Children Toy Recommendations

No childhood is complete without toys. Toys stimulate learning and creative thinking and help children learn about themselves, their environment and the people around them. However, toys can also be a source of danger and lead to tragic results – especially those poorly constructed toys or toys that are inappropriate for the intended child's level of development, etc. Careful considerations are needed when selecting toys for children.

0-2 years:

During this stage where growth is rapid during the first 24 months (especially the first 12 months); it is hard to decide on just 1 good toy! Cognitive understanding and the mastery levels of children of this age group differ month by month. Hence, I would recommend 1 toy for different age groups:

Birth to 5 months

My proposal is to select toys that could stimulate their senses with bright contrasting colours and patterns, and with pleasing and engaging sounds. The picture on the right is a play mat very ideal for infants just born up to about 5 months. It allows the baby to lie down comfortably and enjoy free movement, and when the baby can roll over onto his/her tummy, he/she can look up at the colourful visuals presented slightly above the baby's eye level. This creates an opportunity for baby to strengthen his/her neck muscle! The visuals are ideal as they could increase the baby’s concentration skills, stimulate the creation of synapses (brain cell connections), increase baby’s attention span, calm the baby (when he/she is bored) and enhance curiosity.

6 to 12 months:

During this stage, toys should be easy to hold, grab and pull with lots of stimulating activities and features. Infants at this stage enjoy toys that they can cuddle with as they are learning to express a range of feelings such as pleasure and happiness. They also enjoy stacking, sorting and put-in-take-out games. I would recommend the Yellow School Bus. It consists of items that represent both familiar objects and familiar people. It is easy to hold and manipulate, and can inspire exploration and imagination.

13 to 24 months:

Children at this stage are getting increasingly confident and competent. They are beginning to play pretend games. A play kitchen will be fantastic for them! It is great for them to practice life skills as they get into the roles of familiar characters.
2-3 years:

Children at this stage love to create, put things together and pull things apart.

Hence, these mega blocks are a hit among young children! I always recommend these blocks for young children of this age group. These durable blocks come in great colours and in chunky sizes – just great for little hands. There are no limits or restrictions about how to play with building blocks. These blocks offer unlimited options for young children to express their creativity and thoughts. Young children's imagination will grow through their natural desire to discover and create with these blocks.

4-5 years:

Children in this age group love to doodle! They enjoy drawing whatever images they hold in their mind, expressing their feelings and thoughts onto paper or board. This doodle board is great in promoting creativity and the freedom to express. As children doodle, they form their own stories and develop play-scripts based on their daily encounters and experiences.

6 years and above

At this age, children begin their formal education. Kids this age recognise words and make letter sounds, and are starting to express themselves through basic art. They enjoy scribbling and writing. Kids may also start to fixate on a specific interest – from princesses to pirates. Leverage this interest with related educational toys, activities and books.

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Over the years, Nancy has been actively involved in the field movement promoting the care and education of young children. She is an accredited QA Consultant of MCYS, a resource person for staff development and parenting workshops, and a qualified infant massage instructor.