



8400 Fairway Place • Middleton, WI 53562 • (800) 845-0005 • www.americangirl.com

Megan Anderson, PR Manager

Phone: (212) 434-3367

megananderson@americangirl.com

Backgrounder

History of American Girl

Ever since its founding in 1989, by the Pleasant Company, American Girl has strived to encourage young girls through all of its products. The company started inspiring girls with dolls but it has grown since then. In 1998, Mattel bought American Girl. While the company grew and changed, so did its assortment of products. American Girl now offers dolls, books, magazines, movies and more to its customers. The first issue of the American girl magazine debuted in January of 1992 began a new era for American Girl. The website launched in 1999, creating customers more outlets to reach the products. In 2003, retail stores began opening across the country. Throughout the company's evolution, its purpose did not change. Today, American Girl's mission remains consistent: To fuel belonging and connection among girls.

Brands

American Girl offers a diverse range of products for its customers. Each brand targets a certain age group of young girls. Having a selective age group allows American Girl to effectively tailor its products for the intended purpose.

The brands of American Girl include:

WellieWishers™

For girls ages 5 to 7, these characters teach lessons of empathy, kindness and the importance of good friendships.

WellieWishers feature five characters:

- Willa
- Kendall
- Ashlyn
- Emerson
- Camille



-MORE-

WellieWishers' whimsical garden adventures come to life using American Girl's animated series. Besides these episodes, girls can adventure with the WellieWishers through chapter books, dolls, accessories and a free app.

BeForever™

The BeForever line focuses on reaching all girls 8 years old and up. Introduced in 1986, the BeForever dolls focus on teaching girls about the past and even what their future can hold. The dolls teach girls to connect with others that share interests, challenges and dreams.

The BeForever line includes:

- **Kaya**
- **Josefina**
- **Addy**
- **Samantha**
- **Kit**
- **Maryellen**
- **Melody**
- **Julie**



Girls will get lost in the character's stories by the doll, historically accurate clothing, accessories and two-volume book series. Girls can now play with the BeForever characters with online games and apps. BeForever events take place throughout the year at American Girl retail stores around the country.

Truly Me™

As customizable dolls, Truly Me dolls stand out from the other American Girl dolls. Girls 8 years old and up chose from more than 40 combinations to create a doll that resembles them. They can choose the eye color, hair color, hair style and skin tone. Girls can add accessories that reflect their own interests and activities.

The Truly Me world, however, does not end with dolls. American Girl also provides craft and activity books, online games, apps and in store events.

Girl Of The Year™

Each year, girl's interests change the new trend and events. Starting in 2001, every year American Girl releases a new doll with related books and accessories that relate the current events. This line focuses on providing girls 8 years old and up an outlet for their interests.



Each Girl Of The Year overcomes a universal challenge of the time. Lea Clark, the 2016 Girl Of The Year, goes on a trip with her family and overcomes her fears. Lea encourages girls to escape from their comfort zones and experience new things.

Each year the line includes many fun interactive activities for girls to engage in. Girls have the opportunity to watch live-action movies, play online games and apps, attend retail events and read learning guides.

Bitty Baby™

The Bitty Baby line, designed for girls 3 years old and up, fosters nurturing through play. The soft bodied dolls make this line stand out from the other lines made by American Girl. The dolls have six different combinations of skin tone and eye and hair color. Accessories for the Bitty Baby include a signature sleeper, diaper bag, stroller, wooden crib, changing table and matching clothes for the girl and the doll. The product line also offers a picture book with a CD of 12 songs.



American Girl Magazine™

The American Girl Magazine focuses on encouraging the 8- to 12-year-old readers to follow their dreams no matter what. The magazine's mission is to help girls find their way in a confusing yet exciting world- to entertain, educate, and empower them at a time when so much in their lives is changing.

Locations

American Girl has its headquarters located in Middleton, Wis.; however, it has retail stores located all around The United States and even some internationally. American Girl holds 20 permanent retail locations with in The United States.

The United States locations:

- Atlanta
- Boston
- Charlotte
- Chicago
- Columbus
- Dallas
- Denver
- Houston
- Kansas City
- Los Angeles
- Miami
- Minneapolis
- Nashville
- New York
- Orlando
- San Francisco Bay Area
- Seattle
- St. Louis

International locations:

- Canada
- Mexico

Charitable Partnership and initiatives

American Girl has a strong passion for helping children and families in need. American Girl fights against illiteracy, poverty, homelessness, natural disasters, illness and many more issues affecting children. So far American Girl has donated over \$100 million in dolls, books, clothes and cash to many organizations, including:

Detroit Community Support

Children's Hospital Association

K.I.D.S. (Kids in Distressed Situations)

Save the Children

United Way

Special Olympics

Madison Children's Museum

American Girl Fashion Show

American Girl's Fund for Children

Product donations and community partnerships

Future

American Girl will continue to grow and adapt to the needs of girls. Providing new and safe outlets for girls to express themselves will remain as American Girl's goal. Constant re-evaluation of current products and introducing new products will keep American Girl relevant in the lives of young girls. American Girl will also continue to support charitable organizations that help improve lives of children.

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