



## BUILDING BLOCKS THERAPY WINTER NEWSLETTER 2010

To our valued clients,

Welcome to winter and the holiday season! At this time of year, parents often ask for present ideas and activities. Below you will find gift suggestions with an emphasis on creativity and speech and language enhancement, as well as local family-fun activities for the winter break.

### GIFT IDEAS:

1. **The Usual Favorites Ages 2-3+**
  - a. **Candyland, Don't Break the Ice, Memory, Chutes N Ladders.** Ages 3+
  - b. The Cranium brand offers a large selection of educational, strategic, and fun games for kids of all ages. Yearly favorites include, **Caribou, Hullabaloo** (NOT the DVD version), and **Sounds by the Seashore.** Ages 3+.
  - c. **Pretend play-sets** – Toys such as, fake food, kitchen sets, doctor's kits, cash registers, doll houses, car garages, etc., offer ways for children to use their imagination and create their own scenarios.  
We like the **I Play brand** as they have all the pretend sets without the batteries! Your child is in charge of making noises and talking while they play. Appropriate for ages 3+. Found at any toy store, including: Target, Toys R Us, Child's Play, and Doodlehopper.
2. **Some new games we've discovered:**
  - a. **Scaterpillar Scramble, Elefun, Diggity Dog, and Feeling and Touching game** (Haba brand) are fun, engaging games to work on turn-taking and sequencing development. Ages 3+
3. **Older kids 5-6+**
  - a. Strategy games such as, **Chicky Boom, Sherlock card game,, Monza brand Car Racer, and Rush Hour Traffic Jam,** and Descriptive games such as **Pickles to Penguins, What's on my Head?, What's in Ned's Head?, and I Spy** are good for older kids.
4. **Games to travel with:** We know there may be a lot of car time over the holidays, so hopefully these games will keep the kids occupied in the back seat! **Doodle sketch, Zingo To-go, and Travel Let's Go Fishing.**
5. **Throwback recommendation** – **SHRINKY DINKS** are back! Have fun coloring, cooking, and watching them shrink just like when you were a kid.
6. **Creative activities** – Let your kids show off their artsy side with **Creativity for Kids "create a pop up book"** set. Sold at Child's Play toy store.

### LOCAL ACTIVITIES:

1. **Bright Nights! Who doesn't love a holiday light display? Here are top local suggestions:**
  - ~ ZooLights, Brookside Gardens (Wheaton, MD), Bull Run Park (Centreville, VA), National Harbor (PG County, MD), and Alexandria Boat Parade (Old Town Alexandria, VA)
2. **All Aboard for some train exhibits – change it up from Thomas and Percy and check out these model trains over the holidays:**
  - ~ Holiday Model Train Show – FREE, Artspace, Herndon, VA
  - ~ Christmas Toy Train Show, \$5-11, Dec 11, Kena Shriners Ballroom, Fairfax, VA
  - ~ Trains and exotic plants mingle together at the Botanical Gardens on the National Mall in DC, FREE
3. **For the little ones...**
  - a. Kids Colonial Christmas, ages 3-6, \$5 Dec. 22, Claude Moore Turkey Farm, Mclean, VA
4. **For the older ones...**
  - a. Junie B. in "Jingle Bells, Junie Smells" play at Imagination Station, Bethesda, MD
5. **A Hidden Treasure**

- a. For those who haven't been...the National Building Museum is a LARGE, spacious building with an ongoing hands-on Lego exhibit. It's open all year round, M-Su and is FREE to all! Great for a rainy, snowy, cold day when the kids need somewhere to run around. Check it out!

**CRAFT IDEA:**

**Stuck indoors and the kids are already tired of their new toys?**

Recycle empty cereal boxes and build a Cereal Box Snowman:

<http://crafts.kaboose.com/cereal-box-snowman.html> - Show your kids the picture and see if they can figure out what materials they'll need!

Please accept our wishes for a happy and healthy Winter Holiday season!

Sincerely,

The Building Blocks Therapy Staff

Kirsten, Laura, Melissa, Jessica, Laney, Melanie, Ashley, Amanda, Kayla, & Sarah

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