

Buying Toys

for Children with Disabilities

Buying Toys

Elements to Look For in a Toy 

Multisensory Appeal

- Lights, sounds, and movement.
- Contrasting colors, scents, and textures.

Method of Activation

- Provides challenge without frustration.
- What is the force required to activate?
- Number and complexity of the steps required to activate.



Where Will the Toy be Used

- Can the toy be used in a variety of positions, such as side lying or on a wheelchair tray?
- Is there space in the home, and will it be easy to store?

Opportunities for Success

- Can play be open-ended with no definite right or wrong way?
- Is it adaptable to the child's individual style, ability, and pace?

Current Popularity

- Is it a toy most any child would like?
- Does it tie-in with other activities like T.V., movies, books, etc?

Self-Expression

- Does the toy allow for creativity, uniqueness, and choice making?
- Will it give the child experience with a variety of media?

Adjustability

- Does it have adjustable height, volume, speed, level of difficulty?

Child's Individual Characteristics

- Does the toy provide activities that reflect both developmental and chronological ages?

Safety & Durability

- Consider the child's strength in relation to the toy's durability.
- Are the toy and its parts sized appropriately?
- Does the toy have moisture resistance?
- Can it be washed and cleaned?

Potential for Interaction

- Will the child be an active participant during use?
- Will the toy encourage social engagement with others?

Source:
The National Lekotek Center
www.lekotek.org



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Safety Tips



General Toy Safety



- Stuffed toys should be washable.
- Fabric toys should be labeled flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Art materials should specify on packaging that they are nontoxic.
- Avoid toys with cords or long strings.
- Painted toys should be covered with lead-free paint.
- Avoid thin plastic toys that could break, creating sharp edges.
- Purchase a choke tube to test small parts for choking hazards.

Opened Toys



- Immediately dispose of plastic wrappings and small pieces of packaging before they become dangerous play things.
- Read instructions for proper use and set up.
- Keep toys appropriate for older children away from younger siblings.

Safety at Home



- Regularly check wooden toys for splinters and metal toys for rust.
- Properly store outdoor toys to protect from wear and damage caused by rain and snow.
- Repair or throw away any broken toys.
- Regularly clean toys with antibacterial cleaners.

Links of Interest



www.sportime.com

Leading supplier of physical education equipment.

www.ableplay.org

Free toy rating system and shopping guide based on type of disability.

www.lekotek.org

Information regarding toys and play for children with special needs.

www.specialneedstoys.com

TFH offers a wide range of special needs toys.

www.cpsc.gov

US Consumer Product Safety Commission



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