

Kids' fidget gadget rules in spin city

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THEY'RE spinning out of control! Fidget spinning, that is.

For all 17 of you who don't know, fidget spinners are the latest gadget to sweep the elementary school set. The two- or three-pronged toys are essentially ball bearings encased in plastic or metal that kids hold and spin endlessly. And they're driving parents, and especially teachers, crazy.

"I almost hit a kid because he was too busy spinning the dang thing," one Queens science teacher joked.

"I also almost hit a kid, when he walked in front of my car, totally focused on his fidget spinner," he added, more seriously.

"They're cool as a toy, but I can see how teachers might hate them," says Red Hook, Brooklyn, mom Jennifer Frantz, whose 9-year-old son is an enthusiastic spinner. His school, Public School 29, has banned them in some classrooms and at lunch.

Available everywhere from Walmarts to dollar stores, fidget spinners (photo) come in all types of materials. Plastic spinners typically go for a couple bucks, though places like Etsy sell more artful designs made from brass, steel and copper for as much as \$75.

Although the world seems to have just recently reached peak fidget, the spinners were actually invented in 1997, and their purpose was not to annoy, but to assuage. Marketed as a stress-relief device for people suffering from anxiety, ADHD or autism spectrum disorder, they supposedly help people deal with sensory sensitivities — like the need to touch something.

