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(54) **TOY FOR MOUNTING ON A CHILD'S SHOE**

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(57) **ABSTRACT**

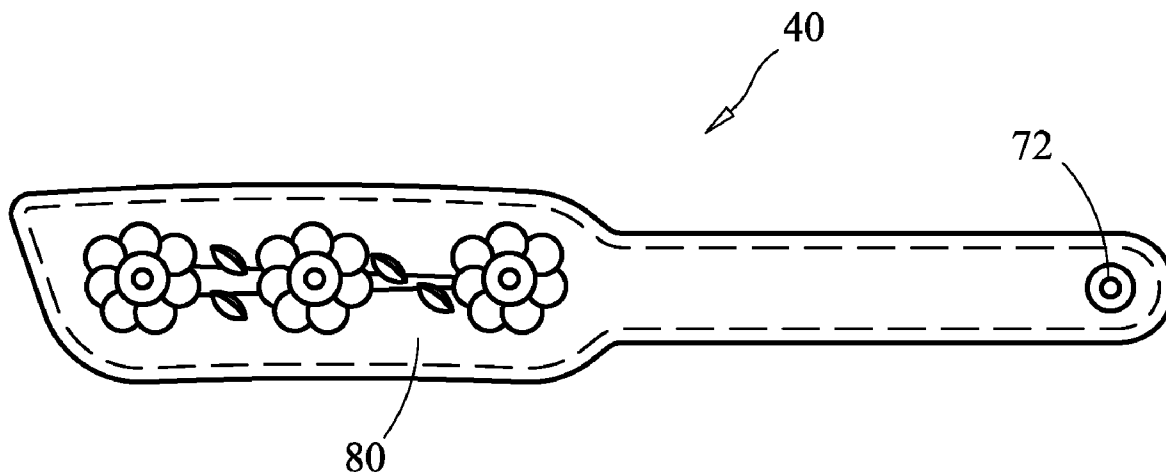
A shoe is adaptable to receive a number of different styled decorative toy shoe straps. On a first side of the shoe is a male portion of a snap assembly that secures one end of a toy shoe strap having a female portion of the snap assembly. Located on the second side of the shoe is a rectangular slot for receiving the toy strap wherein the strap passes through the slot and is folded back on itself towards the first side of the shoe. The second end of the toy strap is then secured to the shoe over the first end using a hook and loop material (e.g., Velcro). An upper side of the interchangeable toy shoe strap is decorated with various designs, shapes and colors.

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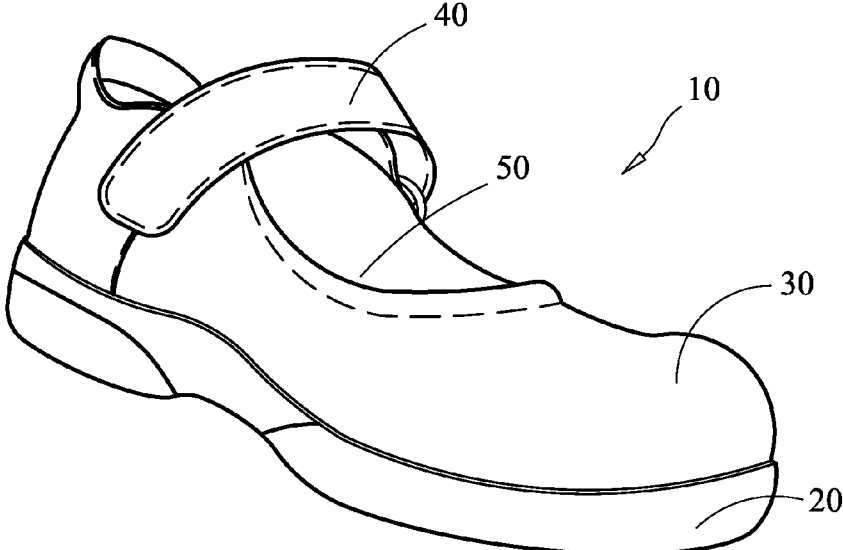


FIG. 1

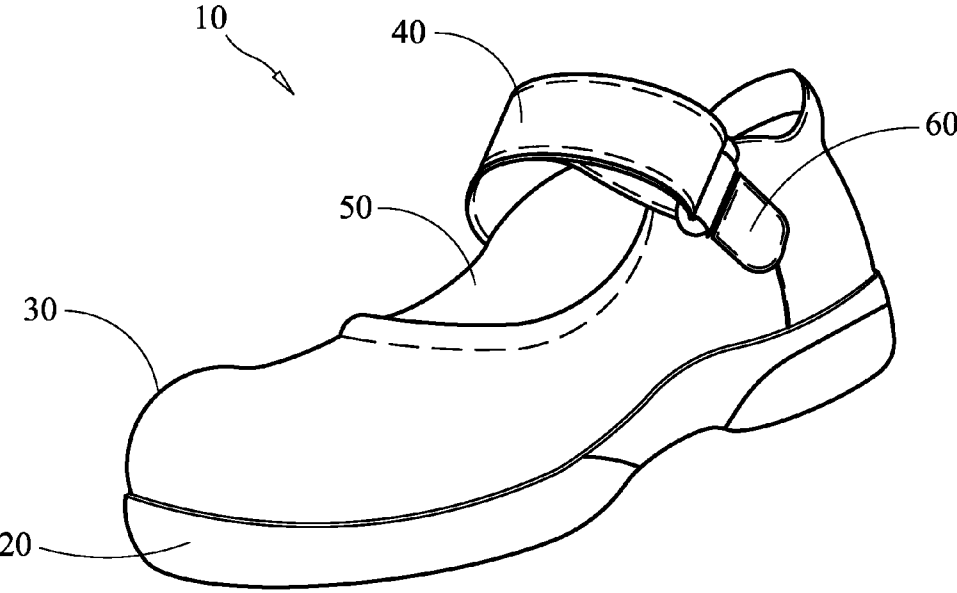


FIG. 2

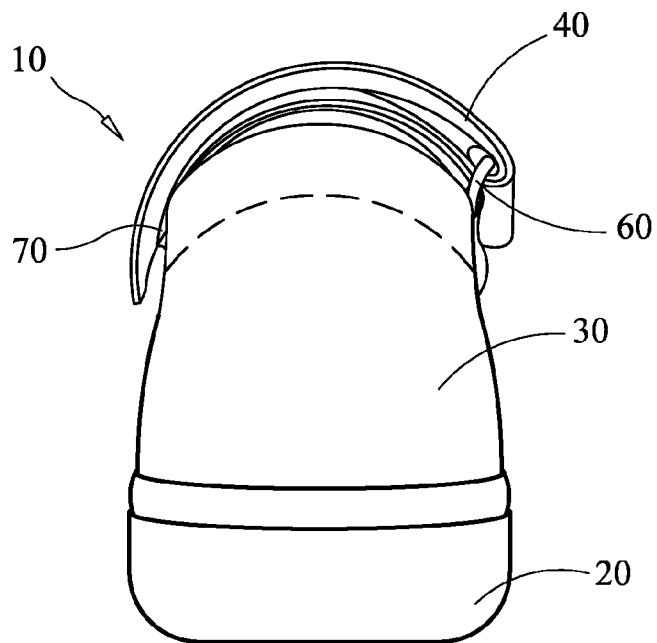


FIG. 3

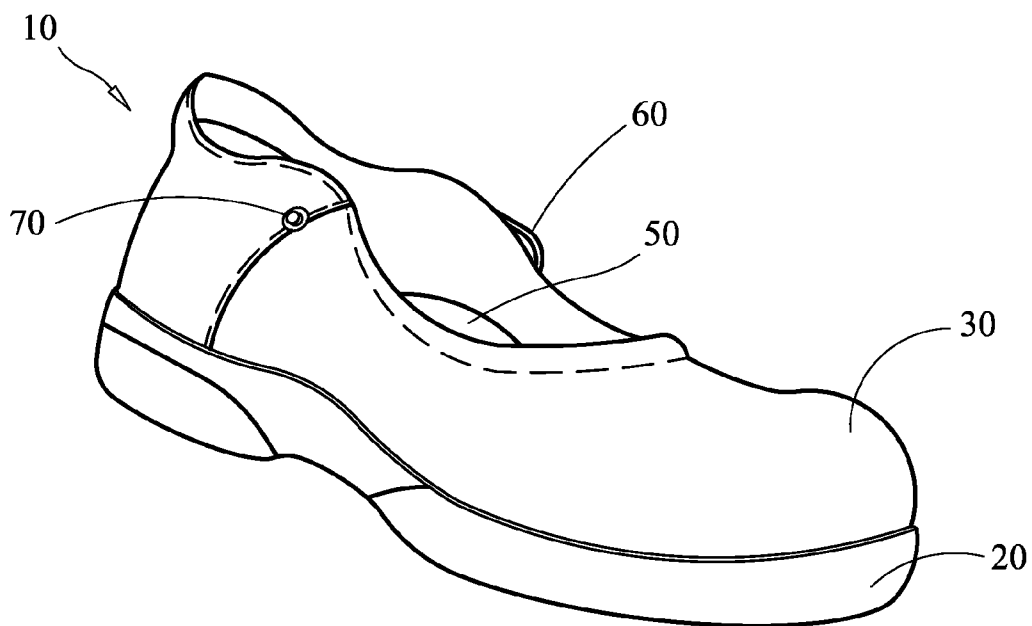


FIG. 4

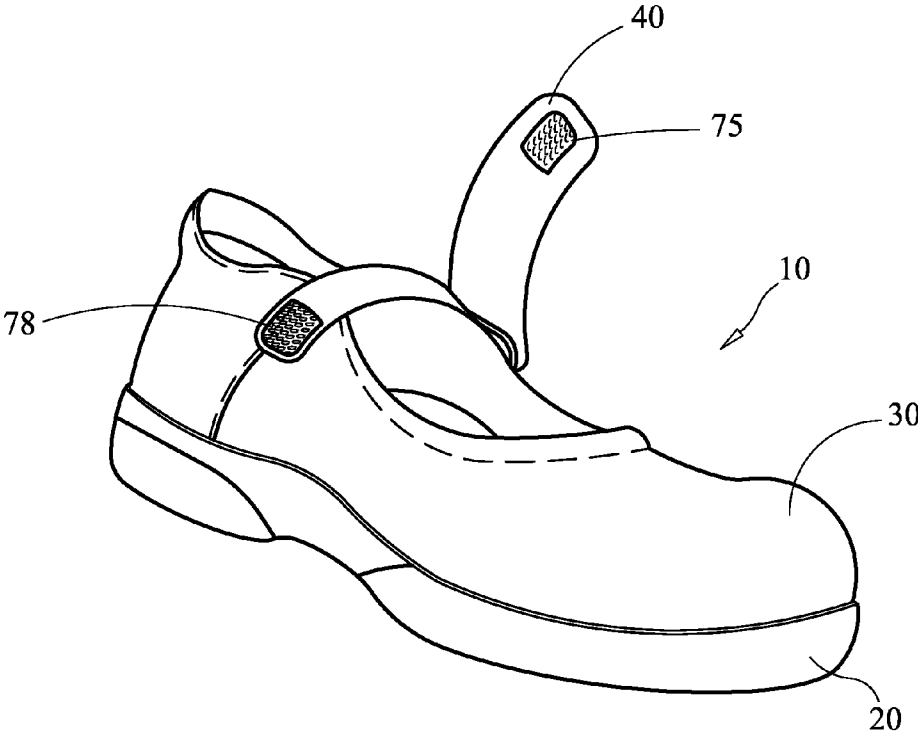


FIG. 5

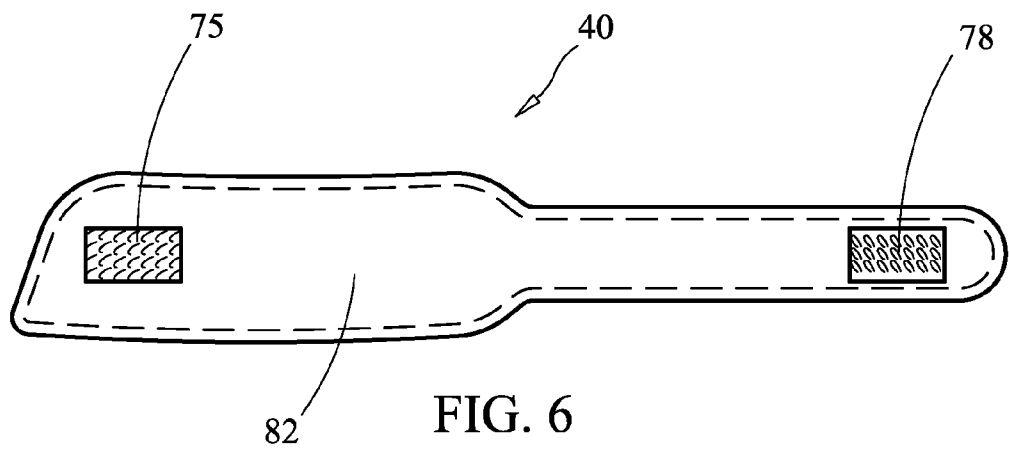


FIG. 6

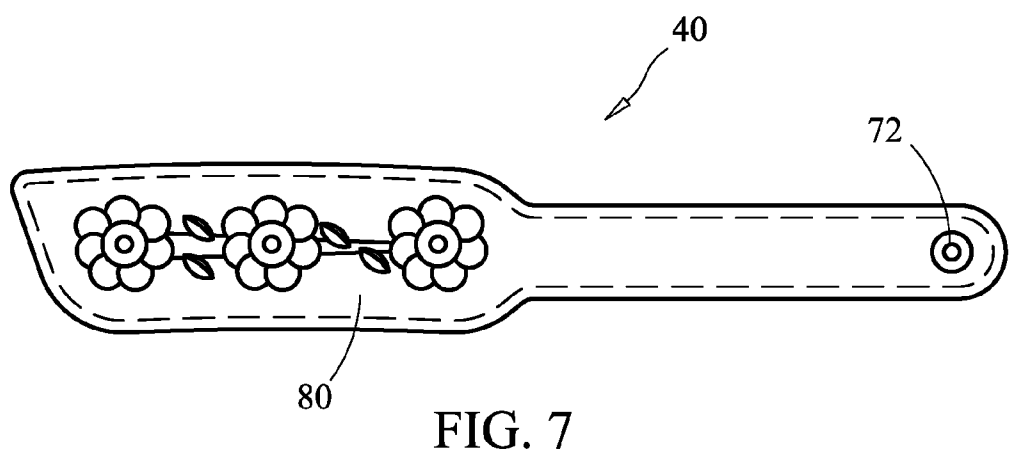


FIG. 7

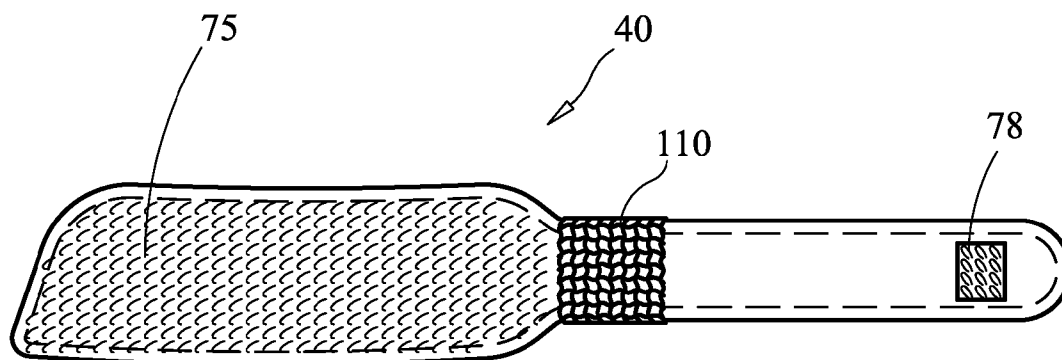


FIG. 8

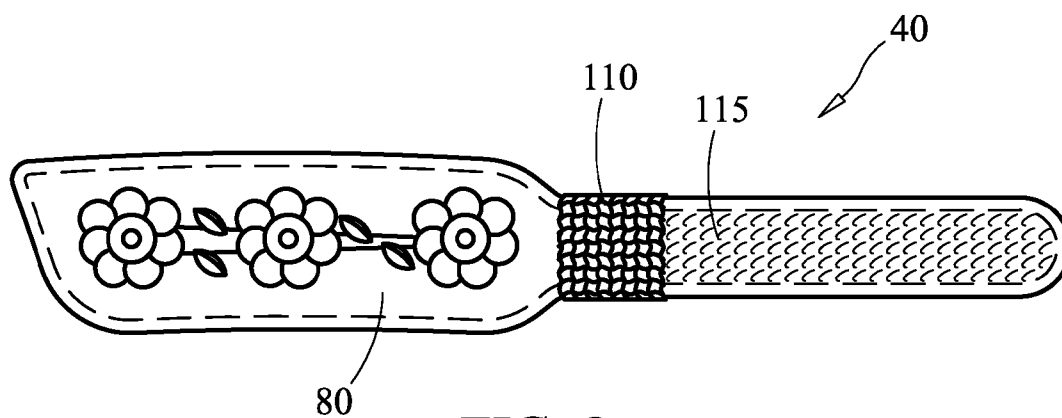


FIG. 9

**TOY FOR MOUNTING ON A CHILD'S SHOE**

**FIELD OF THE INVENTION**

**[0001]** The present invention relates generally to children's shoes, and more particularly to a toy strap that can be removably attached to child's shoe.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIOR ART**

**[0002]** Shoes are available in a variety of colors and styles. There have been attempts to improve the aesthetics of shoes that allow a user to change the look and style of a particular shoe. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 5,992,058, to Jneid, describes a shoe with a sole having upper and lower surfaces and a perimeter sidewall extending around the perimeter of the sole between the upper and lower surfaces of the sole. Each end of a shoe strap is removably attached to the perimeter sidewall of the sole. A shortcoming of this type of strap is that it requires each end of the strap to be secured to opposing sides of the shoe. This creates two points of failure where the strap can become accidentally disengaged from the shoe. Further, the strap must be sized appropriately for the user and is not adjustable.

**[0003]** Another example of the prior art is U.S. Pat. No. 6,651,359 to Bricker, that describes a base shoe strap that is permanently affixed to the shoe and having an upper side covered with a first portion of a hook and loop fastening system. Decorative and interchangeable covers are secured over the base shoe strap using a second portion of a hook and loop fastening system disposed on a lower surface of the decorative cover. Similar to the shortcomings of Jneid described above, Bricker fails to disclose, among other things, an adjustable strap and the decorative cover is susceptible to accidentally becoming dislodged from the base strap. U.S. Pat. No. 6,769,204, to Phillips has similar shortcomings in that it describes a sandal with interchangeable decorative ribbons that fit over the sandal straps. The sandal straps are provided with an upper surface having a hook and loop fastener and the ribbons are provided with a lower surface having a hook and loop fastener for securing to the sandal straps. Again, the sandal straps are not adjustable and the decorative ribbons are susceptible to becoming detached from the underlying sandal straps.

**[0004]** Accordingly, there is a need in the art for a novel, non-obvious and improved shoe that includes an adjustable toy strap that is interchangeable.

**[0005]** There is another need in the art for an improved shoe that includes an adjustable toy shoe strap that is decorative yet remains securely attached to the shoe.

**[0006]** There is also a need in the art for an improved shoe that includes an adjustable toy shoe strap that can be decorated with user-selected ornaments.

**[0007]** Notwithstanding the existence of prior art shoes, there is a need for an improved shoe strap. It is, therefore, to the effective resolution of the aforementioned problems and shortcomings of the prior art that the present invention is directed. However, in view of the prior art at the time the present invention was made, it was not obvious to those of ordinary skill in the pertinent art how the identified needs could be fulfilled.

**SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

**[0008]** The shoe of the present invention is adaptable to receive a number of different styled decorative toy shoe

straps. On a first side of the shoe is a male portion of a snap assembly that secures one end of a toy shoe strap having a female portion of the snap assembly. Located on the second side of the shoe is a rectangular slot for receiving the toy strap wherein the strap passes through the slot and is folded back on itself towards the first side of the shoe. The second end of the toy strap is then secured to the shoe over the first end using a hook and loop material (e.g., Velcro). An upper side of the interchangeable toy shoe strap is decorated with various designs, shapes and colors.

**[0009]** It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide for an improvement that overcomes the aforementioned inadequacies of the prior art and provides a significant contribution to the advancement of shoes.

**[0010]** Both the foregoing general description and the following detailed description are explanatory and are not restrictive of the invention as claimed. The accompanying drawings, which are incorporated in and constitute part of the specification, illustrate embodiments of the present invention and together with the general description, serve to explain principles of the present invention.

**[0011]** These and other important objects, advantages, and features of the invention will become clear as this description proceeds.

**[0012]** The invention accordingly comprises the features of construction, combination of elements, and arrangement of parts that will be exemplified in the description set forth hereinafter and the scope of the invention will be indicated in the claims.

**BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

**[0013]** For a fuller understanding of the nature and objects of the invention, reference should be made to the following detailed description, taken in connection with the accompanying drawings, in which:

**[0014]** FIG. 1 is a right side perspective view of a shoe according to an embodiment of the present invention;

**[0015]** FIG. 2 is a left side perspective view of the shoe according to an embodiment of the present invention;

**[0016]** FIG. 3 is a rear view of the shoe according to an embodiment of the present invention;

**[0017]** FIG. 4 is a right side perspective view of a shoe according to an embodiment of the present invention shown without the interchangeable toy shoe strap for clarity;

**[0018]** FIG. 5 is a right perspective view of the shoe according to an embodiment of the present invention showing the interchangeable toy shoe strap prior to a decorative portion being attached to an underlying portion of the strap;

**[0019]** FIG. 6 is a bottom view of a first side of the interchangeable toy strap showing the hook and loop components according to an embodiment of the present invention;

**[0020]** FIG. 7 is a top view of a second side of the interchangeable toy strap showing the decorations and a female portion of the snap assembly according to an embodiment of the present invention;

**[0021]** FIG. 8 is a bottom view of a first side of the interchangeable toy strap showing the hook and loop components according to an alternative embodiment of the present invention; and

[0022] FIG. 9 is a top view of a second side of the interchangeable toy strap showing the decorations according to an alternative embodiment of the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

[0023] The present invention includes a toy strap to provide entertainment for children as they decorate their shoes. The toy strap is interchangeable to accommodate a variety of designs. Accordingly, the shoe can be decorated to match better with a child's particular clothing, time of year or special occasion. For example, holiday type decorations can be used to accent the toy shoe straps or having the strap embroidered with a child's name is also contemplated.

[0024] As shown in FIGS. 1 and 2, shoe 10 includes sole 20, shoe upper 30 and toy strap 40. Shoe upper 30 extends upward from the periphery of sole 20 to form an aperture 50 so a child's foot (not shown) can slide within shoe upper 30. A heel portion at the rear portion of shoe 10 and an enclosed toe portion at the front portion of the shoe 10 secures shoe 10 to the child's foot. Referring now to FIG. 1, strap 40 overlaps aperture 50 and extends beyond shoe upper 30. Strap 40 can be made of any material suitable for footwear and known by those skilled in the art, such as leather or vinyl. As seen in FIG. 2, strap 40 is secured through buckle assembly 60, which is sewn into the outer surface of shoe upper 30. Buckle assembly 60 includes a square aperture for receiving strap 40.

[0025] FIG. 3 shows a rear view of shoe 10. A first end of strap 40 is snapped onto shoe upper 30 using a male portion of a snap assembly. Strap 40 then bridges across aperture 50 and slides through the square aperture of buckle assembly 60 and is folded back onto itself towards buckle assembly 60. Hook and loop material on the lower surface of strap 50 is used to secure strap 40 in place and overlap the underlying portion of strap 40.

[0026] Referring now to FIG. 4, male portion 70 of snap assembly is shown on a first side of shoe upper 30. As explained above, male portion 70 is inserted into the female portion of snap assembly 60, which is disposed on the underside of the first end of strap 40. The snap assembly firmly secures the first end of strap 40 to shoe upper 30. In an alternative embodiment, a buckle assemble, ring, or other fastening means may be used to secure the first end of strap 40 to shoe upper 30.

[0027] FIG. 5 illustrates strap 40 as the first end is secured to shoe upper 30 and buckle assembly 60. Strap 40 is positioned to be folded back on itself to display the decorative upper portion of strap 40. Hook and loop material 75 is included on the lower surface of strap 40 proximate to the second end to attach to hook and loop material 78 disposed proximate to the first end of strap 40.

[0028] Referring now to FIG. 6 shows a first side 82 of strap 40 that includes hook and loop material 75, 78. The first section of strap 40 is narrower than a second section of strap 40 so that when strap 40 is folded back on itself, the second section overlaps the first section completely. FIG. 7 illustrates a second side 80 of strap 40 wherein first section of strap 40 displays decorations that are removable from strap 40. Female portion 72 of the snap assembly is shown proximate to the first end and is used to secure first end of toy strap 40 to shoe upper 30.

[0029] In a particular illustrative alternative embodiment, strap 40 may include an elastic portion 110 interposed between a first section and second section of strap 40 as

shown in FIGS. 7 and 8. The elastic portion 110 may provide additional comfort to the child's foot when wearing shoe 10. Referring now to FIG. 7 shows a first side of strap 40 that includes hook or loop material 75 covering a second section of strap 40. The first section of strap 40 is narrower than the second section of strap 40 so that when strap 40 is folded back on itself, the second section overlaps the first section completely and revealing a decorative portion of the strap 40 as shown in FIG. 8. A second side 80 of strap 40 includes a first section of strap 40 that may display decorations that are removable from strap 40. Hook or loop material is disposed on the first section of the second side 80 of strap 40. The correlating hook or loop material is disposed on the first section of the second side and may be used to secure the first end of strap 40 to shoe upper 30. In another embodiment, a second ring and/or buckle assembly may be attached to show upper 30 and the first end of strap 40 is secured to shoe upper 30 using the second ring or buckle assembly.

[0030] The particular embodiments disclosed above and in the drawings are illustrative only, as the invention may be modified and practiced in different but equivalent manners apparent to those skilled in the art having the benefit of the teachings herein. Furthermore, no limitations are intended to the details of construction or design herein shown. It is therefore evident that the particular embodiments disclosed above may be altered or modified and all such variations are considered within the scope and spirit of the invention.

[0031] It is also to be understood that the following claims are intended to cover all of the generic and specific features of the invention herein described, and all statements of the scope of the invention, which as a matter of language, might be said to fall therebetween.

[0032] Now that the invention has been described,

What is claimed is:

1. A child's toy, the toy comprising:
  - an elongated strap for removably attaching to a child's shoe;
  - the shoe further comprising a sole having a lower planar surface and an upper planar surface, wherein the sole having a size similar to a bottom of a child's foot;
  - a shoe upper extending upwards from the periphery of the sole to form a shoe opening having a size so that the child's foot can slide therein; wherein the shoe upper further comprising a heel portion to support a heel of the child's foot and an enclosed toe portion to secure a child's toes within the shoe;
  - the elongated strap having a first section and a second section, wherein the second section having a length and width that is greater than the first section;
  - a female portion of a snap assembly disposed proximate to a first end of the elongated strap for receiving a male portion of the snap assembly disposed on a first outer surface of the shoe upper so that the snap assembly firmly secures the first end of the elongated strap to the shoe upper; and
  - a buckle assembly sewn to a second outer surface of the shoe upper wherein the buckle assembly having a rectangular aperture for receiving the toy strap therethrough so that the strap bridges across the shoe opening and slides through the square aperture of the buckle assembly and the toy strap is folded back onto itself towards the snap assembly so that an upper surface of the second section of the toy strap is visible.

2. The toy of claim 1, wherein the elongated toy strap is vinyl material.

3. The toy of claim 1, wherein hook and loop material is disposed proximate to the first end of the toy strap to secure the second end of the strap in place when the second section is overlapping the underlying first section of the strap.

4. The toy of claim 3, wherein the second section of the toy strap covers the first section of the toy strap completely so that it is not readily visible.

5. The toy of claim 4, wherein the toy strap further comprises button openings for receiving decorative ornaments.

6. The toy of claim 5, wherein the decorative ornaments are in a shape and size of flowers sized and configured to be removably secured to the toy strap.

7. The toy of claim 1, wherein the first section of the toy strap is comprised of a different material than the second section of the toy strap.

8. The toy of claim 7, wherein the first section of the toy strap having a thickness less than a thickness of the second section.

9. The toy of claim 1, wherein the toy strap is adjustable in length to bridge the foot opening.

10. The toy of claim 1, wherein a lower surface of the first section of the toy strap having cushioning material so that the strap is comfortable to a child's foot.

11. The toy of claim 1, wherein an upper surface of the second section of the toy strap is visibly displaying a child's name.

12. The toy of claim 1, wherein an upper surface of the second section of the toy strap is visibly displaying a holiday message.

13. A child's toy, the toy comprising:  
an elongated strap for removably attaching to a child's shoe;  
the elongated strap having a first section and a second section, wherein the second section having a length and width that is greater than the first section;

a first portion of an attachment assembly disposed proximate to a first end of the elongated strap for receiving a second portion of the attachment assembly disposed on a first outer surface of the shoe so that the attachment assembly firmly secures the first end of the elongated strap to the shoe; and

a buckle assembly sewn to a second outer surface of the shoe wherein the buckle assembly having an aperture for receiving the toy strap therethrough so that the strap bridges across the shoe and slides through the aperture of the buckle assembly and the toy strap is folded back onto itself towards the attachment assembly so that an upper surface of the second section of the toy strap is visible.

14. The toy of claim 13, wherein a button is disposed proximate to the first end of the toy strap to secure the second end of the strap in place when the second section is overlapping the underlying first section of the strap.

15. The toy of claim 14, wherein the second section of the toy strap covers the first section of the toy strap completely so that it is not readily visible.

16. The toy of claim 15, wherein the toy strap further comprises button openings for receiving decorative ornaments.

17. The toy of claim 13, wherein the first section of the toy strap is comprised of a different material than the second section of the toy strap.

18. The toy of claim 13, wherein the toy strap is adjustable in length to bridge the shoe.

19. The toy of claim 13, wherein an upper surface of the second section of the toy strap is visibly displaying a message.

20. A child's toy, the toy comprising:  
an elongated strap for removably attaching to a child's shoe; wherein the length of the strap is sized so that the strap bridges across the shoe and folds back onto itself so that an upper surface of the strap is visible to decorate.

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