

Gifts of time

Creative gifts that keep giving

When the holiday season begins, many parents feel like taking to the hills. Store windows are crammed with high-price dolls and fancy train sets until everything in sight seems to have a "buy me" sign.

By early January, a mountain of broken or still unassembled presents accompanies a forest of discarded Christmas trees into garbage cans across the nation. All that is left of the season-to-be-jolly are disappointed children, frustrated moms and dads and post-holiday bills.

What can be done to change this dismal picture — especially for younger children? Plenty, and it all begins with creative thinking before going Christmas shopping. This year, make the holiday magic last beyond the festive season with special gifts, including some that enable you to share pleasure with your child during the year to come.

- Some ideas:
- **MORE THAN A PET.** If your youngster is getting a kitten or a puppy for Christmas, also enroll him in a class that teaches basic pet care. Call your local humane society for information on these classes and animal-oriented children's clubs.
 - **COMPUTER LEARNING AND GAMES.** Don't ignore the needs of your preschooler. According to spokesmen for Weekly Reader

Family Software, manufacturer of the Stickybear early learning series, a child as young as 3 can have fun while learning with programs designed for his age group. They suggest that you look for software that comes with supporting material such as picture books and posters. This enables the parent to get involved and serves as a bridge between the computer and other learning tools.

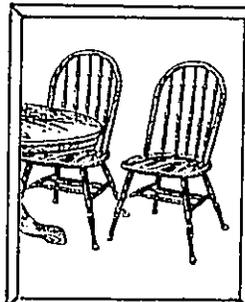
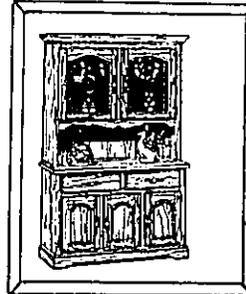
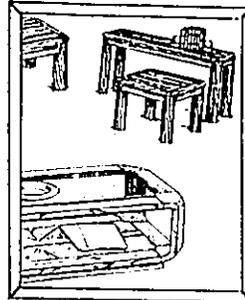
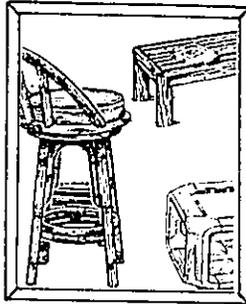
- **GREEN THUMB.** Many communities have a garden club or arboretum with classes for youngsters. Such a course would make a wonderful gift, along with a packet of seeds for easy-to-grow vegetables like string beans or radishes, or indoor bulbs for simple flowers.

- **PARENT-CHILD SPORTS.** Find outlets for energy at your nearest civic center or youth club by giving your child — and yourself — the present of a swimming or dancing course.

- **CREATIVE ARTS.** Contact your local museum or arts group about young people's programs such as painting, mask-making, puppets and other creative fun. Give this gift promise with a stocking stuffer of paints or crayons and drawing paper.

Each of these gifts is a present that can be enjoyed by both parents and youngsters long after the holiday decorations are tucked away.

LOOK INTO OUR WINDOWS & SEE WHAT'S "IN STORE" FOR YOU!



HAPPY HOLIDAY GIFTS FROM

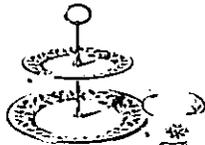
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