

Featured in the 2008 Holiday Preview Issue of **Playthings** magazine!

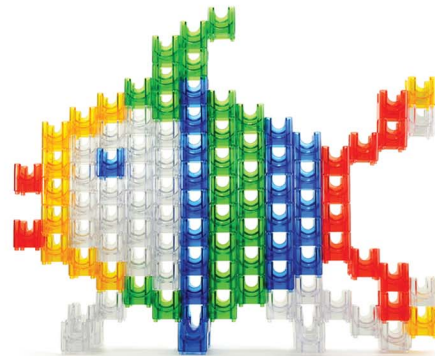
It may not be noticeable to the untrained eye, but behind the scenes at the nation's toy stores, it's already beginning to look a lot like Christmas—and this month we're giving our readers a preview of it. On the following pages you'll find some of the stand-out products we predict that at this moment are rapidly filling the stockrooms of toy stores—and that soon enough the nation's children will most heartily be hoping for once the holiday season is in full swing. Of course, there's always something that slips past the eyes of the prognosticators, but when these products wind up stripped from store shelves, don't say we didn't warn you!

—Karyn M. Peterson and Cliff Annicelli



Holiday Showcase

3. Art, engineering and playtime collide beautifully with the **Q-Ba-Maze 20-pack** set from **Q-Ba-Maze**, which lets kids (and adults) create 3-D sculptures that double as desk-top marble runs using the enclosed steel balls. The translucent sets of interlocking cubes are available in both hot and cool colors. (Pictured: a fish sculpture utilizing both hot and cool colors.) Also available: 50-pack sets. Q-Ba-Maze.com



Construction

1. The 30-piece **Abby Cadabby** set from **K'Nex** is specially designed for ages 2 and up. It includes the classic K'Nex rods and connectors as well as an all-new design of blocks to help kids build their very own version of the newest Muppet and fairy-in-training. It also includes stickers and activity cards, packed into a storage bin. A full line of additional Sesame Street sets is also available. K'Nex.com

2. This **Police Headquarters** set from **Legó's** City line is an expansive 953-piece set of hometown heroes for ages 6 and up. Once built, the structure is fully equipped with an office area, prisoner cells, garage and secret passage walls, and the modular system means the layout can easily be rearranged. Includes seven mini figures, police dog and handcuffs, plus three vehicles: a police van, car and motorcycle. Legó.com

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4. The cleverly designed, 49-piece **Word World Barn** set for ages 3 and up from **Mega Brands** includes A to Z alphabet blocks, two WordFriends characters for kids to build, a *Word World* DVD and a storage bucket, the top of which doubles as a farm scene. It offers several play patterns, from word learning and building to construction to role-play featuring characters from the PBS series it's based on. MegaBrands.com

