

Start the new year with 'Seal of Approval' products

12584

Every year I get hundreds of e-mails from men and women asking me to recommend products that can help dads strengthen their relationships with their children. That's what inspired me to start the Mr. Dad Seal of Approval.

I wrote my first Mr. Dad Seal of Approval column last year right before Father's Day. Here's a new list for dads who resolve to spend more quality time with their kids this year.

As before, the criteria were very strict. To earn the Seal, a product or service has to:

- Help dads get or stay involved with their children.
- Improve the quality of the time fathers and children spend together.
- Improve father-child relationships.
- Help dads be better parents.

Using these criteria, over the past couple of months a team of evaluators and I considered dozens of products. The competition was fierce, but we were finally able to select the products that did the best job of bringing dads and their children closer together.

Here are a few of my favorites. While not all of these gifts are specifically for dads, they still give them some wonderful ways to connect with their children.

"Piano Wizard" is an amazingly simple family video game that can teach anybody to play piano and read music. The graphics are engaging

ARMIN
BROTT
ASK MR. DAD



and at the beginning levels easy enough for a 3-year-old. It's so much fun that you may find yourself putting the kids to bed a little early so you can play by yourself.

"Learning Cents Bank" is a great way for Dad to teach his children about money. It teaches

kids how to divide their allowances into three cylinders: spending, saving and charity. There's even a Hebrew version with tzedakah (charity)

"All the Colors," a new CD of children's music by Ira Marlowe, has something we like a lot: smarts. Not only is the music original, fun, and appealing, the lyrics don't underestimate the intelligence of their listeners.

Better Surf Diaperbag/Backpack may be the perfect diaper bag for Dad. Not a flower or lamb or a fluffy bunny to be found. Beside looking like a manly beach bag, it's got a detachable fanny pack, a good-size diaper changing pad, and a cell phone holder.

"Journey to Fatherhood." This interactive journaling software is one of the best gifts Dad can give his child. Dad can start recording his thoughts about his partner's pregnancy and create a book about his child's birth.

The complete list of the Seal of Approval winners is available at www.MrDad.com/seal

Happy new year!

Visit Armin Brott's Web site, www.mrdad.com, or e-mail him at armin@mrdad.com.