



Let's Make Shoppers Think!!

If you've been in a big box store toy department lately, you know that when it comes to play, girls and boys are reduced to gender stereotypes, neatly organized in pink and blue aisles. Girls are sold nurturing, cooking, and cleaning, with a heavy dose of fashion and appearance/body obsession. Their toys, like Bratz and Monster High dolls become a gateway into a narrowly stereotyped and very sexy version of teen life. Boys, on the other hand, are told that they can create, destroy, or save the world. Minus the destruction/aggression messages—not good for anyone—toys that invite all manner of exploration, construction, and action, like LEGO and Playmobile, are primarily marketed to boys, and these toys, which support spatial abilities and cognitive problem-solving, have far more creative possibilities.



One the most important things we can do is raise awareness with parents and other adults buying these toys for children. This SPARKit does just

that. **You've Been SPARKed!** invites you to call attention to stereotypes in toy stores and other places where sexism and sexualization reigns supreme. We are SPARKing this movement armed with colored Post-It notes and cameras, calling attention to the ways boys and girls are boxed in by media and marketers.

Let's get started!

1. Grab yourself some differently colored Post-its, markers, and a camera (your phone will do) and head out to a local store or mall.

Wander the few feet of the toy aisle it will take before you see a sexist or sexualized marketing message. On a Post-it, write a quick note using slogans like “Where My Girls At?” on an adventure set with no visible female characters; “Where’s GI Jane?” on a GI Joe; or “What About learning to become good Dads?” on the baby dolls.

Under your message write: “You’ve Been SPARKed!
www.sparkmovement.org”

Check out these clever examples for inspiration!





You can use statistics, too. Here are some to get you started:
Women make up only 13% of architects (Gee, LEGO, we wonder why); 14% of active US military (Where is G.I. Jane?), and 4% of executive chefs (So, why are all the kitchen gadgets pink?).

2. When you're done, snap a picture, and then email it to us at sparkmovement.org and we'll add it to our **You've Been SPARKed! Facebook album!**

IMPORTANT NOTE! If you do any toy rearranging, be sure to put things back as you found them. We don't want to make life difficult for underpaid store workers!

3. Once you've started, it's hard to Stop! So why not check out the other store aisles and add your enlightened commentary to, say, the graphic T-shirts?



Your pictures will be worth a thousand words. Perhaps these notes will also make parents, grandparents, shoppers and employees question why there are blue and pink aisles in the first place.

**We can't wait to see your pictures,
So go ahead, SPARK this action!**