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**His Toy, Her Toy**

**By Jennifer Gove**

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by: **Jennifer Gove**

I remember when my daughter was born. Visions of her and I dressed in pinks and purples sitting in her lacy pink room playing dolls danced threw my head. A year later my son was born ;My husbands vision of sports and trucks revved around like mad men threw his manly mind.

Those dreams were simply that dreams. Little did I know there are lessons for parents to learn about children's toys and who are children will be.

My daughter plays with dolls. She plays with clay and gets her hands dirty. She plays in the dirt, climbs trees and races her trucks around .,he plays kick ball , base ball and can run as fast as any boy.

My son plays with trucks and builds with blocks, he colors and plays ps2 and he plays house with my girls rocking babies and feeding them.

There was a time my husband would bark to my son "Put down that doll!" until we came to the realization that play is really a child's preparation for real life. Our daughter was learning sportsmanship and how to be a team player from all the sports she played. My son was learning compassion and parenting skills from those dolls. It's amazing to me to watch my son now with his baby brother...I can see the compassion he has learned threw us and his play and I know some day he will be a good father I see my daughter line up her brothers and sister for a game of kick ball. And I see how she has learned to take the lead and take charge. I know some day in what ever she put her mind to see will be a success.

My message to parents is not to limit their child. Toys and sports are learning tools for life and they shouldn't carry a gender.

By the way...my daughter and I play but its not dolls....many days you can find us all at the beach...covered in muddy sand driving our big Tonka'sTM .

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Jennifer is a stay at home mother of eight.Living on the coast of Maine. To visit her parenting site That include more aticles, forums and chat go to

Step by step detailed plans to build an amazing working toy backhoe.

## **How to Organize Christmas Toy Shopping**

**By Barbara Myers**

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It's so easy to go overboard when shopping for kids this time of year. We want them to enjoy all the things we didn't have growing up. It's important to set limits though.

1. List all the children you'll buy for this Christmas. Don't forget an extra toy for your local shelter.
2. Set a firm budget for each child.
3. Note individual interests, hobbies and collections.
4. Ask them what they want for Christmas. You may think Will needs more Legos, but all he really wants is a caboose for his train set.
5. Look through mail order catalogs and internet toy sites for ideas and note them on your list. Place an order if you find the perfect toy.
6. Look through your local phone directory for a list of toy stores in your area. There might be some you aren't aware of.
7. Go shopping with list in hand. As you make purchases mark them off your list. Keep track of how much is left in each child's budget. If you are tempted to go beyond the budget simply write down the item as a future birthday

gift idea.

8. Buy paper, bows and tags if you don't already have them. Spend an evening or two wrapping gifts. You did it!

Barbara Myers is the author of Your Complete Guide to Organized Parenting. Enjoy a FREE "50 Ways to Manage Your Time" tips booklet at <http://www.ineedmoretime.com>

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