Today’s piece was prepared by Felipe Murguia, MD, based on an ABC News article [Holiday shopping: The best toys for kids make use of their imaginations, not a screen (The AAP recently recommended a more hands-on approach to playtime for kids.)](https://abcnews.go.com/Health/holiday-shopping-best-toys-kids-make-imaginations-screen/story?id=59496592)

The article discusses an AAP report published at the start of the 2018 holiday season that addresses the “best” toys currently available for kids. According to the AAP, despite the ever-evolving state of technology and electronic toys, the best toys for kids are the “old school” ones.

The toy market is becoming increasingly saturated with gadgets with interactive screens and sounds. The article warns that though these toys may be labeled as “educational”, they may in fact be detrimental to the developing mind. These toys isolate their users with potentially overstimulating visual effects and sounds and take away from time that may otherwise be spent engaging in play that is based on human interaction. The author notes that the best toys are the ones that promote imaginative, creative, and social play, such as blocks, puzzles, and balls. In fact, the article even suggests a cardboard box as an opportunity for creative play.

This article nicely combats the misleading advertisements flooding the media that label high-tech toys as potentially “more educational” than traditional ones. In so doing, it praises toys that have in fact been shown to promote physical activity, the development of problem solving, social, gross motor and fine motor skills. It also warns against toys with screens, which recent studies have shown may actually be harmful to the developing mind. Besides missing out on opportunities for engaging play, we now know that more screen time for pediatric patients may be associated with an increase in risk for ADHD. Overall, this article nicely brings together several popular issues in developmental pediatrics.

**RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES ON TOYS:**

* [Toy-buying tips](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/baby/Pages/What-to-Look-for-in-a-Toy.aspx) *AAP guide for parents, with reference specifically to a guide from the AAP’s recent publication by the Council on Early Childhood, “Selecting Appropriate Toys for Young Children in the Digital Era”*

And that’s today’s Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics: IN THE NEWS!