

PLAYFUL PROSTHETIC ARM



by Coby Unger

I met nine-year-old Aiden Robinson at a summer camp he attended called *Superhero Cyborgs*. This camp, run by *KIDmob*, is a place where kids with a variety of limb differences design their own prosthetic and orthotic devices. Each kid's design was impressive, but Aiden's playful ideas really resonated with me. To me, Aiden's ideas were a model for how prosthetic devices could and should be more appropriate, useful, and fun than those typically used for both children and adults.

The typical prosthetic arm has a robotic hand or a hook that does not adapt well to a variety of uses. Aiden was born without a left arm below the elbow and has had many different types of prosthetics, all leaving him feeling almost better off without them. Despite these hurdles, and like the resilient and creative kid he is, Aiden adapted extremely well to life with a limb difference and is more active than most kids his age. Because the prosthetic is a part of him, we both felt that he needed a device that accurately reflected his personality and interests.

Aiden and his mom had two main goals for this new device. Aiden wanted access to multiple task specific attachments on one device, like a Swiss army knife. Aiden had specific-enough interests to know exactly the tools he wanted on his arm, mostly consisting of things that helped him play favorite games or do everyday tasks. Aiden's mom, Jill, wanted something that would grow with him. Prosthetics are often expensive and custom fit. To be worth the cost, Aiden had to get long-term use and be more satisfied with the device overall. I took the ideas Aiden and his mom came up with and together we designed his new device.

The Everyday Adventures of Louie and Leggo



Louie and Leggo were on their way to school one day. They met a new boy who was just starting in their class. The boy noticed Leggo and asked Louie if Leggo liked going to school.



Louie said "Leggo really likes going to school. I like school because of my desk and my books and all the great stuff I learn."

Schmerling

"Leggo likes it because he gets to close his eyes and take a nice long nap."