



Kids' Christmas

Terrific toys & stocking fillers

As a parent of a toddler and regular visitor of children's centres, I must have been handling hundreds of toys.

A good buy is a toy that engages your child for a long time - I'm talking in term of months rather than minutes as some toys only last until their novelty wears off -

is good quality for money and has a fun, educational element to it.

So armed with my experience and countless chats with other mums, I've made a selection for all ages. All toys featured (except the finger puppets on page 8) are on sale at www.nctshop.co.uk, whose profits go to the NCT.



FROM BIRTH ONWARDS

PRESENT Sneezy (£20.55)* has a squeak in his nose and crinkle ears/wings. One hand rattles, the other squeaks, a mirror hides in a pocket, a flower pops out of another, a bell rings in his tail!

STOCKING FILLER Whoozit (£7.82) crinkles, rattles, squeaks and has a mirror hidden under its nose. Attach it to a cot, highchair, pushchair...



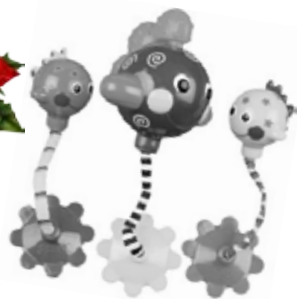
FROM THREE MONTHS ONWARDS



PRESENT Double-sided activity centre (£23.49) One side has 6 different activities, a mirror that shows the under patterns of the spinner, a squeak, knocker, twirl and happy face that lights and plays music. The other side has buttons to press that cause the flower to spin, the frog to pop up, plus levers make noises and four musical instrument buttons that play Bach. Attach to the cot or play on the floor. *Age: 3-24 months.*

unwrapped

from the NCT Shop...



STOCKING FILLER Bobbing sprites (£6.80) Make music in the bath with this trio of floating musical fish. Squeeze/pat to make squeak, maraca and wood block sounds.

FROM NINE MONTHS ONWARDS

PRESENT Wooden baby walker (£28.87) Stable walker in brightly coloured wood with rubber rimmed wheels, complete with 24 shaped and coloured blocks.

Age: from nine months

STOCKING FILLER Sidney School Bus (£10.77) Award-winning friction-powered shape sorting bus, complete with six shapes and driver. *Age: from 12 months*



FROM 18 MONTHS ONWARDS

PRESENT FOR GIRL Katie's Camper Holiday Friends (£21.53) Sturdy, friction-powered toy full of features inside. Everything packs away neatly for easy storage. *Age: from 18 months*

PRESENT FOR BOY Flip 'n' Tip Fred (£27.40) Tough and strong recycling truck promoting 'green' thinking. Friction powered with tipping loader and other amazing features. *Age: from 18 months*





STOCKING FILLER Stack 'n' pull Dinosaur (£10.76)
Quality wooden toy. Age: from 18 months+ to 2 years

FROM TWO YEARS ONWARDS

PRESENT Noah's Ark (£24.46) Includes Mr & Mrs Noah with six pairs of animals and

one pair of doves. Animals and figures can be stored inside the ark. The top half of ark attaches to the base with magnets. Not to be used in water.



STOCKING FILLER Crocodile name jigsaw (£8.80) Teach your child to spell their name! Letters can only be put together in the correct order.



FROM THREE YEARS ONWARDS

PRESENT The Oldfield Farm (£39.14) The wooden play base includes barn with loft and ladder, animal shed, farmhouse, pig sty and fences. The roof panels attach with magnets. **Farm Animals (£11.99)** are sold separately and include pairs of cows, pigs, lambs, chickens and ducks.



STOCKING FILLER Finger puppets kit (£3.50) Makes six foam finger puppets for your own monster show. Kit on sale at the Early Learning Centre.



Wishing you a safe Xmas

Every year over 35,000 children under 15 go to hospital after an accident involving a toy. The majority of these accidents happens to toddlers between one and three years old. The safety charity Child Accident Prevention Trust advises parents to check the age range of a toy on its packaging before giving it to a child.

When you see a toy or product with the **Kite Mark** this means that the British Standards Institution has independently tested it and has confirmed that it conforms to the relevant British Standard. Manufacturers are not legally required to display this mark.

The **CE Mark** is required by law to appear on all toys placed on the market in the European Union on and after January 1990 to show that it passes all European standards. Anything that looks like a toy but does not have a CE mark should not be given to a child.

The **Lion Mark** was developed in 1988 by the British Toy & Hobby Association as a symbol of toy safety and quality for the consumer. The BTHA members supply around 95% of all toys sold in the UK. For a toy to display the Lion Mark, the supplier has signed a strict Code of Practice, which, as well as covering safety matters, demands the highest standards of ethics in advertising.

Visit www.capt.org.uk for information on other hazards, including burns and scalds, electrical safety, falls, fire safety, poisons and road safety.

Feature: Simone Castello
*All prices may vary closer to Christmas