

spotlight: pretend play

When Practice Makes Perfect

New role-play toys and play environments

By Cliff Annicelli

For adults, imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, but for kids it's much more than that—it's a vital learning tool. There's a wealth of social knowledge to be learned while emulating the way grown-ups buy groceries, serve tea or spend their working hours. There's also a lot of creativity to be fostered by letting kids think up and act out their own storylines, aided only by a few simple props and an iconic costume. Gathered here are just a few of the many new role-play toys and play environments available to let kids bring to life their own unique storylines. ■



■ Following on the heels of its impressively authentic looking astronaut outfits, **Aeromax** expands its selection of fire fighter products with the Aeromax Jr. Yellow Fire Fighter set. Like the original black-and-tan version of the ensemble, the yellow kit includes bib overall with pockets, knee patches and adjustable suspenders; and a coat with buckles, zipper, pockets, authentic gauntlet cuffs, reinforced elbow patches and wrap-around collar. \$59.95 Helmet sold separately. \$8.99