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Living

Top 10 gifts for baby's 1st Christmas

by Lockie Hunter, CITIZEN-TIMES CORRESPONDENT
published December 10, 2007 12:15 am

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ASHEVILLE – In their first extraordinary year, babies learn through their senses and begin to process their world through touch, sight, taste, sound and smell. Some of these local products may stimulate babies' senses through playful interaction with their environment and may prove to be good gifts this holiday season.

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1: Bumbo baby seat

Winner of the National Parenting Center Seal of Approval, the Bumbo baby seat allows babies who are not sitting on their own to sit upright independently from three months of age.

Cost: \$39.99 at Target, 115 River Hills Road, Asheville, 298-1262; 17 McKenna Road, Arden, 681-0341.

2: Usborne touchy-feely books

The American Academy of Pediatrics encourages families to read to their children at young ages. Nan Gregory, director of Asheville Montessori, agrees. "I do feel it is important for infants and toddlers to be read to. I love books that use rhyming words, animal sounds, simple ideas, real photographs. I also love the books with various textures for a sensory component.

Cost: \$7.99-\$9.99 at the Toy Box, 793 Merrimon Ave, Asheville, 254-8697.

3: Baby Whoozit

With a nose that lifts to reveal a mirror, this smiley face features dangling toys and pockets for hiding them. "It promotes object permanence like the game of peek-a-boo," says Enviro Depot's Gary Kramer.

Cost: \$19.99 at Enviro Depot, 58 College St., Asheville, 252-9007.

4: Baby Sign Language Play Kit by Monta Z. Briant

"Finding ways for children to communicate with parents (and vice versa) early in their lives together is a wonderful way to bond!" says Health Adventure's Julie Moser. Pair the play kit with baby sign language workshops, also offered at The Health Adventure.

Cost: \$22 at The Health Adventure, 2 S. Pack Square, Asheville. Call 254-6373, Ext. 329 for upcoming workshops.

5: Honeywear sling

A ring sling allows baby to snuggle tight while engaging in his surroundings. There is one made locally of supple, organic cotton. It has an adjustable pouch, a small pocket for diapers and personal items, and holds babies up to 35 pounds.

Cost: \$120 at the Littlest Birds, 647 Haywood Road, Asheville, 253-4747.

6: Gund stuffed bears

Every baby needs a cuddly friend. According to Enviro Depot's Gary Kramer, this pair of Gund's is ideal. "The embroidery eyes are safe for baby, and Gund has been around many years and makes a quality product."

Cost: \$20 each at Enviro Depot.



credit: Special to the Citizen-Times

Winner of the National Parenting Center Seal of Approval, the Bumbo baby seat allows babies who are not sitting on their own to sit upright independently from three months of age.

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When Regent Park Early Childhood Development Center teachers were polled, their top picks were of the "low-tech" variety. "These toys encourage children to actively use their imaginations as they play," says Marlene Breger-Joyce, director.

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Cost: \$14.99 at the Toy Box.

9: Taggie football

An Openheim Toy Platinum award winner, the Taggie football has tags to grab and is slightly understuffed for easy gripping.

Cost: \$15 at Enviro Depot.

10: Ecobaby organics nursing/play pillow

This nursing pillow is filled with wool and has an organic cotton cover.

Cost: \$78 at Nest Organics, 51 N. Lexington Ave., Asheville, 258-1901.



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