

5 Reasons Not to Buy AI Toys



There's lots of buzz about AI — but artificial intelligence can undermine children's healthy development and pose unprecedented risks for kids and families. That's why over 150 experts and organizations in child development and digital safety strongly advise families not to buy AI toys for children this holiday season. Here's why:

1 AI toys are usually powered by the same AI that has already harmed children.

AI toys use the very same AI systems that have produced unsafe, confusing, or harmful experiences for older kids and teens, including urging them to self harm or take their own lives. Yet, they are being marketed to the youngest children, who have the least ability to recognize or protect themselves from these dangers.

2 AI toys prey on children's trust.

Equipped with friendly, caring voices and promising to be "trustworthy," AI toys take advantage of young children, who naturally believe that friendly, caring voices can be trusted. AI toys may shape children to trust corporate-made machines in the same way they would caregivers and blur the line between real and manufactured.

3 AI toys disrupt children's relationships and resilience.

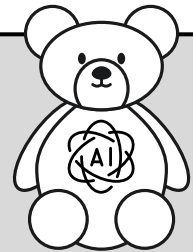
AI toys promise to be "friendly" and offer empathy they can't actually provide, confusing children's developing understanding of healthy relationships. They often smooth over conflict and offer canned comfort, which may undermine the real life-interactions children need to build social skills, self-regulation, and resilience.

4 AI toys invade family privacy by collecting sensitive data.

Using audio, video, and even facial or gesture recognition, AI toys record and analyze sensitive family information even when they appear to be turned off. Because children trust them, kids may unknowingly share their private thoughts and emotions while the toys also capture family conversations or intimate moments. Companies can then use or sell this data to make the toys more addictive, push paid upgrades, or fuel targeted advertising directed at children.

5 AI toys displace key creative and learning activities.

Even though they promise to boost imagination and learning, AI toys can monopolize children's attention and crowd out actual imaginative, child-led play that research shows is foundational for creativity, emotional regulation, and real learning.



What are AI Toys?

*AI toys are chatbots embedded in everyday children's toys, like plushies, dolls, and robots. They use AI to mimic human characteristics and emotions, acting like a friend or trusted companion. **And they are marketed to children as young as 0.***



Get the full advisory

www.bit.ly/Altoys

Join the movement to protect young children from manipulative technology!

- **Learn more about AI Toys:** www.bit.ly/Altoys
- **Join our Screen Time Action Network's Early Childhood Workgroup. Start here:** screentimenetwork.org
- **Connect with our Young Children Thrive Offline program:** rachel@fairplayforkids.org | rene@fairplayforkids.org
- **Share this info** with families, communities, colleagues, and more!