

Melanie Notkin, Toy Expert and America's Savvy Auntie®, Reveals the Savvy Auntie Coolest Toy Award Winners - Toy Fair 2016

Savvy Auntie List Celebrates 10 Inaugural Winners



New York, NY – February 17, 2016 – Melanie Notkin, founder and CEO of Savvy Auntie®, the multiplatform lifestyle brand for aunts and godmothers, has revealed the **SAVVY AUNTIE COOLEST TOY AWARDS - TOY FAIR 2016**.

While Notkin has announced an annual list of coolest toy awards at the holiday season since 2009, for the first time, Notkin has added a preview list of coolest toys discovered at Toy Fair. Toy Fair NY (February 13-16, 2016) is produced by the Toy Industry Association.

While many toy marketers and toy lists focus on primary caregivers, Notkin created the **Savvy Auntie Coolest Toy Awards** to give aunts and all secondary caregivers the toy-savvy they need to make the best gift choices for the children in their lives. Savvy Aunties may be secondary caregivers, but they are primary gift givers.

The inaugural list of **SAVVY AUNTIE COOLEST TOY AWARDS - TOY FAIR 2016** offers savvy gift-givers the opportunity to get a head start on knowing which toys the children in their lives will be coveting when the toys are available later in 2016. Notkin looked for toys that are fresh and innovative, and as the award suggests, “cool.” Her awardees list includes toys from the largest toy makers like Mattel and Spin Master, to startups like the crowd-funded iBesties. The awardees feature some of the 2016 trends in play, including: coding; robotics; latest technology; makers; “blind bag” surprises; and girl empowerment. Gift-givers will also spot nostalgic toys modernized for Generation Z on the list.

The 2016 winners will also be listed at SavvyAuntie.com

SAVVY AUNTIE COOLEST TOYS AWARDS – TOY FAIR 2016

Ages 3+

Fisher-Price: Think & Learn Code-A-Pillar™ - Fall 2016

Why Savvy Auntie loves it: Like reading and counting, coding is now becoming part of preschooler learning and development. Fisher-Price has developed a seamless way to help the youngest children learn how to code, while also helping their new buddy navigate the playroom! Imagine the satisfaction on a child's face when he or she realizes they are in control of how their Code-a-Pillar™ moves!



From Fisher-Price: The Think & Learn Code-a-Pillar™ is a caterpillar that encourages experimentation while developing coding, sequencing and critical thinking skills. Preschoolers can arrange Code-A-Pillar's easy-to-connect segments in endless combinations to send Code-a-Pillar™ on his path: forward, left, right, or even wait for a couple seconds before moving again. Kids can configure the segments in such a way that the Code-A-Pillar™ can reach targets they set up throughout the room. When kids connect the

segments to make Code-A-Pillar™ move -that's sequencing! When they figure out a sequence that will create a path for Code-A-Pillar™ to reach a target, that's programming (and problem solving, too)! It's all coding—and it's all fun! Includes 8 light-up segments, motorized head segment with lights, sounds and blinking eyes, and 2 targets. 4 AA batteries required. Additional segment add-ons sold separately. A companion app will expand on the learning & fun with the Code-a-Pillar™ facing new challenges the child has to plan & sequence and gets to overt learning like counting & patterning. **MSRP: \$49.99**

Wicked Cool Toys: Cabbage Patch Kids So Real Baby - Fall 2016

Why Savvy Auntie loves it: There are a few techno-driven baby dolls coming to market in 2016, but the Cabbage Patch Kids Baby So Real is really special. Wicked Cool Toys has teamed up with Seebo, an innovative technology company, to develop a baby doll that needs a child's attention to feed her, make her feel better when she's sick, sooth her when she cries, put her to bed when she's tired, and play with her when she awakens. The bond between this baby doll and it's "mommy" or "daddy," along with seeing the child develop nurturing skills and empathy, will be wonderful to watch.



From Wicked Cool Toys: Cabbage Patch Kids (CPK) Baby So Real allows you to enjoy one of the most magical and interactive experiences in the baby doll category. These life-like babies combine traditional play patterns with groundbreaking technology. Baby So Real's interactive sweet baby sounds and random reactions are designed to surprise and delight. With your touch, Baby So Real comes to life with beautifully animated LCD eyes that open, close and look around. Loaded with realistic features that encourage interactive nurturing play, Baby So Real has sensors for peek-a-boo and tickle play feeding from a special bottle, burping, diaper changing, and rocking to sleep. If your baby should develop a fever, you can calm those red cheeks by administering TLC from a magical spoon. Just like the original Cabbage Patch Kids, Baby So Real is soft and cuddly with removable clothes. And for advanced play, Baby So Real has its own free app that allows your phone or tablet to simulate a baby monitor. The online mode allows you to see the virtual nursery where you can play with your baby, feed, diaper burp and administer TLC. You can also play games, watch video clips and earn baby points for additional virtual accessories and new features. Baby So Real comes with a fully removable outfit and diaper, a special interactive bottle and medicine spoon, birth certificate and adoption papers and a free baby monitor style app for additional virtual play. **MSRP \$99.99**

Ages 4+

Wonder Forge: Disney Imagicademy Storymation Studio: Fall 2016

Why Savvy Auntie loves it: Wonder Forge has a knack for developing games that are truly original and innovative, while helping develop the preschool and young student mind. Storymation Studio, the stop motion movie kit, stops us in our tracks (no pun intended!) when we saw it at Toy



Fair. While Wonder Forge released a version of the toy in 2015, the second generation coming later this year allows for much more flexibility and creativity for kids - and a lower price-point. While it comes with Disney characters, we're sure kids will add their own favorite toy mini figures, or create their own movie characters with cardboard and markers. The app even allows for a title image so kids can introduce their movies. *Image unavailable*

From Wonder Forge: It's a stop motion movie kit for children! Kids get creative with a collection of Disney characters, backgrounds, clay, and costume molds! With the free, easy-to-use Storymation Studio animation app, children will be making their own animated masterpieces inspired by their favorite Disney films! **MSRP \$19.99**

Ages 5+

Spin Master: Hatchimal - Fall 2016

This one is a secret! Lucky Savvy Auntie got a sneak peek at Toy Fair and we've promised to keep it a surprise! Wait until you see the magic and enthralling experience hatching from Spin Master this fall. **MSRP \$59.99**



Ages 6+

Mattel: DC Super Hero Girls™ Action Dolls - Spring 2016



Why Savvy Auntie loves it: We almost want to say: "What took so long?" The DC Super Hero Girls are absolutely beautiful and diverse, muscular and powerful. Any gift giver will be a super hero for giving any one – or all – of these action hero fashion dolls to a child. Let them create their own hero's journey!

From Mattel: Inspired by a new interpretation of iconic DC Comics characters in an all new high school setting, who are learning to hone their super powers, girls can explore their own

inner heroes with this assortment of dolls designed to lead to Super Hero fun. Fashions include elements

from original DC Comics Super Heroes while accessories highlight the characters' super powers. Articulation allows for lots of action and Super Hero poses. **MSRP \$19.99**



Mattel: Barbie Hello Dreamhouse™ - Fall 2016

Why Savvy Auntie loves it: There's no question that Savvy Auntie loves a Barbie Dreamhouse. And while we gave the latest Barbie Dreamhouse a Savvy Auntie Coolest Toy Award in 2015, this smart house, is beyond our wildest imaginations. Sure, it's a high priced luxury pad at nearly \$300, but the technology driving this dream of a playhouse is like nothing we've seen before.

From Mattel: Go high-tech with the world's first smart dollhouse -Barbie Hello Dreamhouse™! This two-story

home has innovative features designed for a modern girl and reflective of the next wave of innovation in the home. Floor sensors recognize where Barbie® and her friends are in the house. Embedded speech recognition allows you to control elements of the house, including the slide and elevator. An accompanying app allows further customization. Through a combination of voice commands and embedded switches, kids can imagine, customize, and control their house play. **MSRP: \$299**

iBesties: iBesties Middle School Moguls - Now

Why Savvy Auntie loves it: There are a number of cool dolls coming in 2016, but iBesties, a Kickstarter funded toy, is one of the coolest we've seen. iBesties Middle School Moguls is designed to empower any girl to become a leader. From McKenna the Business Boss to Sunny the Coding Queen, with three more iBesties available, each doll inspires leadership and/or STEAM development. They each come with a book with vocabulary words like "CEO" and "Mergers and Acquisitions." But it's not all "business." Savvy Auntie loves is that each doll comes with fabulous hair and fashions that many *FashionNieces* adore, so it combines girl empowerment with a classic play pattern.



From iBesties: These middle-schoolers are the new girls at Mogul Academy— an unconventional school run by eccentric billionaire business woman Sherry Rocketsmeller. Each with their own unique talents, the girls find themselves in a high-tech, fast-paced, world of adventure as they work to build businesses, friendships and unforgettable fun! The Middle School Moguls are as diverse as the girls who love them. Distinct in culture, personality and talents, they come from backgrounds that include blended families, bi-racial families, military families and single-parent households. The girls are smart, fun and talented, yet not at all perfect. In fact, that's what makes them such good friends, they can all

be real with each other and they always help each other out. It's the combination of all their unique (and sometimes random) personalities that make them the talk of Mogul Academy! **\$40.00**

Ages 8+

WowWee: CHiP - Fall 2016



Why Savvy Auntie loves it: This robot dog is so lovable – and loving, you'll probably forget he's not a real dog. CHiP is the puppy children are wishing for – if they aren't able to have a real dog as a pet. Plus, he's easier to take care of than the real thing. He'll even find his "bed" to go to sleep and recharge so he's ready for the next day of play.

From WowWee: CHiP (Canine Home Intelligent Pet) is the ultimate AI Robotic Dog. Based on new Mechatronics, the latest in a combination of wireless technology, telecommunications engineering and a suite of advanced sensors, CHiP is truly the latest and greatest in robotic pets. CHiP recognizes its master

and responds to commands using the included SmartBand, a sleek, rechargeable wearable controller. Also, CHiP plays fetch and fun games with the SmartBall, interacting in all the ways a real dog would. CHiP even knows when it's time to head to its special SmartBed and recharge. With a 360-degree system of play that's physical, digital and tactile, with an intuitive, evolving app, CHiP is a welcome addition to today's connected home and fun for all ages. **MSRP: \$199**

Moose Toys: SelfieMic™ - Fall 2016

Why Savvy Auntie loves it: Some tech toys are so high-tech, there's a long learning curve before kids can get to play. The SelfieMic™ is so simple and fun, combining all the trends kids and teens are into: selfies; lip syncing; social sharing; and the maker trend – that it's an easy gift choice.

From Moose Toys: Combining the love of Selfies with the popular past time of singing karaoke, the SelfieMic™ allows kids to become a pop star and create their own music videos right from their smartphone. The SelfieMic is a selfie stick with a working karaoke microphone, ear piece, and music app. Kids can record their own voice or lip sync to over three million songs, creating music videos which they can share with their friends! The SelfieMic's voice and video effects make anyone sound and look like a star. **MSRP: \$24.99**



Ages 9+

Innovation First: Vex IQ Robotics Construction Set - Now

Why Savvy Auntie loves it: Construction paired with robots is a hot trend and Vex is one of the leaders with its latest Vex IQ Construction set. While a high price-point, it's endless in its play and learning value. Children can build the models – and also build their own robotic creations from the parts. Vex is releasing smaller sets this summer, at under \$20, so kids can decide if Vex IQ is the right choice for them before a larger investment.



From Innovation First: The VEX IQ Robotics Construction Kit is loaded with advanced robotics technology, including a brain with 12 self-configuring input/output ports, as well as 750+ pieces that include four smart motors, one color sensor, one bumper switch sensor, one touch LED sensor, and built in rotational sensors on the motors. This technology is accessible enough to jump right in and snap these robots together using the intuitive, tool-less pieces. Follow simple step by step instructions to build your first robot, and then take advantage of the unmatched versatility of the VEX IQ system to build anything you can imagine! It comes with a video game style remote control with a rechargeable lithium ion battery, and with two programming software options - Modkit for VEX or ROBOTC, as well as VEX IQ Curriculum that is free for all users. **MSRP: \$299**

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About Savvy Auntie®

Founded by Melanie Notkin, Savvy Auntie is the multiplatform lifestyle brand that empowers and engages aunts, serving the PANK® – Professional Aunt No Kids - demographic discovered and coined by Notkin, and heralded by fabulous kid-loving women everywhere as a modern celebration of Aunthood. Notkin launched SavvyAuntie.com in 2008 and it remains the first and only resource and online community for this demographic. The brand also includes a popular and engaged social media following, Auntie's Day® - a national day founded by Notkin to honor aunts and godmothers each fourth Sunday in July, and Melanie Notkin's national bestseller: *Savvy Auntie: The Ultimate Guide for Cool Aunts, Great-Aunts, Godmothers and all Women Who Love Kids* (Morrow 2011). As a lifestyle expert, toy expert and a taste-maker for children's trends, Notkin appears on TV and as a spokesperson for brands.

About PANKs®

Savvy Auntie attracts PANKs®, or Professional Aunts No Kids, the term Notkin coined in 2008 for the growing demographic of female consumers who are not moms, by circumstance or choice, and have a special bond with a child in their life. According to the 2012 joint-study entitled: *The Power of the PANK*, by Savvy Auntie and Weber Shandwick, there are 23 million PANKs in North America. PANKs spend \$9 billion each year on nieces and nephews, baseline just one child per PANK. A whopping 76% of PANKs spend over \$500 per niece and nephew, per year.

For additional information on the Savvy Auntie Coolest Toy Awards or press / on-air and talent inquiries: Press@SavvyAuntie.com.