

# Parents Urged to Select Toys Wisely

Toys are very important to your child, for they are the key to his learning. A child grows and develops through play.

Mrs. Carol Rothermel, assistant Chester County Extension home economist, points out that toy buying is really a big opportunity to provide the child with lasting benefits, as well as immediate pleasure.

Any parent would benefit from a trip to a toy department to carefully examine what's being offered.

Unfortunately, says Mrs. Rothermel, many well meaning parents will spend large sums of

money this Christmas on toys that are unsafe and have no lasting interest to the child. Toys should challenge, not frustrate, be safe, and have a variety of uses to which they can be put.

Ask yourself if a child can do something with the toy you're buying. Will the toy stimulate his activity? Clay, crayons, and finger paints will stimulate a child's imagination. The lasting popularity of dolls and blocks is also based on their creative possibilities.

Toys that wind up and perform by themselves are almost useless

when the winding mechanism ceases to work.

Take time to think of safety when you select Christmas toys. Carefully inspect toys for rough or splintering edges, sharp points and other hazards. A child may not use the toy as the designer intends. So look for failsafe properties.

Find out if a toy will be sturdy. Some plastic toys are very brittle or fragile. A child can break off a part of the toy, exposing a sharp edge, and place the piece into his mouth or ear.

Try to steer away from toys with small removable parts that a child could swallow. Some dolls and stuffed animals have eyes, bows, and hair that can be pulled off revealing a sharp spike.

Miniature appliances and power tools aren't made to last or endure the hard use a child will give them. Adults know how careful they must be with real-life appliances and tools. Even these break or don't function properly. A child just isn't that careful and you shouldn't expect him to be.

Avoid toys that use exposed flame or are made of combustible materials. Chemistry sets, rocket kits and similar toys should be bought only for children old enough to handle them wisely.

Another group of toys is very complicated and operates on batteries. You have to use extreme care so that the toy doesn't get bent or the tiny wires disturbed. A child may very well end up being so careful with his toy that he won't enjoy it.

Many worthwhile and safe toys are available. And many of them will last for years. But you must take buying seriously and sift through the toys on the market, Mrs. Rothermel advises.



## Ladies, Have You Heard?



By Doris Thomas, Extension Home Economist

**How to Fight the TV Toy Sell**  
Each year at this time, children receive a not-so-subtle brainwashing from toymakers advertising on television. Children are likely to be watching lavish advertisements that whet their pre-Christmas appetite for dolls, race sets and other expensive toys.

The advertisers know what they're doing. They have studied children and know the best way to create desire in a youngster.

For instance, you'll notice that a few toys are advertised repeatedly, making the child feel he just can't get along without them.

If your child clamors for expensive toys he's seen on television, meet the problem head-on. Listen to what he wants. Then check on the toy yourself, either in a catalog or a store. Evaluate each toy according to its safety, cost and suitability for your child.

If a toy doesn't meet any one of these requirements, then it's best to sit down with your child and explain why he shouldn't expect that particular item to be under the tree Christmas morning. Although this may be difficult, it's better than allowing him to eagerly anticipate something he won't get.

You'll find it easy to steer some children towards a gift you

already have on your list. Offer an older child the alternative of saving his money to buy the toy. This tactic can help to teach him the value of money, too.

**How to Make Sand Candles**  
Extension home management specialists at Penn State say that sand candles are easy to make and are appropriate Christmas gifts and decorations. They offer these directions on making sand candles.

You'll need candle wax, candle coloring which can be old crayons, old candle ends, or special candle colors you'll find in hobby and craftshops, sand or fish tank gravel and wicks appropriate for the size candles you're making.

For large sand candles you can use more than one wick by braiding several wicks together. Or you can place several individual wicks in the larger candles so you have several small lights burning at one time.

Wired wicks will stand up while you're pouring the candle wax.

Place sand or gravel in a bucket or box and dampen it well. Dig out or press a design of your choosing and pour the wax into the hole.

A favorite bowl or similar object will make a mold when pushed into the sand.

Remove the object and firm the sides of the sand with your hands and fix the wick in place.

Cut wick at least one inch longer than depth of the candle.

Bury one end in the sand or tie a small weight to the end of the wick and tie the top of the wick to stick or pencil and lay across top of sand mold.

Pour in melted wax—heated between 175 and 225 degrees in a double boiler and use caution to avoid harmful burns. Remember that the hotter the wax the more it will seep into the sand and create a thicker coating.

Allow to set until firm then dig out and remove any excess sand or dip outside of candle into hot wax to coat the sand and make it part of your decoration.

You can achieve extra effects by mixing 3 parts sand with one part melted wax and sculpturing this mixture around the molded candle.

## 199 Progressive Parties Are Held

Fulton Grange sponsored progressive parties to benefit the Southern Lancaster County Family Health Center have netted \$3,047.08 to date with 199 parties being held.

The following have held parties recently: Mr and Mrs Charles Witmer, Mr and Mrs Walter Minnich Jr, Mr and Mrs Glenn H. Shenk and Mr and Mrs Hoover Roland.

Those who have not held their parties are being asked to do so, as more financial aid is still needed for the center.

The Southern Lancaster County Family Health Center in Quarryville has been in service eight weeks and open house was held November 21, attended by about 500 area residents.

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