



Mattel Announces Funding of Cutting-Edge Research on the Impact of Play and Child Development

Mattel Helps Researchers Develop a Deeper Understanding of Why Play Matters with Inaugural Research Grants

Quick Facts:

- Mattel is funding four research endeavors to explore the role play serves in the cognitive, emotional and social development of children.
- Mattel advocates for play in the everyday life of children to enhance their learning and development.

EL SEGUNDO, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Mattel, Inc. today announced it will fund four university research projects focused on the impact of play in children's early development through Mattel's Philanthropy Programs. The Mattel Play Research Grants recipients will explore a wide range of play-focused topics over the next 12 months, including the impact of play on creative thinking, problem solving and the development of language, social and cognitive skills.

Mattel established the Mattel Play Research Grants to help researchers provide more insight into the benefits of play, the use of the tools of play, the value of safe places to play and the need to educate parents, caregivers and the society on the positive power play serves in a child's life.

The first four inaugural grants have been awarded to Anna Shusterman, Ph.D., Hilary Barth, Ph.D. and Emily Slusser, Ph.D., of Wesleyan University; Ted Hutman, Ph.D., of University of California Los Angeles; Susan Menkes, M.A., of Claremont Graduate University; [Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, Ph.D.](#), Kelly R. Fisher, Ph.D., and Kuba Glazek, Ph.D. Candidate, of Temple University; and Roberta M. Golinkoff, Ph.D., of Univeristy of Delaware.

- **Wesleyan University** (\$25,000)
Understanding the Power of Play. Study will focus on assessing the cognitive benefits of independent, self-directed play with toys.
- **University of California Los Angeles** (\$20,000)
Mother-Child Play Interactions With and Without Toys: The Impact of Toys on the Development of Language, Social and Cognitive Skills: Study will examine the benefits of toy play and will identify mechanisms of change in mother-child interactions during a critical stage of development.
- **Claremont Graduate University** (in-kind resources — Imagination Center)
The Influence of Play Platform, Age, and Executive Functioning Skills: Study will investigate the impact of playing with emerging play platforms on children's comprehension of material, as well as the extent to which executive functioning skills contribute to children's comprehension.
- **Temple University** (\$15,000)
Exploring Contextual and Play Material Constraints on Creative Thinking and Problem Solving in Early Childhood: Study will explore the impact of play-based (free play, guided play) and didactic instructional approaches on children's problem-solving and creativity, as well as examines how toy structure during free play influences children's play behaviors and creative problem-solving.

"While we know that play is extremely beneficial for a child's development, we also know that with busy schedules children have less time to simply play and use their imaginations," said Dr. Michael Shore, vice president of consumer insights at Mattel. "This new research will help us learn even more about the development process and how toys can continue to support learning, socialization and creativity in children."

"I am thrilled that we were awarded one of the Mattel Play Research Grants," said Kelly Fisher, Ph.D., Temple University. "Given recent reports that show a significant decrease in creativity during childhood, little is known about how current educational practices and the structure of play materials influence children's problem-solving and creativity. This research may help us to better understand the reasons and provide a potential solution."

Resource Links:

- View Mattel's newly published [2010 Philanthropy Report](#)
- Learn about Mattel's [philanthropy programs](#) and [employee volunteer activities](#)
- Connect with Mattel on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/mattel>

About Mattel:

As the worldwide leader in play, the Mattel, Inc. (NASDAQ: [MAT](#)) (www.mattel.com) family is composed of such best-selling brands as Barbie®, the most popular fashion doll ever introduced, Hot Wheels®, Matchbox®, American Girl®, Radica® and Tyco R/C®, and a wide array of entertainment-inspired toy lines. In 2011, Mattel was named as one of FORTUNE Magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For" for the fourth year in a row, and is ranked among Corporate Responsibility Magazine's "100 Best Corporate Citizens." With worldwide headquarters in El Segundo, Calif., Mattel employs approximately 31,000 people in 43 countries and territories and sells products in more than 150 nations. Mattel donates more than 2 percent of its pre-tax profit toward [philanthropic activities](#). At Mattel, we are "Creating the Future of Play."

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