



Parker Kresx

CEO, BRICK LOOT

THIS PRE-TEEN CEO TURNED HIS OBSESSION INTO A BUSINESS

Kids often suffer silently.

It's a time in life when friendships are volatile. When emotions are volatile. When one's own biology is volatile. The smallest events carry tremendous weight. Anxiety, for some, is crippling and constant.

Nearly **1 in 3** American adolescents show signs of depression. And nearly **half** of all kids ages 10 to 13 say they've experienced relational aggression – a type of bullying meant to diminish one's social standing – in the past year.

Morris is 10 years old. He wears **Rec Specs** and sweatpants and speaks softly. He radiates kindness. He likes to build. His suburban bedroom is full of LEGO models finished and yet to be finished.

Morris' school used to have a LEGO club. But it was disbanded the first year he was eligible to join. "Of course," he quietly lamented. The real world is not the same as the LEGO world. Especially not at school.

But Morris has something many kids don't: inspiration. That comes from one of Morris' idols. That idol's name is Parker Krex.

Parker knows real life can be different from the LEGO world.

In one reality, Parker is a rising star. In the other, a pre-teen trying his best to make it through junior high.

JUST A KID

"My name is Parker and I like to collect LEGOs."

So begins Parker Krex's first public pronouncement of his obsession with the Danish toy company, as seen in his inaugural YouTube video: a review of the **LEGO Power Miners Fire Blaster**.

He was 7 years old.

It seems like normal kid stuff. We've all seen a child with a toothy grin, eager to speak about a hobby.

But Parker is different.

Now age 12, Parker is the CEO of a company that delivers a box of custom LEGO and other "brick" products to more than a thousand subscribers each month. With help from his mom and dad, he started **Brick Loot** when he was 9 years old, just two years after he started recording LEGO reviews in his pajamas.

Parker's life revolves around his business. You can find him at the Brick Loot store every day after school, helping customers, researching new products and trying to negotiate deals to make next month's box better than the last.



"I never thought I'd be working for a LEGO company," Parker said during Brick Loot's Halloween event. "And that's the most awesome thing you could ever do."



Parker is precise – with his words, with his actions and with his interests. He picks every item in every box, helping to popularize lesser-known creators within the industry who he thinks deserve more exposure.

Even Parker's Halloween costume – the Riddler – has a purpose: This month's Brick Loot box has a mystery theme. The question marks are fitting.

BRICKS AND MORTAR

The Brick Loot store is dotted with references to 80s movies. LEGO Ghostbusters, Mr. T, a DeLorean and a **McDowell's** store are just a few examples. That's surprising for a kid born this side of the new millennium.



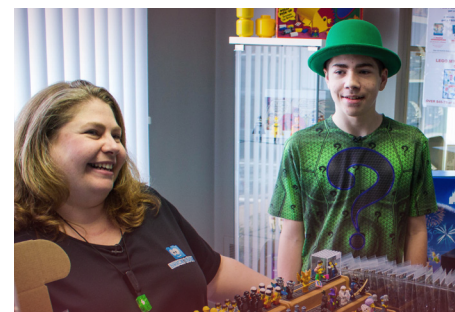
Why?

"[Movies from the 80s] are my favorite because it's all original stuff," Parker said. "Everything now is based on another movie or a comic book or something. Back to the Future wasn't based on a book."

His defined tastes have become a source of pride at an age where most kids don't feel comfortable in their own skin.

"He is a little socially awkward I think, and is very smart about business and his work," said Erin Krex. Parker is her only child. "I think that the business has really given him a lot of confidence socially."

Along with Parker's dad, Erin is part of a twin engine that helps drive Brick Loot, running the



store 7 days a week while Parker goes to school.

"He can pretty much care less about what other kids think," she said.

Since starting the business, Parker has done dozens of TV interviews and is a revered figure at LEGO conventions nationwide. Nearly half of his subscription boxes are sold to adults. When recalling how one excited kid asked Parker to sign his hand, he smiles.

CHARTING A COURSE

Originality and freedom are the basis of Parker's interest in building. LEGO might give instructions on how to build a spaceship, but kids need not heed them.

That's a lifelong lesson. And one that Parker thinks is lacking in traditional education.



"I think schools should do more building because it teaches kids a lot of creativity," Parker said, "... you can do whatever you want. You can make a company [or] you could just build a LEGO model. You don't have to follow the instructions."

Morris feels the same way.

And Parker offers Morris something irreplaceable. He offers hope for kids who might not feel comfortable at school, but find community in common interests and a desire to build something bigger.

"I like that it shows that a kid can do all of this," he said. "I try to think of stuff that kids won't. And I feel like that's what he's done."



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