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Furby takes over children's toy lists

BY LINDSAY YOUNG
 Senior staff writer

Another year, another showing of Tickle Me Elmo-style shopper fanaticism.

Already this month, parents are practically knocking down store doors to buy 1998's most popular toy.

Furby, a furry doll that resembles Gizmo from the Gremlin movies, has taken Elmo's place upon the shelf.

But parents aren't giving the fur ball much time to settle down.

"Every time we get it, it sells out in the first 10 minutes we're open," said an associate at Toys R Us, 5220 N. 27th St.

Wade Wilkinson, Wal-Mart toy department manager, echoed those thoughts: "I get like 10 calls a day asking for them."

Furby's electronic features outshine those of the orange muppet some buyers paid hundreds for back in 1996.

He's around 5 or 6 inches tall, with buggy eyes that blink and a mouth that moves when he talks. His ears wiggle as well.

When he's petted, he purrs, and when he's tickled, he laughs.

The critter even has its own lan-

guage—Furbish. He learns English little by little.

The toy can be taught words and tricks. Then, when it is set down by another Furby, the two can teach each other what they know.

The two can even catch a cold from each other.

"He's hotter than Tickle Me Elmo," an assistant manager with Kaybee Toys, 6100 O St., said. He said the store gets between 15 and 20 calls a day for the toy.

Furby, made by Tiger Electronics, costs about \$30.

Other popular toys this season jumped onto store shelves from the TV.

Bounce Around Tigger, Barney's Musical Banjo and merchandise from the Nickelodeon television show "Blues Clues" are all selling fast.

Other popular toys are Magic Stroller Baby and the Magnadoodle School Bus.

Tonka has come out with three remote control trucks that have been selling well at Kaybee Toys.

And hand-held Monopoly, Candyland, Mr. Potato Head and twister games also are selling well.

Star Wars merchandise also is selling strong.

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