

What's Hot On Toy Lists

BY LIZ GOFF

Some of this year's hottest toys are not included on any "dangerous or hazardous" list. But they are smart. They wiggle, giggle, bounce, light

up, talk and burp.

The 10th anniversary "Tickle Me Elmo" hit the stores in September, following months of intrigue and mystery.

The furry red doll breaks into fits of laughter, falls to the floor and picks himself up, only to go into a frenzy of laughter again. Whether you want to or not, you'll find yourself laughing along with this one. The high-tech, animatronic Elmo disappeared from toy store shelves back in October, but has since reappeared for the holiday rush. The only thing deadly about the new TMX Elmo is the peril parents will put themselves into to get the interactive stuffed "life of the party".

A red, furry Elmo chair vibrates and makes giggling noises when sat in. A spokesperson for manufacturer Spin Master said the experience is "just like sitting on a big, giggling Elmo doll".

Other toys sure to show up at the top of any kid's Christmas list include:

"Fairy Wishes Dora", the loveable explorer who comes to life with a touch of a magic wand to her

necklace. Dora winks, blinks, sings and smiles in both English and Spanish for \$39.98.

It's a bird, it's a plane—no, it's an R/C Superman Command flight figure with a multidirectional control command. The superhero requires eight batteries to fire up his super powers. He's available for \$69.99 at www.amazon.com

Future photographers can train as shutterbugs on the Fisher-Price "Kid-Tough" digital camera. It takes up to 60 better-than-decent photos and comes with a replay screen in the back so kids can see photos and delete or store them. The camera body is made of a rubbery material that can take what kids dish out. It's available at most toy and electronic outlets for \$59.99.

Disney is offering a series of its heroines from Snow White to Ariel as babies. Each is sold separately or with a crib or a horse-drawn carriage. Prices start at \$12.97.

Toy manufacturers haven't forgotten pre-school boys. They can join Diego and his friends on adventures with the "Diego Playset," a hands-on version of the hit TV show. The playset, which includes a flying helicopter, sells for

\$54.99 at Toys "R" Us and other toy outlets.

Young linguists can take advantage of "Language Littles" DVD, which teaches kids to speak French, Spanish, Italian, Russian and Hebrew. The DVD is available for \$14.99 at www.language-littles.com or at local electronic and music stores.

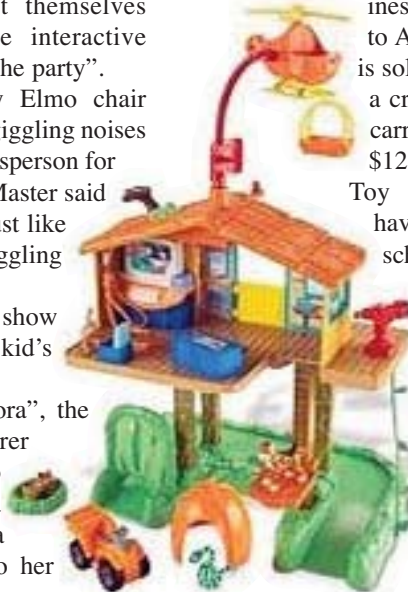
Mattel is offering a series of Barbie dolls as the "12 Dancing Princesses". The dolls can be purchased along with "Prince Derek" for \$12.99 to \$24.99 at most local toy outlets. Don't forget the big-headed "Bratz Forever Diamond" dolls.

Bigger kids will love the updated "Here & Now" Monopoly Game. Times Square replaces Broadway and passing "Go" earns you a whopping \$2 million.

Toy collectors are keeping their eye on the new Lego "Mindstorms NXT Buildable Robot, Digi Makeover". The robot lets kids take a photo of themselves, then do an onscreen makeover. "Digi does whatever you want it to," its manufacturer said. "And it's not just for kids."

Can't find the toy you're looking for? "Don't become frustrated," retailers said. "They'll appear on store shelves after the holidays. Ease the disappointment for younger kids by leaving a note with other gifts and toys that says Santa's elves are a little behind this year. Better late than never, right?"

Pictured: Princess Isla and Princess Hadley Dolls in the 2 figures in the Barbie 12 Dancing Princess series. Diego Rescue Center Playset



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