



Kate and Lori McConville own Marvin's Toy Store with a new location in Barrington.

The Center of Play

MARVIN'S TOY STORE OFFERS EARTH-FRIENDLY, WELL-DESIGNED TOYS THAT ARE MEANT TO LAST AND DELIVER HOURS OF FUN, WONDER, AND LEARNING.

KATE MCCONVILLE AND HER MOM, Lori McConville, teamed up just over six years ago to combine the best of their personal knowledge and parenting experience to benefit other parents and their children. The result is a toy store that features carefully selected toys made all over the world.

The main criteria for their selections are earth-friendly, long-lasting toys that encourage learning while being fun to play with. Their quest for high-quality children's products has resulted in sourcing toys from manufacturers in many countries—Germany, Denmark, Ireland, Mexico, Sweden, Canada, China, the USA, and Guatemala. They look for socially and environmentally responsible manufacturers that follow strict rules of governance.

Kate McConville worked for the McHenry County Health Department and was also a consultant who taught breastfeeding skills and nutrition to low-income moms. Kate has two children of her own. Lori got into the children's toy business after trying to find quality toys for her own children. That, combined with a growing awareness of sustainability and environmental impact issues, moved her to research products.



Plan toys are all-wood, earth-friendly toys that incorporate thoughtful design and age-appropriate challenges to stimulate children's creativity, encourage healthy social interaction, promote natural learning, and instill a sense of wonder.



The M-cro Kickboard Scooter is designed in Sweden. Every piece is replaceable to make it a long-lasting toy. For ages two to 12.



Arckit is a collection of Architectural model kits that encourage learning while playing. There is a Professional and STEM series of model kits that are perfect for Architects, Budding Architects, Hobbyists, Students, Teens and Adults of all Ages. Arckit is made in Ireland.

She spent more than one year reviewing products and then she made a list of those that she supported. She looked at toy safety issues, pushed for quality over quantity, and wanted toys that would not become land-fill and a short window of use. "I believe that if you put people and the environment first, you will be successful," Lori said.

THOUGHTFUL CHARACTERISTICS

In addition to meeting exceptional safety standards and providing lots of play value, many of the team's toys and products have at least one of these characteristics:

- **Responsible—Kindness Counts:** Crafted by organizations that value socially responsible labor and/or manufacturing practices. Also, those that participate in community involvement programs and/or donate to charitable organizations.
- **Fair Trade:** Products that abide by Fair Trade guidelines for equal opportunity manufacturing and trade.
- **Organic:** Crafted with certified organic materials (up to 100%).
- **Natural:** Crafted with natural materials.
- **Recycled:** Crafted with sustainably harvested, recycled, and/or reused materials and/or packaging.
- **Parent Crafted:** Products crafted and founded by parents and family-owned companies.
- **Active Play:** Designed and ready for active, up and moving play indoors and outdoors.

Marvin's Toy Stores are located in Woodstock (inside Read Between the Lynes, a local bookstore on the Square), Crystal Lake (Williams Street), and now Barrington. Children playing with toys from Marvin's Toy Store won't know all the thought and care that went into their sourcing. But moms, dads, and others can rest assured that Marvin's Toys will last, sometimes for more than one generation, and bring imagination, wonderment, and the ability to foster their loved one's growth and learning.

To learn more, stop in the Barrington store at 100 E. Station St. #155, across the courtyard from Francesca's Famiglia restaurant. Or, call 224-848-4016. Visit online at marvinstore.com.



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