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A HORSE IS A HORSE, OF COURSE, OF COURSE UNLESS IT'S A PICCOLI HORSE

*Innovative Learning App Encourages Children To Speak Aloud As
Cuddly (Tech-Free) Toy Horse Becomes Their Beloved Best Buddy*

Lexington, KY (May 27, 2018) – The sound of silence is not something you want to hear in a house with children. (Well, sometimes it's okay!) But have you noticed how youngsters do their "talking" with their fingers on their devices? Kids are communicating by texting instead of lively conversations. One tech toy company hopes to conquer this unhealthy phenomenon with huggable toy horses and a free learning app.

Say hello (out loud) to Piccoli Horses, a new technology-based toy company, already in 150+ retailers across the country. Piccoli (pronounced peek-oh-lee) is Italian and it translates to little, small and young, as in their little 6" and 14" plush ponies and among their young audience. As their website, www.piccolihorses.com, explains, "We make the softest, cutest plush horses that are intended to accompany your child while they explore our educational app."



Not since Mr. Ed (of black & white television fame) have horses and talking combined to enchant children. Horses have understood and communicated with their human caretakers for thousands of years. In fact, horses are the #1 most communicative mammal on the planet! Toy company Piccoli Horses, headquartered in the horse country of Kentucky, combines the delightful stuffed animal (move over teddy bear) with a fun app that children and parents will want to play again and again.



"Yes, there are great educational toys for learning words and yes, even motivating kids to exercise," explains Piccoli Horses CEO Kimberly Rogers. "But nothing combines talking aloud, physical movement and a tangible object for learning."

The most common question is always: *What does the horse do? Or where is the horse's on button?* The answer is simple: Piccoli Horses introduces children to technology and the company does not want the adverse effects of screen time.

Winner of four toy industry awards – including *Creative Child* magazine and *Tillywig Toy* – Piccoli Horses uses the technology of Apple or Android apps to allow kids to be kids through silly movements and words. Their language learning app is based on science and research – created by early education experts, parents and teachers.



Piccoli Zoo free app shows and tells the word snake, then asks kids to stretch and pose like a snake.

With a tap and swipe of their small fingers, kids will speak aloud while jumping, stretching or moving their whole bodies as instructed on the engaging app. Enter the world of Piccoli Zoo, and watch how kids are enticed to skip, crawl or jump while speaking aloud after encountering a kangaroo, bear, giraffe, lion or other members of the animal world! A roar here and there is encouraged too.

All the time the child plays Piccoli Zoo app, the plush horse is right there, offering a loving connection to the here and now. The horse in cartoon form pops up in the app to guide the child to new words and actions!

The result? Kinetic learning takes place. Kids practice using their words, moving their bodies, and maximizing learning — all while having fun. “A human child has to speak aloud and play for conversation skills to grow. The horse keeps the child connected to the here and now, so he or she does not get lost in the world of electronic devices. It’s the combination of all three that creates the magic – the perfect way to learn with and through technology.”

Piccoli Horses is now available in English. However, moms voted in a recent Facebook campaign to add Spanish, Chinese, French and German. Look for an updated app with more languages coming soon!

Only want the horse? Children of all ages love this delightful stuffed animal. “We sell as many horses to teenagers and young adults as we do to young children. They love the horse, even if they’re 23!”

How Piccoli Began

Rogers began the journey, which led to Piccoli Horses, years ago to help her son. Dylan had gradual onset hydrocephalus, a serious brain disease, which required three neurosurgeries. At three years old he was unable to speak. English was a foreign language for him. Rogers wouldn’t accept that she might never hear her little boy say mommy, so she set out to help him.

She contacted the experts: speech pathologists, occupational therapists, doctors, and teachers. They told her Dylan had to stay engaged in physical play to learn English because he missed the ‘receptive language years’ – that critical time when a child’s brain is receptive/open to learning new languages. Learning from a screen alone wouldn’t work. “They told me physical movement is required to absorb language. That and speaking our words aloud,” Rogers explained. She combined their recommendations and invented the Piccoli system.

With the free downloaded app, the child slides horse icons to the left to progress through the lesson. Reviewers online gush how Piccoli provides a calm, supportive and fun environment to maximize learning new languages. Add a tech-free huggable horse to the lesson and it’s an unbeatable combination of simple childhood pleasures and little language lessons.

- *“Adorable horses and fantastic app,” typed one online customer, “my 4-year-old is in love with both!! Buy a horse and download the app - you won’t be disappointed!”*
- *“My youngest is two-years-old and she loves Piccoli Zoo! I love the idea of all my kids learning how fun foreign languages can be!”*
- *“Very soft toy that I gave my nephew for his birthday,” wrote in one Amazon buyer. “He loves it. My sister told me he takes the horse with him on all sorts of adventures, even in the mud.”*

Children will be delighted to learn that every Piccoli Horse comes with a unique name. As the website explains, “In the equestrian world, the show name of every horse is unique. There is only one. This name you’re about to discover is the only one in the whole Piccoli world. Ever. (And then you give your horse a nickname.) Enter the code, click, and uncover the one-of-a-kind name!”



Piccoli Zoo App • Free download for IOS and Android • Ages 2+

Piccoli Zoo is designed introduce children to the fun of learning languages, their own and others. The goal is to get children speaking aloud in a playful, fun way by encouraging them to move their whole bodies through physical activities including jumping, skipping, crawling, etc. Our educational language development apps use tangible objects to encourage children to stay connected to their present environment.

Version 2.0. key features:

- Learn subjects and verbs through zoo animals and their actions
- Child mimics the animal behaviors
- As child completes tutorial with different voices, he/she collects stars at the bottom of the screen.
- When the star changes color, you have advanced to a different animal
- Celebrate success with tangible object (toy horse)
- No subscriptions, in-game upgrades, or hidden fees
- A new map to show your child's progress
- Child can continue playing or take a break halfway through the app
- A praise button allows child to hear different compliments about their progress. After three times, the button disappears, prompting the child to continue playing the app.

Not surprising to retailers, many families have discovered the App without buying a toy horse. Likewise, parents and grandparents are discovering the stuffed animal without downloading the App. Piccoli offers something and someone for everyone! Here are the stuffed animals in Piccoli’s stable:

Piccoli Classic 14” Plush • \$30 • Ages 3+

Choices, choices! Pick your horse from a variety of colors and then select a saddle that’s created just for a special boy or girl. Each horse is handcrafted with high-quality fabric and features a large blue ribbon and beautifully-made custom saddle. Find this classic toy on Amazon, PiccoliHorses.com and across the country at specialty stores.



Piccoli Racehorse • \$30 • All Ages

Red Velvet is a unique chestnut horse. Chestnut is the color of the mane, tail, body and feet because most famous Kentucky racehorse winners are this shade of red. The neck is adorned with a wreath of red roses and the bottom of the feet have handsome silver shoes.



Piccoli Mini 6” Plush • \$15 • All Ages



These adorable ponies sold out quickly in 2017, but a new batch just arrived! Some of the mini horse saddles are handmade in Kentucky from repurposed fabrics, too little to be used for anything other than filling our landfills. You can even get your child’s name embroidered on the saddle strap for an extra \$2.00.

Follow Piccoli Horses on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram. Keep up with exclusive offers, newest plush toys and latest apps by signing up for Piccoli’s email newsletter. You’ll also get weekly inspiring quotes like this one: “No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted.”--*The Lion and the Mouse, Aesop’s Fables*

CEO Kimberly Rogers Quote

“The horse is this generation’s teddy bear. That traditional, classic stuffed animal we all had. I had a Raggedy Ann, my husband had a teddy bear. My best friend had a green kitty. Let’s face it, some of those stuffed animals ended up going to college with us! There’s nothing electronic in our horses. Why? Our kids don’t need more electronic toys,” suggests the Piccoli Horses CEO. “They are ‘plugged in’ enough. At Piccoli, we want to go back to using technology as the tool it was meant to be. It’s the app that’s revolutionary. Putting movement together with words is the natural way to learn language. I found this out after my son’s first neurosurgery. The experts explained the importance of speaking aloud and physical movement. With our App, a child hears *Horse*, and then says *Horse*. A child hears *Trot*, and then repeats *Trot*. Then the child gets to trot like a horse. Subject, verb and the action. With our apps, kids still get to play with technology, so they don’t feel like they are missing out anything. There’s a cartoon illustration of their horse on the app that they slide each time a new screen comes up. But they also play with the plush horse. They connect with that stuffed animal instead of the device.”

ABOUT PICCOLI HORSES

Piccoli Horses help children learn to love the fun of languages by incorporating movements, speaking aloud and a classic stuffed animal to connect the children to their own world, the here and now. Trot over to www.PiccoliHorses.com and learn about this classic toy and revolutionary app, taking the good from both the past and the present.