

Play expert warns parents to ignore top 10 Christmas toy lists

Submitted by: Seriously PR

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A new website, [goodtoyguide.com](http://www.goodtoyguide.com) is set to help parents manage pester power at Christmas and focus on what's really important. So many parents feel the pressure to provide it all at Christmas and many fall into the trap of spending lots of money on expensive toys and trying to over stimulate their children

This is not helped by the endless lists of top ten Christmas toys that are produced at this time of year, TV ad campaigns and of course, peer pressure. As a result, leading child psychologist and founder of the Good Toy Guide (<http://www.goodtoyguide.com>), Dr Amanda Gummer, believes that parents should focus on simple pleasures combined with toys that will entertain past Christmas Day.

"Don't give in to pressure to buy the most expensive, latest toys on the market. Often toys that children will play with over and over again don't make it into the top ten lists" says Amanda.

Amanda and her team set up the Good Toy Guide to provide a free, easy to use resource for parents and relatives buying presents for children. By rigorously testing all toys featured on the website in play clubs and explaining what children get from playing with the toys, parents are able to choose more wisely and avoid the costly mistakes that end up at being 5-minute wonders.

On average parents spent £136 on their children's Christmas presents alone. Amanda encourages parents not feel pressured into over-spending but to concentrate on sharing quality time with their children.

There is a big danger of parents trying to over stimulate their children at Christmas. Whilst Amanda strongly believes that Christmas is about time together before toys, with all good intentions parents want to make the most of the quality family time together but overload their children with outings and activities, whereas children are craving a little downtime just as much as mum and dad.

Starting simple Christmas traditions and rituals that they will remember for years to come will be treasured more. For example, reading a Christmas book, snuggling with the kids in front of movies you watched when you were young, walks along the high streets at night to see the lights are just some suggestions from Amanda of ways to create memories that don't break the bank.

Amanda's advice to parents on buying presents is simple:

- Do your research and make sure that the toys you do buy are going to keep the kids entertained past Boxing Day.
- Don't base your judgment of what to buy your children on the latest list of top sellers – these lists don't tell you whether a toy is any good, they just tell you what is selling.
- If you buy the latest licensed product or screen based or digital toy, be prepared for your children to spend the rest of Christmas day glued to it, but that doesn't mean it's always a bad idea. Many high tech toys are developmentally beneficial and licensed toys are becoming increasingly sophisticated.
- A careful selection of other toys and games can help balance out any single toy and provide the child

with a range of play choices that will suit different situations and promote different skills.

- Active toys have been shown to increase the amount of time children spend playing actively and creative play helps build confidence and self-expression. Concentration and perseverance are important skills and many quieter toys, e.g. puzzles and construction projects help children develop these.

The idea of a play diet features in Amanda's work and it's a theme that runs through her website www.goodtoyguide.com where people can get advice on how different toys can help children develop different skills and should help ease some of those Christmas shopping quandaries and stop parents over spending.

Read more about Amanda's thoughts on Christmas top 10 lists in 'The Anti-List' on the Good Toy Guide website <http://www.goodtoyguide.com/2012/09/17/the-anti-list-top-christmas-toys/>

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Notes to Editors.

For more information, images or quotes please contact Dr Amanda Gummer or any of the team - admin@goodtoyguide.com or 01438 831204

About Good Toy Guide

Website- www.goodtoyguide.com

Twitter - [@goodtoyguide](https://twitter.com/goodtoyguide)

Facebook – www.facebook.com/goodtoyguide

About Amanda Gummer

Dr. Amanda Gummer is a leading authority on child development, play and parenting and holds PhD in psychology and a Post Graduate Certificate in Higher Education. With nearly twenty years of experience working with families and children, and two young daughters of her own, Amanda has a detailed understanding in this area. Amanda's experience also includes running a family support charity in London and teaching children with special needs as well as working as an Associate Lecturer in Child Development for the Open University.

As well as being a member of the British Psychological Society, the Play Research Network, the International Toy Research Association, Play England and the National Toy Council, Amanda has also been involved with parliamentary policy on children's issues and contributed to the Childhood Enquiry, established by David Willets MP and the Bailey Review.

Amanda established FUNdamentals in 2004, a research-based consultancy helping providers of children's products and services to understand more about