

AUTOMOTIVE

Mercedes inspires girls to be anything they want

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Mercedes will gift thousands of girls in first grade a toy replica of the car driven by the first woman to win the Grand Prix

By STAFF REPORTS

German automaker Mercedes-Benz is hoping to break gender stereotypes with a new toy car in partnership with iconic toymaker Mattel.

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Known as the creator of Barbie, Mattel has been working to challenge gender roles is now making a toy car to show girls they can grow up to be anything they want to be. The car is representative of an important moment in history for women, as it is a die-cast Matchbox replica of the Mercedes-Benz 220SE in which Ewy Rosqvist won the Argentinian Grand Prix.

Challenging gender roles

Mercedes presented the car along with other toys and captured young girls' reactions to the toys. When gifted the car, many dismissed it as a boys' toy.

However, Mercedes made a film showing off the accomplishment of Ms. Rosqvist and afterwards the girls' changed their minds. This shows how important it is to introduce message that breaks traditional gender roles at a young age and help women realize they can choose any path they want.

Thousands of young girls will receive the toy car as part of the Dream Gap Foundation.

The car will also be sold in stores in the United States starting in 2020, which will include a teaching toolkit for parents to learn how to challenge their gender stereotypes with their children. Proceeds will go towards the creation of more cars.

"Through Ewy's story, we saw an opportunity to inspire young girls to play outside the box' and imagine all the different opportunities open to them without the restrictions of traditional stereotypes," said Mark Aikman, general manager of marketing services for MBUSA, in a statement. "We realized that these pioneering women from our past could serve as valuable role models for young girls today and have a positive impact on how they see their future.

"This led us to collaborate with Matchbox to create a tangible reminder for girls that there are no restrictions on their tomorrow."

Mercedes' film was produced by R/GA

Mattel has been working on this cause and to establish positivity in young children for sometime, even revolutionizing the iconic Barbie.

The high-fashion loving Barbie doll was the subject of a museum exhibit at the Muse des Arts Dcoratifs in Paris to trace the beloved toy's roots and cultural impact.

Barbie has been a source of conflict and an inspiration since her debut in 1959, sparking conversations about fetishized bodies, female independence and the lasting impression the doll has left on generations of children. The exhibit, simply titled "Barbie," uses the doll as a catalyst to show how society has changed since Barbie's debut through the use of more than 700 of the toys ([see story](#)).

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