

# [***Barbie turns 65***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BHJ-F7B1-JCG7-80BX-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

***Barbie*** is 65 years old, she has evolved a lot since March 9, 1959, when at a Toy Fair in New York, the Mattel company launched the great idea that Ruth Handler had for girls between 7 and 8 years of age in the United States. The doll cost $3.00.Until then, girls only had one version of a doll: the baby; they could only play at being mommies. Yes, they could change her clothes and play with her, but that toy would always be a baby.Thus was born ***Barbie***, Barbara Millicent Roberts, a 17-year-old girl who was born as a runway model who liked to follow fashion trends; with a black and white striped swimsuit, white cat eye glasses, and the makeup seen in the fashion magazines of the time.In an interview with MILENIO, Lisa McKnight, Mattel's brand manager, talks about how the doll has transformed: "We are happy with the 65th celebration of ***Barbie***; over time she has become more than just a doll. She was introduced as the first fashion doll in 1959, and since then she has evolved into all occupational categories, and above all, into a true global icon.

"Lisa explains how since her launch "she was always meant to inspire girls to believe they could be anything" however, over six decades this message has come and gone, until about 10 years ago when "we realized we weren't communicating this enough as a brand, and it was losing relevance among moms and their daughters. So we went back to driving the brand concept, which is to inspire girls.and we started using female empowerment as part of the marketing campaign in a cross-cutting way across all products."Diversity and inclusionWhile since 1980 Mattel launched racially diverse dolls, with Latina ***Barbie*** and black ***Barbie*** -in 1968 they launched Christie, ***Barbie***'s black friend-, it was in 2016 when Mattel decided that if ***Barbie*** already had different skin colors, factions and professions, she should also have body diversity; and in 2022 launched its Fashionistas with disabilities collection, integrating dolls (***Barbies*** and Kens) in wheelchairs, with prostheses, Down syndrome, hearing aids and vitiligo.Kim Culmone, head of doll design at Mattel, spoke to MILENIO about how they decide when it is a good time to make a physical or concept change in ***Barbie***: "We are very fortunate to have a great design team that is always on top of cultural and fashion trends; along with the consumer experience team that helps us understand and decide what concepts are most applicable in the future for girls and their families. The combination is perfect, we have what's going on in the world and we apply it to our customers. "Beauty concepts have changed over the years, as have makeup, hairstyles and fashion trends, "and also the way children play; today we have a multidimensional view of beauty from a cultural point of view; for example, we have dolls that have a more youthful, not so stylized and adult face. With all these changes that keep happening, they make ***Barbies*** what it is today." Lisa McKnight agrees when talking about the future of the brand: "We are going to go where our consumers go, we want to stay connected to people and their culture; wherever consumers are, there ***Barbie*** will be; whatever fashion trend, she will be embracing it, the same as in art, in culture, in everything".And despite everything, ***Barbie*** is still ***Barbie***, how do they do it? "She keeps evolving, that's the secret to keep being her. She's been around for 65 years just because of that: she evolves, she stays relevant and reflects what's going on in the world," Kim emphasizes.And what about the children, are there products in the brand for them? Kim Culmone answers immediately: "***Barbie*** is a brand that empowers girls, but is open to everyone; we have boy and man fans who love the brand, and we love that they are part of the ***Barbie*** family. We always welcome all genders to play with us."

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