



LOCAL TOY STORE HOSTS FAMILY EVENT INSPIRED BY TIA'S GENIUS OF PLAY

October 11, 2015 | The Toy Industry Association's (TIA) [Genius of Play](#) movement inspired the owner of a local toy store in Leominster, MA to hold a special event for families last week. As reported in the [Sentinel and Enterprise](#), Cassandra Abramson, owner of Cutie Patuties, hosted a Saturday afternoon activity called "Let's Play" to highlight the benefits of unstructured, creative playtime. Children had fun testing out the store's toys and games, while parents were encouraged to take the Genius of Play's "[Play Pledge](#)" and commit to giving their children more opportunities to play. Currently, the Genius of Play has motivated fun-loving families across the nation to pledge a collective 550,000+ hours of play. For every pledge made, TIA is donating a brand-new toy to a child in need.

Laura Mason, mother of two, said the event was a "great idea" and aligned well with her own philosophies on open-ended play. "[My kids] have their screen time, but then we turn it off and say, 'OK, go figure out what you're doing.' We pretty much let them go at it, and they entertain themselves very well," Mason told the [Sentinel and Enterprise](#).

Backed by scientific and sociological research, the Genius of Play aims to raise awareness among parents and caregivers about the myriad benefits of play and its positive impact on children's cognitive, social, emotional and creative development.

"We are thrilled to see that our industry's message is resonating so well with families," said Ken Seiter, TIA's vice president of marketing communications. "We hope to see other toy stores follow suit by hosting their own events to champion the benefits of play. Together, we can enrich the happiness, growth and wellbeing of children around the world."

Toy stores can get involved by sharing Genius of Play materials and research with shoppers and by hosting special in-store events. Toymakers can also spread awareness about the power of play on their websites and social media. Promotional materials can be accessed at www.TheGeniusofPlay.org/Assets; questions may be directed to TIA's Jackie Retzer.