

Robots helping Chinese parents raise kids. Is that a good thing?

At kindergarten, three-year-old Seven Kong has his schoolmates to play with, but at home his best friend is a kidney-shaped, lime-coloured android named BeanQ.

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The green android responds with similarly simple words and phrases, alongside an array of different emoji facial expressions displayed on a large screen, which serves as its face.

Recommended to the family by a friend, the android is intended to be an early educator, sharing some of the parental burden.

“When we get really busy, BeanQ can be there keeping him entertained,” said Seven’s mother Liu Qian, 33, who is a work-at-home mom living in Beijing.

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Driven by a cluster of leading AI companies and using ad campaigns that target tech-savvy parents, early education products have taken a futuristic turn in China, where the popularity of such devices has boomed.

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Parents say the benefits of AI gadgets extend beyond the realm of education. BeanQ, for example, also features a “remote babysitting” mode, under which it can serve as a moveable nanny, automatically taking snaps of children and uploading them online for parents to see.

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But some experts have questioned the value of the AI education devices, dismissing them as little more than a “low-end smart phone” for overworked parents.

Others have raised darker concerns around privacy and child safety, worried that parents are putting unsecured visual and location data about the children online.

Read full, original post: [AI robots are transforming parenting in China](#)