



## For Immediate Release

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### **The League School of Greater Boston Offers Holiday Gift Ideas for Students with Special Needs *Experts Offer Ideas to Address Specific Skills Development***

(Walpole, MA – December 7, 2009) – As the holidays approach, the Occupational Therapy and Speech-Language Departments at the League School of Greater Boston have compiled this list of suggested toys and games to provide gift-giving guidance to parents seeking the best possible gifts for their children with autism, Asperger's syndrome, and other developmental disabilities.

“We’ve grouped the gifts into two categories that concentrate on the main skill sets children with disabilities usually need the most help with: promoting independent play and promoting cooperative, such as group or social play,” said Melissa Fitzpatrick, a licensed occupational therapist at the school. “Within each category, parents can find toys that address a variety of motor, sensory, and language areas across a broad range of abilities. We encourage parents to use their knowledge of their child’s specific strengths and challenges when exploring their gift-giving options.”

#### **Promoting Independent Play**

##### ***Sensory Exploration***

Crayola Model Magic Fusion™  
Fascinating Pin Art (Toysmith®)  
Insta-snow®  
Koosh balls  
Moon Sand  
Non-Stop Top (Can You Imagine)  
Uncle Milton's Moon in My Room  
Twilight Ladybug

##### ***Fine Motor Skills & Finger Strength***

Crayonball™ Crayons  
Cube Burst (Magnif)  
K'nex  
Legos  
Hello Kitty® Fortune Cookie Maker  
Lite Bright (Hasbro®)  
Pop Bead People (Klutz®)

\*\*\*\*\*MORE\*\*\*\*\*

Model airplanes or cars  
Spyro Gyro Pen (Hog Wild)  
Write & Learn Desk (VTech)

***Visual Perceptual Skills (including handwriting and cutting skills)***

Etch-a-Sketch® (Ohio Art)  
Highlights® Hidden Picture Books  
I Spy books and games  
Spore for Wii and Nintendo DS®  
Magna Doodle (Ohio Art)  
Perfection (Milton Bradley®)

***Motor planning (including timing and sequencing body movements)***

Bop It (Hasbro®)  
Bulls-eye Baseball (Hasbro)  
Fun Slides Carpet Skates (Simtec)  
Screwball Scramble (Tomy®)  
Dance Maker 2 Dance Machine  
Little Big Planet for PSP or PS3  
Power Chutes (Rokenbok®)  
Rhythm Heaven for Nintendo DS  
Marble Run with Motorized Elevator (Quercetti®)  
Speed Stacks Competition Cups Stack Pack (<http://www.speedstacks.com/>)

***Language Development***

Cranium WonderWorks Talking Picture Book (Hasbro)  
Dora Links Doll (Fisher Price®)  
LeapFrog Tag Reading System & Jr. Book Pal (LeapFrog®)  
Write & Learn Desk (VTech)

***Organization***

Learning Resources® Time Tracker Timer and Clock  
Melissa & Doug® Magnetic Responsibility Chart

**Promoting Cooperative Play**

***Sensory Exploration***

What's In Ned's Head? (Fundex®)  
Geration (Beyond Play®)  
Cranium Cadoo  
Texture Dominoes (Beyond Play)  
Sock'em Boppers Set or Sock'em Bop Buddy (Big Time Toys)

***Fine Motor Skills & Finger Strength***

Gassy Gus game (Fundex®)  
Mancala  
Operation (Hasbro)  
Dino Xcavator (Uncle Milton)  
Kerplunk (Mattel®)

***Visual Perceptual Skills (including handwriting and cutting skills)***

Perfection (Milton Bradley)  
Cranium Matching Madness  
Cranium Balloon Lagoon  
Splatster (Fisher Price)  
Pictionary Junior (Hasbro)  
Aftershock! (Learning Express®)  
Battleship (Hasbro)

***Motor planning (including timing and sequencing body movements)***

Barrel of Monkeys  
Bop It (Hasbro)  
Cranium Hullabaloo  
Electronic Hot Potato Game Elmo's Hot Tomato Game  
Qwirkle (Mindware®)  
Cosmic Catch (Hasbro)  
Wii Fit (Nintendo)  
Gnip Gnop (Fundex)  
Jenga (Hasbro)

***Language Development***

Apple to Apples (Mattel)  
Bananagrams (Banagrams)  
Cranium Cadoo (Hasbro)  
Cranium Hullabaloo (Hasbro)  
Cranium Whoonu (Hasbro)  
Elmo's Hot Tomato Game  
Guesstures (Hasbro)  
Imagine If (Buffalo Games)  
I Spy Seeing Doubles (Briarpatch)  
Last Word (Buffalo Games)  
Scattergories (Hasbro)  
VisualEyes (Buffalo Games)  
Zingo! (Think Fun)

For more ideas, the League School staff recommends checking out [toysrus.com](http://toysrus.com), which includes suggestions for differently abled kids. [Ableplay.org](http://Ableplay.org) is another Web resource that allows parents to search for and read reviews of toys based on disability, age, and category. The staff at the League School hopes that you can use these suggestions to provide your child with gifts that are both appropriate and enjoyable this holiday season.

### **About the League School of Greater Boston**

For more than 40 years, the League School of Greater Boston has been a leading educator of children and young adults with autism spectrum disorder. Its approach is built on innovation as well as established programs that have proven to help students reach their greatest potential. The school's year-round, private educational program serves students from ages 3 to 22, and offers a full range of social, academic, behavioral and community-life-skills curricula to meet the individual strengths and needs of our diverse population. For more information about the League School of Greater Boston, visit its Website at [www.leagueschool.com](http://www.leagueschool.com).

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