



FIG 18-1 A push panel allows a child with cognitive impairment (CI) to turn a computer on and off.

Early intervention program is a systematic program of therapy, exercises, and activities designed to address developmental delays in disabled children to help achieve their full potentials (Bull and Committee on Genetics, 2011; National Down Syndrome Society, 2012a; Weijerman and de Winter, 2010). Considerable evidence indicates that these programs are valuable for cognitively impaired children. Nurses working with these families need to be aware of the types of programs in their community. Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990 (Public Law 101-476), states are encouraged to provide full early intervention services and are required to provide educational opportunities for all children with disabilities from birth to 21 years old. Services may be provided under state programs for Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN) or Head Start, or by private organizations such as National Down Syndrome Society,^{*} Easter Seals,⁺ or The Arc of the United States.[‡] Parents should inquire about these programs by contacting the appropriate agencies. The child's education should begin as soon as possible, because it has been shown that increased and early intervention exposure relates directly to greater improvements in cognitive development (Wallander, Biasini, Thorsten, et al, 2014). As children grow older, their education should be directed toward vocational training that