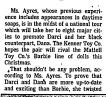
Jingle, jingle, Christmas sales already ringing

Being flexible, any management di-rector will tell you, is an important key to succegs. But, to television actress Leah Ayres, flexibility means more than personal growth. Flexibility is just one facet in a whole list of qualities that will make her constant companion, Darci»—a model, actress, and disco doll — irre-sistible to today's sophisticated 5-10-year-olds.

Darci spokesperson, Leah Ayres (right) not only travels with the trendy new doll and its companion Dana, she also wears the same fashion, disco and lifestyle clothes that are included in Darci's growing wardrobe. She said the Kenner Co. learned that little girls don't want dolls that represent the boy or girl next door after the disastrous introduction of the Boy Scout doll. Today's more sophisticated junior misses are looking for beautiful, glamorous and sophisticated dolls, a need that the company expects Darci and Dana to fill this Christmas.



Darci's legs, arms, neck and torso into lifelike poses. Darci's mobility, she said, will help stimulate little girls' imaginations.
"Barble was generic with fashion," she explained. "She was associated with a certain group of people. Now she is the passe. But the passe of the said of the said

a longer than usual study of the doll market, which last year sold 44 million dolls, accessories and fashions with earnings of \$165,370,000.

"Three years ago, the Bionic Woman was a huge success. It showed that Barbie was no longer meeting the publics needs. So, Kenner conducted a nation-wide survey to find out what people want in dolls."

The result showed there was a need for a beautiful, glamorous, sophisticated, totally moveable doll.

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Kenner built a prototype and then inKenner built a prototype and then intended the prototype and then intended the prototype and the intended then in a competitive market.

Questionnaires; completed at the preview, indicated the doll's original
name, Jennifer, was a turnoff, but the
doll itself was a success.

"THE NAME held associations for
too many people," she said. Darci was
inally selected as a moniter because it
was ususual and did not to hold associaations for too many people.

According to John Beck, Kenner's
communications manager accompany-

communications manager accompany-ing Ms. Ayres, the designing, develop-ing and manufacturing of a smash suc-cess toy is a difficult and costly under-

taking.

A toy company, he said, will cloak the creation of a new toy line with as much secrecy and security as automotive companies devote to the introduction of a new line of cars. A toy company's secrets are often more carefully guarded than those at an auto company be added.

ny, he added.
"There are two floors at company headquarters which have to be notified if visitors are to be brought through,"

'Toy companies try to change purchasing patterns, but 70 percent of all toy sales are made between October and December. The biggest purchases are made by mid-November. We had to curtail advertising last year on Star Wars because we knew by Nov. 1 they would

-John Beck, Kenner representative

February, Beck said Darci has climbed into Kenner's number two selling spot, right behind Star Wars. Other long-term bets sellers include the Easy Bake oven and Spirograph, which Beck colled one of the best engineered toys. It is were stilling and appeal are virtually limitless, "he said Still, not every Kenner venture has set with such success as Darci, Star Wars and the Easy Bake oven. "Our most spectacular flop was a Boy Scout doll. We thought that it would be wildly successful. Kenner spent months making preparations, with dozens of meetings between the designers and the Boy Scouts to see that the uniforms were perfect down to the last detail."

The second of th

time the Boy Scout doll flopped Six Million Dollar man was selling like

said Ms. Ayres. "Little girls don't want the boy (or girl) next door. What they want is a doll that is exciting. They are developing role models earlier.

developing role models earlier.

Exposure to television, fashion magazines and exciting people is responsible for a lot of their expectations.

"It also relates," she said, "to the fact that children demand more today from their toys. Years ago they used sticks and fantasized them into play objects. But, the idea is still the same. Being a photographer who takes the pictures while Darci models, or being the DJ while she is dressed for the disco is much more than being placed in a passive role."

KENNER HAS yet to provide Darci and Dana with the extensive wardrobe and accessory collection that Mattell has built up over the years for Barbie. But, said Ms. Ayres, there, are ideas gangbusters." and plans in the making that will give
Which only goes to prove her point,
Darci a competitive position.



successful product are difficult to judge."
Since the doll was introduced at the New York International Toy Fair last



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