

Holiday Gift Guide *By Kathleen Miller*

FOR THIS YEAR'S gift guide we gave our gift gurus a special challenge — give us gifts that have a local connection and/or benefit a non-profit organization. As always, we looked for well-made gifts that fostered creative play or pampered hardworking adults. All of our picks can be found at the store that recommended them, but we've also included manufacturer's information so you can ask about them elsewhere.

Infants and their parents

Sky Flight Mobiles — Beautiful handcrafted mobiles made in Duvall featuring images of nature, including



Skyflights mobile

butterflies, orcas, birds and stars. \$30 (Merry Go Round, Bellevue)

Rugged Idea Blankets — These weather-proof blankies are super-soft and warm one side and the other side



Books for babies — Check out three charming titles: *The First 1,000 Days* — *Baby Journal* and *Awake to Nap*, both by Nikki McClure, *Peek-a-Who* by Nina Laden, *Where Do I Sleep* by Jennifer Blomgren and *Read Aloud Rhymes for the Very Young* by Jack Prelutsky. (Lilypad Books, Issaquah)

Toddlers to kindergarteners

Emphasis lights — They look like cool flying saucers in toddler-pleasing colors, and can be used as a night light or flashlight. \$36

(Merry Go Round, Bellevue and Clover Toys, Ballard)

Fantasy costumes — Custom-made fairy



Love=Creatures

finger puppets handmade by a women's fair trade cooperative in Peru. \$9 (Clover Toys, Ballard and All For Kids, Seattle)

Love=Creatures Hip Plush Animals — Seattle mom and artist Dawn Ramerman creates one-of-a-kind bright and beautiful creatures, each with its own personality. \$25 (Clover Toys, Ballard)

Teepees — Kids love a special place of their own to play. Market Teepees offers colorful teepees that are easy to set up and store. \$40 to \$50 (www.galaxymall.com/shops/tps4kids or 206-325-7630, or at Seattle's Pike Place Market)

Bubble Wands — Bothell-based Majic Bubble Wand offers giant bubble wands in a set with a pan and a bubble recipe. Kids will play with these for hours! \$6 per wand and \$20



Elementary school

Xeko — Xeko is a card-based eco-adventure game for ages 8-11. Produced by Seattle-based Matter Group, which donates a portion of their profits to Conservation International. (Curious Kidstuff, West Seattle)

Wonder Chess — Unique chess boards and other games that offer a "prize inside." The Seattle company sends a portion of their profits to non-profits, including El Centro De La Raza. (Clover Toys, Ballard, and Izilla Toys, Seattle)

Play-date cards and thank-you notes — If your child has ever struggled to set up a play date or needs encouragement writing thank you notes, why not