

Monster Maker

Lyla Black and her family create handmade, plushy monsters so kids can get a good night's sleep.

Monsters have a bad reputation in books and movies. They **lurk** in closets and hide under beds. But Lyla Black, 8, wants kids to know that monsters don't have to give them nightmares. In fact, monsters can help kids get a good night's sleep.

With her mother, Lyla designed a line of monster plush toys called Lyla Tov Monsters. Lyla Tov is a play on the Hebrew phrase *laila tov*, which means "good night."

Lyla hopes snuggling with a soft monster will make kids feel safe and secure. "The monsters can help kids sleep better because kids know they're not alone," Lyla told TFK.

Dreams, Not Nightmares

Lyla based her first toy monster on a picture she drew when she was just 3 years old. All the monsters were designed from this drawing. Lyla and her family sold a few of their toy monsters at a craft fair near their home, in Astoria, New York, and the toys were a hit. Monster madness grew quickly. Lyla and her family now sell four types of monsters as well as a book, *Billy & Dak*.

Last November, Lyla was named Young Inventor of the Year at the seventh annual Toy & Game Inventor Awards, in Chicago, Illinois. She hopes her lovable monsters will soon be sold in stores across the country.

—By Cameron Keady

Lyla shows off three of her friendly monsters.



Power Word

lurk: to hide or linger while meaning to do wrong

THINK!

You've just invented a plush toy. Now give it a playful, descriptive name!