Top Ten Toy Tips
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Selecting a toy for a child with disabilities? Here are the questions that the play experts at the National Lekotek Center ask when choosing developmentally appropriate toys for differently-abled kids. Use these questions to guide you in make the right match between the child for whom you’re buying and a toy.

1. **Multisensory appeal:** Does the toy respond with lights, sounds, or movements to engage the child? Are there contrasting colors? Does it have a scent? Is there texture?
2. **Method of activation:** Will the toy provide a challenge without frustration? What is the force required to activate? What are the number and complexity of steps required to activate?
3. **Places the toy will be used:** Will the toy be easy to store? Is there space in the home? Can the toy be used in a variety of positions such as side-lying or on a wheelchair tray?
4. **Opportunities for success:** Can play be open-ended with no definite right or wrong way? Is it adaptable to the child’s individual style, ability, and pace.
5. **Current popularity:** Is it a toy that will help the child with disabilities feel like "any other kid"? Does it tie-in with other activities like books and art sets that promote other forms of play?
6. **Self expression:** Does the toy allow for creativity, uniqueness, and making choices? Will it give the child experiences with a variety of media?
7. **Adjustability:** Does it have adjustable height, sound volume, speed, and level of difficulty?
8. **Child’s individual abilities:** Does the toy provide activities that reflect both developmental and chronological ages? Does it reflect the child’s interests?
9. **Safety and durability:** Does the toy fit the child’s size and strength? Does it have moisture resistance? Is the toy and its parts sized appropriately? Can it be washed and cleaned?
10. **Potential for interaction:** Will the child be an active participant during use? Will the toy encourage social engagement with others?

For further assistance in choosing toys for kids of all abilities, contact the National Lekotek Center at 1-800-366-PLAY or www.lekotek.org.