

# TOYMAKERS LOOK TO COLORADO KIDS FOR SEAL OF APPROVAL

By TaRhonda Thomas • November 7th, 2010



**CENTENNIAL** - Any parent knows that, like it or not, a child will tell you how they feel about certain things. Toy manufacturers have figured this out, too. That is why they've sent their newest items to Colorado preschoolers.

"Who's a better judge than the kids? They definitely tell you what they like and what they don't! There's no filter," laughed Abby Hussey, owner of the Centennial location of the Goddard School.

When the preschoolers got the news that they would be the first to test the toys this week, they broke out into cheers and dances.

"It seems fun to me," 4-year-old Emma said as she played with one of the toys.

Selected items included a collection of dinosaurs inside a box that turned into a play mat; a puzzle made of recycled materials; eco-friendly blocks; a game that used shapes to help children identify faces and a set for building mini vehicles. The last option was the favorite for 4-year-old Louie.

"It makes it go super-fast like a jet plane," he said of one part that he added to his creation.

The Goddard School on South Lima Street is one of 20 of the school locations across the country participating in this year's Preschooler Approved Toy Test. Manufacturers from across the country respond to the call to submit their newest toys. The school's National Education Director makes the final selection and sends the toys to Goddard School locations across the country to let kids have the final say-so.

The winning toys get a seal that say "Preschooler Approved," which many manufacturers put on their packaging.

"It's great to watch them learn and use their imagination," Hussey said, adding that parents in search of good toys should choose options that are child-focused and allow the children to use all five of their senses.

"Things that are tactile and hands-on," she said.

One of the kids' favorite options was the set of thinly-shaped eco-friendly blocks that could be used to build up cities. It is a toy that teachers say is actually educational.

"They think they're building blocks... and knocking them down... but this really involves a lot of cognitive development," Hussey said.

For preschools and parents, the goal is to find engaging, educational toys that can withstand the test of time.

"Some kids get a new toy and are done with it in a week," Hussey said. "These could last through the ages as they get older."