

Defending barbie



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

When I was young, one of the most favorite songs I usually listened to is "Barbie Girl". The song started with funny melodies about a blonde single girl named Barbie. She lived in her dream house with swimming pool, convertible and lovely things. She also had a boyfriend named Ken. She was not a girl coming from this song but a doll who was created in 1959 by Mattel. Until now she is over 50 years-old but her beauty and her lifestyle are always the dream of children. She does not look like the fashionable trends which will be old-fashionable after a short period. Her influences to children never decline. Barbie is not only a plastic doll that cannot talk and interact but also a friend who plays an inspiring role in their life. In my experience with playing and owning Barbie's, Barbie has had nothing but the fun and positive impacts on my life. First of all, the most positive impact of Barbie is the meaningful messages which she brings to us through her story. Barbie is famous with her dream house, convertible, beautiful outfits, luxurious jewelries and expensive shoes. She owns the luxurious things which she acquires them all by herself from being a career woman.

She is a symbol of a successful woman by working in a wide range of jobs such as a dentist, a teacher, a police, a chef, a baby-sitter, a fire-fighter, an artist and so on. For this reason, she can earn a lot of money by her own capacity and buy everything she likes. Not just that, Barbie is also a fashion monger. She always appears in the most beautiful outfits with different styles and she will be the person who updates the newest fashionable trends of famous brands. She has a boyfriend but she does not depend on his bank account.

She is depicted as an independent girl who does not rely on a man to take care or support for her. By her own way, Barbie becomes an ideal model of women, a public idol who many children want to become. They all want a Barbie to play with and to be like her because of her meaningful message that Barbie can be anything she wants and so do they. Besides that, there are countless valuable messages she brings to children such as being feminine, living independent from man, doing anything you want, working any kind of jobs which you like, achieving your dreams by putting your heart and mind into it, being fashionable... through her special and unique lifestyle.

Secondly, Barbie helps children develop their creation. Owning a Barbie doll is not a simple work. When we buy a Barbie, she just looks like the other Barbie dolls with same faces, same body shapes, same outfits or even same colors of hair. However children have their freedom to make her become different. Whether she will become a unique doll depends on children's hands and minds. If they want Barbie to be different, they have to figure out and act. It is the way Barbie motivates children's minds in imaginative acts.

Holding Barbie in their hand, they can start to change the appearance of Barbie by typing her hair up with rubber bands, make braids or change Barbie hair lengths by cutting shorter too. Besides that, they can also try to replace the set of her outfits by the other one. It is not compulsory that Barbie has to wear this T-shirt with his trouser. Children can combine the t-shirt with a long skirt and create a new style. Moreover they can modify the length of her dresses as they might like or they can even try to sew a new dress or a T-shirt for her.

The ideas to imagine the context which Barbie belongs to is not a bad ideas. For example, Barbie who wears a gorgeous dress may attend in a prom party. Not just that, due to her flexible body children can modify the position of her arms, bend her legs or sink her head like she is greeting someone for their ideas. Barbie makeovers are not only fun, but also creative. It step by step helps children show their own style. Barbie successfully shows her power in promoting the children's imagination and creation. Moreover Barbie is a friend who inspires children to show their own identity.

Playing with their Barbie, children have a chance to show their dream, their lifestyle and their personalities. The children would like to spend many hours to take part in a role play that Barbie is the main character. The context is one of the necessary elements in their imaginative play. Nothing is scripted in their imagination; it includes children's pretended role play. In their play, Barbie will be a reflective image of children. For example, if the child considers Barbie as a teacher, she may create a play that Barbie goes to the school and works at 7 a. m. At 5 p. m, she comes back her home and plays with her children.

Then there are some conservation between Barbie and her children... In this case, perhaps the child has a dream to be a good teacher in future. She also thinks about her future as a kind mother with a lot of children around her. Besides that, the child shows her time for Barbie going to work and coming back home means that she is very good at managing her time. However the role of Barbie in these plays is not fixed. Children usually change Barbie's careers and extend the plots as well as the conservation to illustrate theirfamilylife, imagine adolescent life and glamorous events.

Barbie will be the copy of children which helps them show their dreams, their personalities and their real life. Since I was 12 years old, Barbie was always appeared in my wish lists. That was the time when I came to my friend's house and saw her doll. Her Barbie's beauty going along with her beautiful outfits and accessorizes makes me fall in love with her. However it was not easy to own a Barbie doll due to its price and its market distribution. I remember at that time it is very difficult to find the original Barbie in Vietnam. The only way to own a Barbie doll at that time was you had to buy in America and send back.

My dream only came true when my uncle came back to Vietnam in 2009. He brought a Barbie doll as a gift for me. Although it was not a right time for me to play Barbie due to my busy schedule and my age, I still felt very happy when owning such a beautiful doll. Every weekend, I have to go to Ho Chi Minh City and I take a bus to come back my hometown. When I leave, my younger sister usually stays at home alone. As the result, Barbie became my younger sister's friend whom she could spend for hours to play with. One day when I came home from Ho Chi Minh City, my sister asked me to design some clothes for Barbie.

I accepted her request because I thought this was a good chance to me for practicing my sewing skills. We came to some tailor shops asking for scraps of fabric together. Then we tried to sew the simplest outfit for Barbie without taking her measurements or sketching out her outfit including a strapless shirt and a mini skirt. Although they were not really excellent, it was an unexpected success and it made us feel really satisfied for our efforts. By

sewing the outfit for Barbie, we together stimulate our creation. Not just that, she also enjoyed changing Barbie's appearance for example the hair.

Thanks to the long and straight hair, my sister created many different hairstyles as far as she could imagine. Sometimes Barbie becomes a charming girl with the small lovely braids, another time she turned into an active girl with the basic horse-tail style. Besides that as far as I know, she also had a schedule for taking care of Barbie. She usually changed Barbie's hair and her outfits every day and cleaned the dirt in Barbie every weekend. Taking care of Barbie shows how thoughtful and careful she was. Barbie somehow helps me realize my sister's identity. Sometimes when I came home and saw my younger sister was talking to Barbie.

She often played a role as a teacher and Barbie was her student. She had her own classroom map which included the position of her friends and Barbie in class. She taught Barbie the subjects she studied such as Math, Literature or Music. Thanks to the plays she performed together with Barbie; I realize many potential capabilities of my younger sister as well as her identity and her thoughts. While many people today only pay attention to Barbie's unreal body shape and argue about her negative influences she may bring to children due to her story and her lifestyles, they seem to forget her positive impacts.

In my opinion, instead of complaining about Barbie and her body measurements, we should reinforce the facts that Barbie helps life of children become more beautiful and lively. By the time when children grow up, Barbie will help them figure out their career, their characteristics and

their lifestyle. She is not a plastic doll who was named Barbie but a bridge and an instructor guiding children to their future. What a wonderfully full and imaginative world we enjoy with Barbie!