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by [NYMetro Parents Staff](#)

September 20, 2006



TOYS & GAMES

DOODLING PLAY

Westchester residents Bill Phelps and Steve Wright have a game to unleash the inner artist and linguist in anyone. **Yamodo** is a game without winning or losing — players get a card with a made-up word, and a beginning drawing, and each player contributes part of the imagined definition and more of the drawing. You can play this alone, but it is more fun with the whole family (six and up). \$19.95 at [www.barnesandnoble.com](#). *(Review posted 5/07)*

FATHER OF INVENTION

When Michel Alvarez couldn't interest his son in playing traditional games of chess, he came up with a twist: chess pieces filled with prizes. When you capture a piece, you get the prize inside. Parents can customize the pieces, using stickers, M & M's, or beads. And **WonderChess** (\$19.99), which can be played with kids 4 and up, has expanded to other games as well. **WonderLetters** is a Scrabble-style game, where kids make words, and prizes are hidden in the letters. WonderLetters (\$24.99, for ages 6 and up), includes three Spanish letters, so you can play in English or Spanish. The games are sold at Nordstrom, Wondrous Things, Pizazz, Borders and Mary Arnold Toys. *(Review posted 5/07)*



BABY ALIVE LIVES ON

Many moms had **Baby Alive** when they were kids. The updated doll, which eats (the special doll food she comes with) and poops, also talks — she tells her 'mommy' when to change her diaper. Baby Alive is even available in a bilingual version. Her huge eyes move, and she even wrinkles her nose when she makes a 'stinky'. The doll, from Hasbro, is \$49.99 at KB toys, for ages 3 and up. For more information,

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go to www.hasbro.com/BabyAlive. (Review posted 12/06).



BUILDING BLOCKS

—Kids can learn about architecture and engineering while building. The **Bridge & Turnpike Tekton Truss Bridge** set, for ages 8 and up, allows kids to construct bridges with hundreds of plastic pieces. There are simple explanations of truss bridges (which are made from triangles), and the pieces are scale models of actual bridge parts. Other sets include buildings, which can be combined to make cityscapes. The manufacturer, Bridge Street Toys, is a true family business; Carol and Paul Flack, engineers, and their 10-year-old and 12-year-old children, run the company. The bridge set is \$42.95 at www.bridgestreettoys.com. (Review posted 11/06)



—LEGO has added sound pieces to its Creator series. The **Revvin' Riders** set can be used to make motorcycles and dirt bikes, and the sound bricks make playing with the creations even more fun. \$19.99. For ages 7-12. At www.lego.com. (Review posted 11/06)



—**Mega Bloks Pirates of the Caribbean: Black Pearl Ship Playset** lets kids build and create scenes from the Pirates of the Caribbean movie. There are cannons, (that launch), moving pulleys, and three action figures: Captain Jack Sparrow, Cotton and Pintel. For ages 6-14, \$39.99 at www.amazon.com. (Review posted 10/06).

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