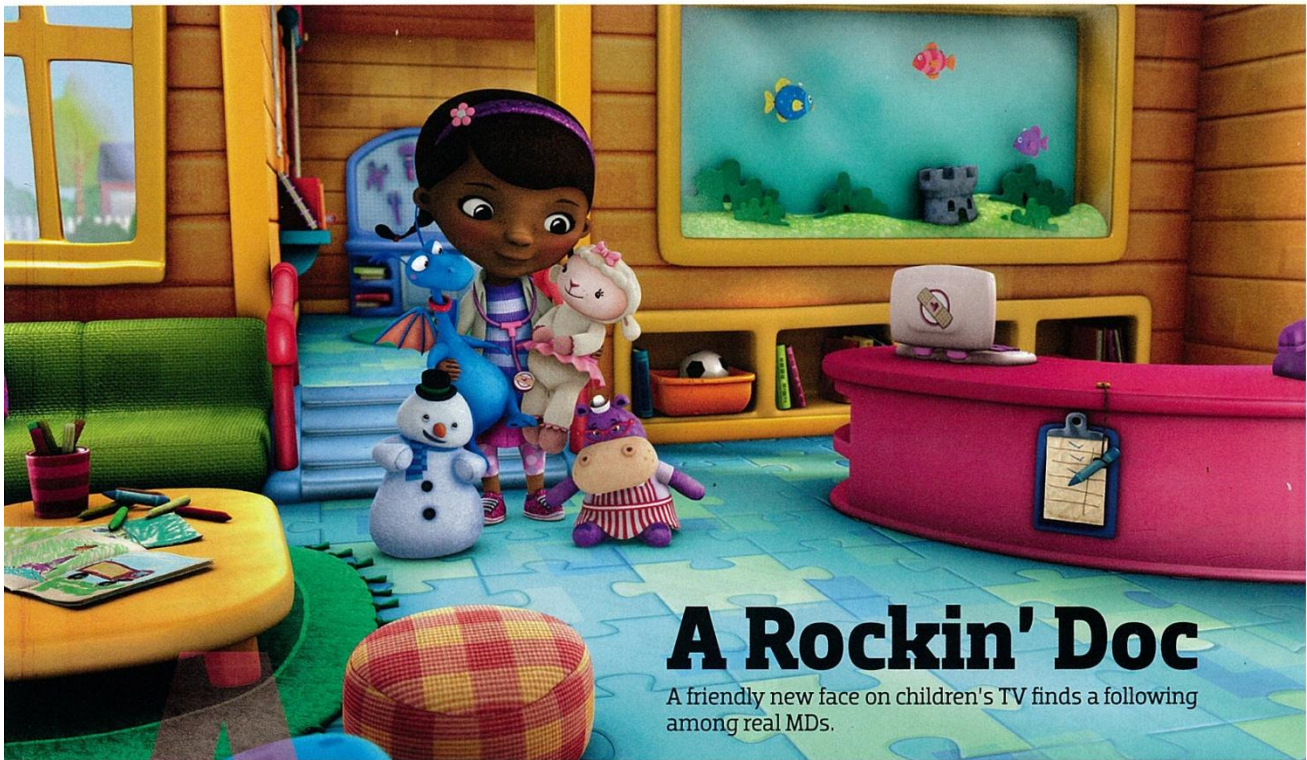




in the
mix



A Rockin' Doc

A friendly new face on children's TV finds a following among real MDs.

As she watched the premiere this past March of Disney Jr.'s *Doc McStuffins* with her four-year-old daughter, Myiesha Taylor was absolutely gob-smacked. An emergency medicine specialist in Texas, Taylor saw herself in Doc, the pig-tailed, brown-skinned, lab coat-wearing physician-in-training.

As Doc "healed" her ailing toys, Taylor recalled her own wonder years treating inanimate patients. "I kept charts," she says. "I had medical records for all my stuffed animals, and I still have some of them!"

But the similarities didn't end there: Doc's mom is a physician; Taylor's mom, a nurse. And like Doc's dad, who is a stay-at-home father, Taylor's husband, William, works from home and is the primary caregiver for their three children.

"I am Doc McStuffins!" declares Taylor, who used Doc for her Facebook profile and tagged about fifty physician friends who are women of color.

"Then I got the idea that maybe we should send Disney [and producer Brown Bag Films] a genuine thank-you for creating this show," says Taylor, who Photoshopped Doc into a collage with the mostly African-American female physicians.

"On TV today, there is a lot more diversity, especially on kids' shows. But the difference with this show is that the leading character is brown and she's an intellectual professional rather than a singer or an actress."

The McStuffins movement took off. By the end of May, the thank-you collage blossomed with 113 women proclaiming, "We Are Doc McStuffins," and thousands more tweeting and posting photos in support of the show.

"It brings me to tears," says veteran children's series writer Chris Nee, creator and executive producer of *McStuffins*, who never considered how well the show would resonate with physicians.

Having spent some scary years in and out of ERs with her son, who has asthma, "I was thinking about what I could do to help him," Nee says. "At some point I thought, somebody should make a

TV show that makes it a little less scary to go to the doctor. I happened to be in the position to do that."

The animated series — where toys might come down with "Filthy Icky Sticky Disease" or "No Vroom Vroomatosis" — gives kids insight on daily routines that will keep them healthy, like washing their hands and getting enough sleep.

"We made a decision early on to not take the easy route, which was to say, the toys could not have human ailments," Nee says. "The toys break in ways that only toys can break, but we're always connecting that to some experience, whether it's emotional or physical, for a real kid."

And just as NBC's *ER* made emergency medicine cool for a generation of doctors, this show could have a similar reach. Sandra De Castro Buffington, director of Hollywood, Health & Society at the USC Annenberg Norman Lear Center — the health and medical consultants on *Doc McStuffins* — says: "I can imagine this series inspiring a whole generation of children wanting to become medical practitioners."

Just like Doc Taylor.
—Janice Rhoshalle Littlejohn

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