



MARKET WRAP

Artiwood Australia

The Boutique Educational Toy Company

www.artiwood.com.au



THE RIGHT TOYS MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Providing the right ingredients for healthy development from the start promotes better outcomes than trying to fix problems later says the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University.

Harvard's researchers found that, 'although developmental windows remain open for many years, trying to change behaviour or build new skills on a foundation of brain circuits that weren't wired properly from the beginning requires more effort — both for individuals and society.'

Their research reveals that, 'one skill begets another as children's brain develops from the bottom up. In essence, the development of gross and fine motor skills, coupled with basic cognitive skills, progressively pave the way for acquiring higher-level skills like the ability to focus and sustain attention, set goals, follow rules, solve problems, and control impulse.'

Artiwood's Managing Director, Andrew McGregor, believes these findings highlight the importance of childhood play, and the toys that stimulate it. He says, "The right toys, introduced at the right time, incrementally promote, and reinforce developmental pathways. Equally, the right toys always make this progression as effortless and motivational as possible."

Artiwood has been sourcing and supplying eco-friendly educational toys since 1999. It distributes premium brands like Bigjigs, New Classic Toys, Indigo Jamm, and I'm Toy. In the last five years it's tripled in size and won multiple awards. Andrew attributes much of this success to an unrelenting focus on educational toys with a multi-functional design."

"For us multi-functional features are a no-brainer. They result in better play value, incremental learning opportunities and a longer active lifespan."

He highlights the Kinderfeets Pikler Triple Climber Triangle as a classic example. "The Triangle, built from



sturdy German beechwood, has three climbing surfaces: a rope net, foot pegs and rungs. Each offers an increasingly challenging play option. That is, each promotes one skill that begets the development of another — just as Harvard's researchers have noted."

Andrew says HEADU's educational activity kits are another great example. "These beautifully illustrated, academically developed kits include plenty of Montessori inspired learning activities, puzzles, and games for stimulating curiosity from a young age."

"Take the popular 'Learn to Draw'. This kit includes ten puzzles. The illustration on each puzzle teaches a child to draw an animal. An enclosed drawing board and erasable marker then lets them practice drawing these animals. A single kit delivers more than 20 learning activities, while promoting increasingly advanced cognitive skills."

Andrew concludes by acknowledging that Artiwood's search for motivational toys is unrelenting. He says "We travel the world every year seeking brands and products that reflect our philosophy. That is, quality toys, with enduring educational features, that are built to last. Most manufacturers never make the cut. However, those that do are always worth the effort."