Parents' Choice Award Winning Toys, Games, Books, and Music that Bridge the Classroom to the Playroom

Who We Are
Established in 1978, Parents' Choice Foundation is the nation's oldest nonprofit guide to quality children's media and toys.

What We Do
• We search out and recommend products that help kids grow - imaginatively, physically, morally and mentally - fairly priced products that are fun, safe and socially sound.
• We advocate playful learning.
• We champion reading.

We Believe...
Each child is unique, intelligent, creative, and gifted.

We Believe...
Music, art, and creative play help children develop and learn.

We Believe...
That all children should practice kindness, generosity, and empathy.

We Believe...
Learning is fun, and we want kids to know that, too.

We Believe...
That STEM learning begins with stories and imagination.

We Believe...
In teaching children how to learn, not just what to learn.
Parents' Choice Awards

The Parents' Choice Awards® is the nation's oldest program created to recognize quality children's media and toys: books, toys, music and storytelling, magazines, software, videogames, television, websites and mobile apps.

• The Parents' Choice Awards® judges are experts in their industry and interests, from dinosaurs to digital media and from mathematics to making mayhem.
• The Parents' Choice Awards committee members hail from families across the country.
• Our product evaluation process is lengthy and comprehensive.
• It's a multi-tiered process with its roots in a four-page questionnaire that queries the product's developmentally appropriate content and challenges, the product's design and function, the educational value, long-term play value, and the benefits to a child's social and emotional growth and well-being.

Parents' Choice Awards® Testing Process

Poll Q.1
Poll Q.2

Poll Q.3

Toys
The Play Gym
Ages: Infant - 2 yrs.
Manufacturer: Lovevery
Price: $140.00

Rarely do we cite packaging claims, but The Play Gym is indeed, "a whole year of play in one box." Made with sustainable wood and organic materials, not only is it safe for infants, the color scheme is appealing to all. The five development zones, each thoughtfully designed and executed, offer, encourage, and promote different sensory systems.

Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.

dimpl
Ages: 10 Months & Up
Manufacturer: Fat Brain
Price: $12.95

This cleverly designed toy of silicone bubbles built into a sturdy plastic frame is as gratifying in the bathtub as it is in a high chair or car-seat. Made of 100% food-grade silicone, this easy-to-clean, no parts-to-lose, take anywhere toy is irresistible, captivating, and fun.

Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.

LALABOOM 5 in 1 Beads
Ages: 10 Months & Up
Manufacturer: Fat Brain
Price: $19.99

The colorful and "can't wait to touch" 50-piece LALABOOM bead set provides an open-ended supply of play and developmental opportunities — encouraging exploration, creativity and delightful adult-child co-play.

Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.
My Buddy & Me SUV
Ages: 1.5 - 5 yrs.
Manufacturer: Simplay3
Price: $99.99
This easy to assemble durable plastic “grow-with-me” SUV styled riding toy features space for two children, a large handle for parents, rotating wheels for easy turns, and the option to transform from a toddler push car to a manual flat-on-ground car for preschool kids.
Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.

Stacking Garden Friends
Ages: 18 Months & Up
Manufacturer: Tender Leaf Toys
Price: $24.99
An ecofriendly toy in materials and concept, young stewards of the environment took turns carefully placing the 14 wooden plant, garden equipment and animal shapes on the stacking tree. They quickly learned about balance, testing which shapes worked where.
Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.

Farm to Table
Ages: 3 - 8 yrs.
Manufacturer: KidKraft
Price: $199.99
The modern and sleek design of this play kitchen features clever details such as, window planter boxes growing “choppable” carrots and onions held together with Velcro®, a stove top that lights up and makes simmering noises, a refrigerator with an ice cube maker that dispenses pretend cubes (included), a farmhouse sink, a chalkboard to create a menu, and more.
Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.
Our Generation Awesome Academy
Ages: 3 & Up
Manufacturer: Maison Battat Inc
Price: $129.99
This 76-piece school room playset is designed to fit 18" dolls. With real life working accessories like a clock, a fire alarm, classroom lights and a recess bell, a chalkboard with chalk and a glow-in-the-dark whiteboard, the curriculum focuses on pretend play.
Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.

Pop-Oh-Ver Stove and Counter Top Sets
Ages: 3 & Up
Manufacturer: Kangaroo Manufacturing
Price: $39.99
With these ingenious slipcovers, any straight back chair can become a pretend stove or a countertop. The innovative configuration and modern design serve up pretend play from role playing to construction.
Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.

Folkmanis® Puppets
Ages: 3 & Up
Manufacturer: Folkmanis, Inc.
Price: Starting at $27.99
With styles ranging from the representation of a frog's life cycle, to the common opossum, to the mythical dragon and narwhal, and much, much more, Folkmanis puppets encourage storytelling, role playing, and pretend play.
Click here for the full Parents' Choice reviews.
My Family Builders™ Toy Set
Ages: 3 & Up
Manufacturer: My Family Builders
Price: $69.95

Teaching young children to respect diversity and differences is important. Learning that through play is invaluable. The 48-piece set of mix-and-match wooden magnetic play pieces designed as heads, bodies and legs lets kids (and adults) create families that look like the families they know and see.

Click here for the full Parents’ Choice review.

Thames & Kosmos Kids First Kits
Ages: Starting at 3 & Up
Manufacturer: Thames & Kosmos
Price: Starting at $49.95

This line of entry level science kits for kids are a great hands on introduction to concepts and topics covered in more advanced kits. With easy to follow, comprehensive instruction booklets, engaging experiments, and subjects including coding, engineering, and chemistry, there’s a kit to fit any science minded kid.

Click here for the full Parents’ Choice review.

Rigamajig Junior Kit
Ages: 3 & Up
Manufacturer: Heroes Will Rise
Price: $35.00

The lightweight wooden pieces of this 157-piece heirloom quality building set are sturdy yet easily manipulated by small hands. The interesting variety of shapes, sizes, and materials allow for countless hours of building. An investment in Rigamajig is an investment in learning. The creativity, problem solving, sustained attention, collaboration and cooperation skills built by this set, deliver a big ROI from play. Click here for the full Parents’ Choice review.
Games

Where’s Bear?
Ages: 2 & Up
Manufacturer: Peaceable Kingdom
Price: $17.99

This game playfully teaches color, taking turns, listening, following directions, sorting, classifying, vocabulary development and social interaction. The Parent Guide adds more ways to play, learn, connect and explore— together.
Click here for the full Parents’ Choice review.

Panda Rollers™ Game
Ages: 3 - 5 yrs.
Manufacturer: Educational Insights
Price: $19.99

With its clever premise, appealing box, and call of the wild (preschoolers think it’s just), this quick to learn game fully engages players as they seamlessly practice identifying and recognizing colors, matching patterns, taking turns, and sharpening fine-motor and visual discrimination skills.
Click here for the full Parents’ Choice review.
Tiny Polka Dot
Ages: 3 & Up
Manufacturer: Math for Love
Price: $14.99

Let's show math a little love. Tiny Polka Dot is a card deck set of 16 games to teach counting, arithmetic, and logic. As examples, children ages 3+ play Hungry Numbers, a game in which players "feed" a numeral card to its corresponding dot card. Players ages 5+ can Dot Fives, when taking turns to match a pair of cards that add up to 5.

Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.

Tell-A-Tale (Barnyard Edition)
Ages: 3 & Up
Manufacturer: Getta1Games
Price: $16.99

Game play in this cooperative storytelling game is delightful: the roll of the dice prompts the story and the placement of the corresponding game pieces add dimension and context. The player who rolls first is the one who starts and finishes the story. Or not. There rules are few, the hours of playful learning are many.

Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.

Pass The Pup
Ages: 3 & Up
Manufacturer: PlayMonster
Price: $17.99

As the name implies, this game is a cute and cuddly take on the classic "Hot Potato" game – with a four-legged twist. The player holding the pup when the music stops must draw one of the 14 dog-themed action cards and act it out – all while learning turn taking, vocabulary and listening skills in the process.

Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.
Five Little Fish
Ages: 3 & Up
Manufacturer: Ravensburger
Price: $19.99
Our young testers were immediately hooked on this colorful fishing game. From 2-5 players use their turn-taking, memory, matching and fine motor skills to find, catch and/or release the colorful plastic fish with retractable tails.
Click here for the full Parents’ Choice review.

Chugga Choo
Ages: 2 & Up
Manufacturer: MindWare
Price: $17.95
Chugga Choo is a color matching game that meets puzzle/problem solving in the train yard. The object of the game is to assemble four train puzzles with an engine, three filled boxcars and a caboose—all of matching colors.
Click here for the full Parents’ Choice review.

Puzzles
I Am LiL’ Sloth
Ages: 5 & Up
Manufacturer: Madd Capp Games
Price: $17.99
Sloths are having “a moment” right now and this suitable for hanging 100 piece poster size puzzle is a fun and thought-provoking way to get little ones in on the trend. An included booklet contains facts about sloths and their habitat.
Click here for the full Parents’ Choice review.

Music

Home is Family
Ages: Infant - 8 yrs.
Artist: Ginalina
Producer: Ginalina Music
CD Price: $9.99
A voice of singular loveliness and one sweet, sunny song after another (with family as her celebratory theme) make this new album by Canadian folksinger/songwriter/guitarist Gina Lam - known professionally as Ginalina - an occasion to savor.
Click here for the full Parents’ Choice review.
Big Backyard
Ages: All Ages
Artist: Michelle Bloom & Co.
Producer: Sweet Lime Records
CD Price: $14.00

This debut album from California-based singer/songwriter Michelle Bloom, is a windswept, semi-nostalgic look back to her own childhood, and her children's. The music reminds this listener of the heydays of '70s acoustic and electric folk.

Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.

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High Five
Ages: 1 - 8 yrs.
Artist: Laura Doherty
Producer: Laura Doherty Music
CD Price: $15.00

Laura Doherty's signature folk-pop stylings and her gift for making young listeners feel that she is singing directly to and for them infuse this new album with cozy fun and notable, kid-respecting warmth.

Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.

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Blue Skies and Sunny Days
Ages: 4 & Up
Artist: Frances England
Producer: Frances England
CD Price: $15.00

The “blue sky, sunny day” theme of England’s new release offers listeners of all ages (adults, too) a heart-happy uplift through observations of those days in childhood when everything goes right, when a parent and child “play hooky,” taking together time, and more.

Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.
Curated Parents' Choice Spotify Playlists:

Parents' Choice Audio Awards 2018 Summer "Play"list

2018 Fall Parents' Choice Audio Awards Playlist

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Books

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Hooray for Birds!

Ages: 2-5 yrs.

Author: Lucy Cousins

Publisher: Candlewick Press

Hardcover Price: $15.99

Author/Illustrator Lucy Cousins offer a 24 hour challenge be a bird, for just one day.

"Flap your wings and you can fly, higher and higher, up in the sky." "Scratch the ground with your feet. Catch a fly with your beak."

With calls and poses and waddles and song, every page is inviting, vibrant and filled with joy.

Click [here](#) for the full Parents’ Choice review.
I Just Want to Say Goodnight
Ages: 2 - 5 yrs.
Author: Rachel Isadora
Publisher: Penguin Putnam for Young Readers
Hardcover Price: $16.99

Via Isadora's pink and yellow palette, the lovely, evocative, loosely framed, double-page oil paintings capture the essence of the African landscape around sunset; the depictions of our young heroine aptly express her personality. Lovely and gently humorous.

Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.

Also An Octopus
Ages: 3 - 7 yrs.
Author: Maggie Tokuda-Hall
Illustrator: Benji Davies
Publisher: Candlewick Press
Hardcover Price: $16.99

First-time children's author Maggie Tokuda-Hall and veteran illustrator Benji Davies have teamed up to create this highly original, gentle charmer, a picture book for young children doubling as a guide to the art of storytelling.

Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.

In the Past: From Trilobites to Dinosaurs to Mammoths in More Than 500 Million Years
Ages: 3 - 7 yrs.
Author: David Elliott
Illustrator: Matthew Trueman
Publisher: Simon & Schuster
Hardcover Price: $17.99

Beginning with Trilobites from the Cambrian Period and ending with the Quaternary Period, a combination of informed, witty, and sometimes soulful poems and eye-popping, mixed media close-up views offer a keep for young paleontology enthusiasts.

Click here for the full Parents' Choice review.
Rube Goldberg's Simple Normal Humdrum
School Day
Ages: 5 - 7 yrs.
Author: Jennifer George, Illustrator: Ed Steckley
Publisher: Abrams Books for Young Readers
Hardcover Price: $17.95

Designed to make young readers laugh, each two-page spread reveals a precarious machine that clearly took Rube considerably more work to design than it would have taken him to simply get dressed and walk out the door.

Click here for the full Parents’ Choice review.

Her Right Foot
Ages: All Ages
Author: Dave Eggers, Illustrator: Shawn Harris
Publisher: Chronicle Books
Hardcover Price: $19.99

The foot in the title belongs to the Statue of Liberty, and the symbolism of that right foot, revealed at the end of this humorous, subtly thought-provoking, and visually striking picture book may well elicit a lump in the throat.

Click here for the full Parents’ Choice review.

Thank you for your time!
Claire S. Green
President | Parents’ Choice Foundation
claire@parents-choice.org

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