

MEDIA CONTACT:
Kristina Junger
415-474-2989
kristina@kjunger.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Animated Programs' ToonTalk 2 Joins "Plugged In:" Helping to Bring Technology to All Children

With its innovative blend of computer programming and "kid-friendly" design, ToonTalk 2 is the perfect instructional tool for children who need a helping hand

SAN CARLOS, CA. – June 4, 2002—Animated Programs' ToonTalk 2, the award-winning guide to computer programming, is proud to announce its association with Plugged In Greenhouse, a unique after school program for children. Based in East Palo Alto, California, Plugged In is a community technology center whose "vision" is to ensure that everyone in the community, regardless of background or income level, has the opportunity to fully benefit from the information technology age.

ToonTalk 2 teaches the basics of programming, including constructing, debugging and running programs, in a joyful interactive world, which makes it the perfect candidate to ensure less techno-savvy kids catch up. "It is rewarding to see how much the kids at Plugged In: Greenhouse are enjoying ToonTalk 2 and how far they have come in just a handful of sessions," says Ken Kahn, President and Founder of Animated Programs. He adds, "It is particularly rewarding that given access to computers and software such as ToonTalk 2, you can see the so-called digital divide disappear."

ToonTalk 2 makes programming easy for children to understand by animating familiar objects such as birds, robots, trucks and bicycle pumps rather than presenting traditional textual exercises. Children have three ways of learning the basics. They can solve a series of interactive puzzle games in a creative and enjoyable environment that gradually teaches programming construction and techniques. They can also enter the "free play" zone, an open-ended, rich environment of exploration and discovery or view narrated demonstrations, which show how to build and debug programs.

ToonTalk 2 teaches critical thinking skills such as problem decomposition, component composition, abstraction, puzzle solving, experimentation and logic. It is fully Internet-enabled plus tightly integrated with the browser. Users can program their creations and then share them with friends and family.

“The kids in the Plugged In Greenhouse are quite familiar with the wide variety of technological products available to them. However, they do not often recognize their ability to turn their creative ideas into their own innovative productions,” says Angela Booker, of Plugged In. She adds, “Our goal is to help them realize this ability and put it into action. ToonTalk 2 provides a great opportunity for our kids, who range in age from 5 to 13 years old.”

The Plugged In center operates three programs: Plugged In Enterprises which trains teenagers in the latest web design technology; Plugged In Greenhouse, a creative arts and technology studio for children and Technology Access Center, the community production studio, copy center, cyber-library, self-paced learning studio, and telecom center. For information, visit the web site at www.pluggedin.org.

ToonTalk 2 is currently available for Windows at \$24.95 and can be ordered online at www.toontalk.com or by calling 800-317-9830. Versions are also available in Japanese, UK English, Swedish, European Portuguese and Brazilian Portuguese.

TOONTALK 2 FACTS AT A GLANCE

- Teaches children computer programming in a fun and supportive environment.
- Parents and students can learn computer programming basics.
- Educational skills include puzzle solving, logic problems and critical thinking.
- Three levels of play including narrated demonstrations.
- Easy-to-use and understand.
- Terrific price point at \$24.95.
- Children can create their own games and programs and share with friends.
- Internet enabled and browser integrated.

ABOUT ANIMATED PROGRAMS: Animated Programs was founded in 1992 and is based in San Carlos, California. Its mission is to make computer programming “child’s play.” The ToonTalk brand of products has been researched under consulting contracts for the University of London, the Swedish Institute of Computer Science and the Royal Institute of Technology in Sweden. Founder and President Ken Kahn is an MIT computer science Ph.D. and an expert in designing computer programming languages.

ABOUT PLUGGED IN: Plugged In, established in 1992, is a community technology center with a mission to ensure that everyone in East Palo Alto California has the opportunity to fully benefit from all that the information revolution has to offer. Plugged in operates three programs: Plugged In Enterprises which trains teenagers in the latest web design technology; Plugged In Greenhouse, a creative arts and technology studio for children; Technology Access Center is the community production studio, copy center, cyber-library, self-paced learning studio, and telecom center.