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**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>

### **Christmas Toys Are For The Kids... Right?**

**By "S. Mallon"**

Toys for grown-ups pushing kids' toys out of Christmas most wanted list.

Christmas used to be a time for the kids but now the adults appear to be taking over. The top twelve toys this Christmas as identified by the Toy Retailers Association contain a suspiciously high number of toys aimed at bigger kids. This apparent paradigm shift in the toy market should come as no surprise - a brief look around the internet reveals an entire market devoted to the taller toy consumer.

As UK toy stores prepare for the inevitable Christmas rush, their shelves are stocked not only with gifts for children, but of stock on the wish list of an ever growing adult market. A brief look at the most wanted list for this Christmas shows toys such as Robosapien V2, Roboraptor and the Doctor Who Remote Control Dalek. It does not take an industry expert to surmise that these toys are aimed at a demographic with full time jobs and high disposable income rather than a demographic that watches Saturday morning television.

The rise of toys for grown ups has been an increasing trend in recent years and coincides with an increase in retro culture that dominates the film and television industries. Remakes of films and television series that appeal to an older audience mean that subsequent merchandising appeal to a grown up audience who were fans of the series and films first time round - the conspicuous presence of Star Wars toys and Doctor Who toys in UK toy store both online and offline reflect this.

The emergence of a two tier market catering for real kids and "big kids" is apparent and will be particularly evident in the busiest period for the toy market. The market for the older demographic has become increasingly sophisticated in recent years and had led to the specific targeting of the segment particularly through the marketing of technology based toys such as the Robosapien V2 and Roboraptor - toys with a limited appeal to those in short trousers. Increasingly, these toys permeate the marketplace and toy stores looking to capitalise on the big kids market.

It seems that this market is set to grow over the forthcoming years, representative of a wider cultural shift and impacting significantly on the toy market. Whilst the toy market is still dominated by kids toys, it seems that Christmas toys are no longer just for the kids.

Steven is an independent cultural commentator who contributes to a wide range of journals and magazines both online and offline Web –

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