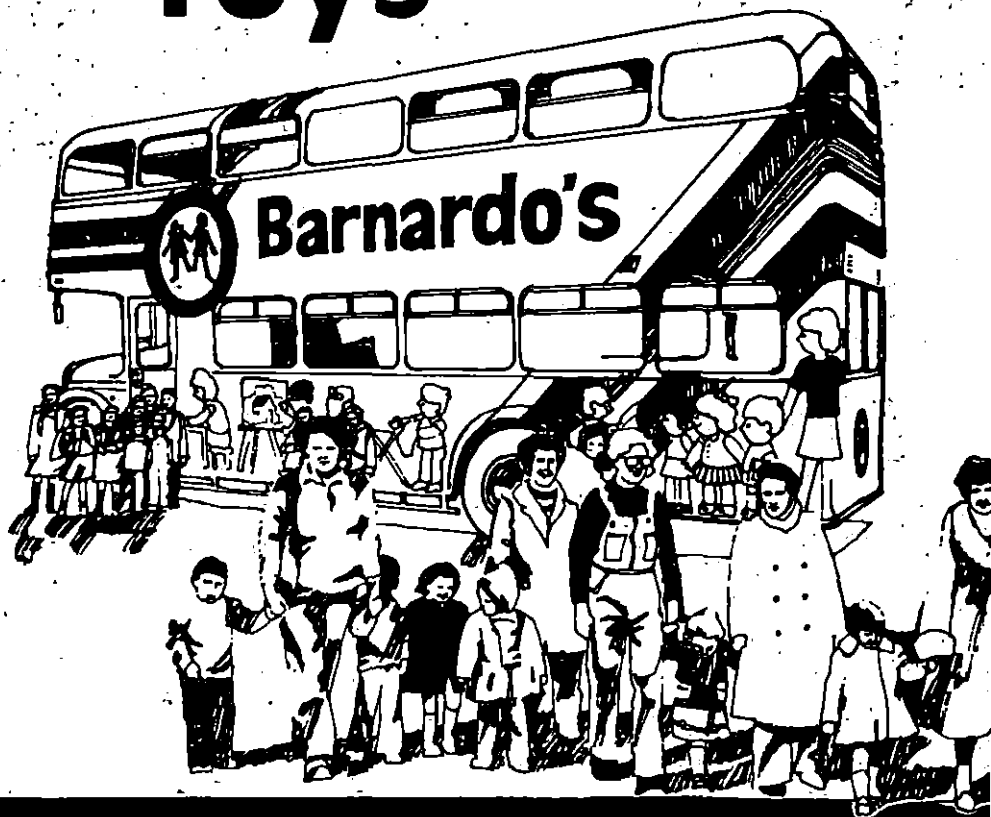


A Parents' Guide to Toys



**Barnardo's
Irish Division**

PLAY IS THE WORK OF CHILDHOOD

There are many experiences which a child needs in order to develop to his full potential physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

Toys play a useful part in this development but other items are every bit as important e.g. toys can consist of cardboard boxes, clothes pegs, saucepans — but for the purpose of this guide, we are discussing toys one can purchase or make at home.

SAFETY

Toys should have no sharp edges, no pieces small enough to be swallowed by a little child, be hard wearing and painted with paint which is free from lead or other toxic or harmful substances. If in doubt, ask the shop staff. If at all possible, toys for young children should be capable of being washed.

When choosing a toy, look at your child, look at the toy and ask yourself is he physically ready for this experience?

Does he have the necessary skills to enjoy the toy regardless of the age stated on the box? If the answer is 'no' why not try an item which is less complicated and at a level with which he can cope?

Frustration can set in when the item is too difficult, then we have an unhappy child and a disappointed adult. Stage not age is the important word when choosing a toy.

Remember, when choosing toys, that a child will try using toys in various ways.

We shouldn't impose on the child our way of using a toy — let him/her experiment.

At different stages a child may use the same toy in different ways.

We list here some of the toys we use in our Toy Libraries as a guide for parents

All the items suggested are available in good toy shops.

A — toys up to £6

B — toys between £6 and £13

C — toys between £13 and £20

D — toys over £20

Examples of toys to encourage large motor movements
(e.g. playing with a ball is developing arms and legs).

ITEM	MAKER	COST
Child's trampoline	GALT	D
Play barrel	GALT	D
Tricycle (with or without pedals)	Various	Various
Climbing Frame	Various	D
Slide	Little Tike	D
See-saw	Little Tike	D
Wobble Board	Kilbride	D
Horse	Fisher Price	C
Explorer	Fisher Price	C
Space Hopper	Various	B
Pedal car	Various	D
Cot rods	Kiddicraft	B
Balls	Various	A
Large wooden blocks	Various	Various

**TOYS DO NOT HAVE TO
COST A FORTUNE.
LOOK AT THE SECTION
AT THE END OF THE BOOKLET**

Examples of toys to encourage development of fine motor skills and co-ordination

(e.g. jigsaws with knobs help develop the muscles needed for writing).

ITEM	MAKER	COST
Threading spools	Various	A
Threading beads	Various	A
Construction straws	GALT	A
Peg boards	Various	B
Octons	GALT	B
Cash register	Fisher Price	C
Duplo	Lego	B
Activity Centre	Fisher Price	C
Lego	Lego	B
Post boxes	GALT	B
Tool sets	Eichorn	B
Wooden blocks	GALT	B
Stacking cubes	Combex	A
Big top	Matchbox	B
Sorting and stacking toys	Labare a Jouer	B
Video phone	Matchbox	B
Templates — raised	GALT	A
Templates — wooden	GALT	A
Wooden jigsaw with — large knobs	Various	A
small knobs		&
inset, no knobs, many pieces		B

ITEM	MAKER	COST
Shapes sorter with doors	Fisher Price	B
Sand/water wheel	GALT	A
Hammer and pegs	GALT	B
Stickle bricks	Milton Bradley	B
Twist and turn	Kiddicraft	A

REMEMBER *STAGE* IS THE IMPORTANT WORD

Examples of toys to encourage pretend play

ITEM	MAKER	COST
Dolls House	Fisher Price	D
Airport	Fisher Price	D
Sink	Fisher Price	C
Tea set	Various	A & B
Hospital	Fisher Price	D
Farm	Fisher Price	D
Hob, Pots & Pans	Fisher Price	D
Band set	Fisher Price	D
Garage	Fisher Price	D
Puppets	Pelham	B

Example of toys to encourage listening skills

ITEM	MAKER	COST
Radio	Fisher Price	B
Xylophone	Various	A
Sound and roll postbox		
Chime bars	Music shops	A
Cot toys	Kiddicraft	B
Television	Fisher Price	C
Record Player	Fisher Price	D
Tape recorder	Fisher Price	D
Spinning top	Various	A

Develop listening skills

e.g. listen to the wind, the rain, the kettle whistling, animal sounds.

Play games — identify sounds. How about taping sounds child is interested in?

While language and communication skills are developed through all the activities a child engages in, especially interaction with others, the following can be helpful for extra stimulation.

ITEM	MAKER	COST
Lotto	Simplex/ GALT	A
Dominoes	GALT/Adams	A
Jigsaws	Various	A & B
Puppets	Pelham	B
Poster pack	Evans	A
Snap cards	GALT	A
How to measure	GALT	B
Profession lotto	Simplex	B
HEX	Spears	A
Match a Balloon	Ravensbourg	B
The House that Jack Built	Spears	A
Build a House	GALT	B
Fun with sums	Spears/ Spellmaster	Various
Rubber stamps	Various	Various

Book suggestions: Ladybird, Methuen, Dinosaur, Dick Bruno.
 What about home made books — great fun to make and children love them.

IDEAS WHICH COST LITTLE OR NOTHING

A supervised basin of *water* for splashing:

Empty yoghurt cartons are good for pouring. A sponge can be squeezed. A plastic jug can be filled and emptied. An empty plastic bottle with holes punched at random with a skewer makes an exciting pattern when filled with water. A sieve does not hold water, why?

Food colouring makes coloured water.

A tray of *dry sand* can be used for drawing patterns with a finger. Shake the tray and the pattern disappears — magic.

Don't keep all the fun to yourself, ask your child to help you — think of all the experiences he is gaining — measuring — cutting — sticking — colouring — using his imagination and feeling various textures. The wealth of knowledge gained and the happy contact with you help him to develop as a person.

PLAYDOUGH

3 cups plain flour

1 cup salt

Cold water (add a little food colouring if you wish)

1. Mix flour and salt together.
2. Add enough cold water to make a non sticky dough.

Store in an airtight container in a cool place and the dough will stay fresh for several weeks.

When your child has had full satisfaction from stretching, shaping and banging the lump of playdough, introduce pastry cutters and a rolling pin.

Make a child size rolling pin by cutting a short length from a brush handle making sure that rough edges are sanded.

Dressing up — Clothes can be made by cutting down old shirts, slips etc. Old hats, handbags and shoes add excitement to pretend play.

To help develop leg muscles, why not try using a large inner *tyre tube* as bouncing equipment. Wash several layers of cloth to act as padding before bending over and strapping to the tube with plenty of insulating tape which goes around the complete area of the valve.

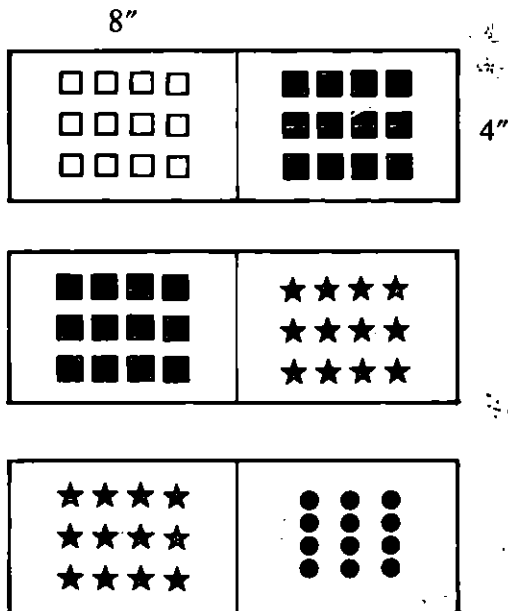
Tearing paper is useful to make a child use both hands. Tear a coloured catalogue into little pieces and then stick the pieces on to a simple shape e.g. a circle. You can add pieces for eyes later and Humpty Dumpty appears making a cheerful poster for a child's room.

Pictures can be used for 'I spy' games at all levels. I spy with my little eye something *red*, I spy with my little eye something *soft*, I spy with my little eye something *cold*. Introduce new words — give the child a chance to spot what you are looking for, he may need a little longer than you.

DOMINOES

Cut lengths of card approximately 8" × 4". Make a mark at the centre of the card and cover one 4" with one piece of wallpaper and the other 4" with wallpaper of a different pattern. Make at least a dozen lengths having one pattern matching one pattern on another length. The child can then look for matching ends.

Example



Use different materials as well in order to introduce different textures.

Bean Bags are useful for hand to eye co-ordination. Make by stitching two pieces of material together and filling with dried peas or pearl barley.

Empty boxes make a wonderful plaything; in the child's imagination they can be boats, cars etc.

Cut holes for doors and windows in a large carton and your child will have a Wendy House or den which he can then paint with powder paint mixed with water. He will enjoy this experience.

Do not forget to protect your floor with newspaper or work outside.

Make a **paint pot** from an empty washing-up liquid bottle cut in half with the upper half inserted into the lower half, you then have a hole for the paint brush.

Start collecting cartons, cards, magazines, empty spools, round ended scissors, wallpaper, samples etc. Now — enjoy working together.

Nature provides many treats and is always fascinating — look at the trees as you walk, make a bark rubbing, collect different leaves, watch how a worm wriggles and the clouds move — there is so much to look at and enjoy.

**YOUR LOVE AND ATTENTION
IS AS IMPORTANT TO YOUR
CHILD AS ANY TOY**

Barnardo's has been looking after children for more than a century. In Ireland today we work closely with the health boards, other statutory authorities, and voluntary agencies to provide a wide range of **family and community** based child care services, such as:

Day Nurseries

for children with special needs. Places are allocated through the referral system and parents are welcome any time.

Children's Bus

resource centre for parents developing and running community playgroups; also a fully equipped and staffed pre-school facility for travellers.

Playgroup Advisory Service

for parents in selected areas to start and effectively run community playgroups, mother and toddler groups, and after-school groups.

Toy Libraries

and advisory services for children with special needs.

Neighbourhood Resource Centre

for parents to meet and share information about children's activities and for individual consultation with trained staff.

Day Foster Care

for children of single parents in selected areas.

Parents Advisory Service

to help parents recognise and develop their parenting skills.

Adoption Advice Service

including fostering advice, available to all - (Tues 2.00pm-6.30pm, Dublin 960042).

Social Work Services

work with homeless teenagers, single parents, and expectant single parents.

Barnardo's

1985-6



244 Harold's Cross Road
Dublin 6
Dublin 965869, 977276,
977313