baby is fascinated with your computer, *Giggles Computer Funtime for Baby — ABC's & 123's* and *Giggles Computer Funtime for Baby — My Animal Friends* are two good options for creating a safe, interactive environment for the little one. These keyboard-tapping software titles protect adult files from the baby and provide simple but stimulating environments in which to play.

*ABC's & 123's* and *My Animal Friends*, part of the *Giggles* series Leveractive introduced last year, encourage babies to touch or bang on the keyboard by making things happen on the screen when they do. You can also place your toddler's hand on the computer mouse and then cover it with your own to make things happen. Because the software responds to every touch on the keyboard or mouse, it creates a simple cause-and-effect learning situation.

With *Giggles Computer Funtime for Baby — ABC's & 123's*, you choose from 14 activities accompanied by 50 songs. The activities show young children, in amusing and animated ways, what numbers and letters look like.

While one of the activities simply shows a large colorful letter or number if the corresponding key is tapped on the keyboard, most activities are more whimsical. In one, Flopsy, the mascot dog of the series, giggles as he moves his body into the shape of numbers one through 10. Each time any key is tapped, he changes his shape.

In another activity, alphabets and numbers swoosh down a slide. Babies can also encourage animated versions of the letters A, B and C to dance by tapping any key. Also, the cursor can turn into tap shoes that dance whenever the mouse is clicked. All of these activities can be explored in both English and Spanish.

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*Giggles Computer Funtime for Baby — My Animal Friends* offers 14 activities full of cute animals doing silly things. In one, hitting any key brings up an animal friend, and the baby can hear the sound the animal makes. In another, fish wiggle, crabs scuttle and blowfish expand with a tap of the keys. By banging