MARKET INTELLIGENCE · VERIDICA RESEARCH STREAM

Competitor Analysis

The children's SEL, wellbeing, ed-tech and character-IP landscape — where each player sits, what they miss, and the white space Iam Awesome owns.

Confidential — prospective investors & partners

July 2026

SUMMARY

A funded, fragmented field — with a hole in the middle.

The categories IAM touches are real and well-funded, which validates demand. But every player is single-format or single-channel. None combines character IP, adaptive AI, physical products and a Hero's-Journey narrative for confidence. That combination is the investment thesis.

Where IAM sits

Iam Awesome does not fit one category cleanly — it spans five of six. That breadth is both its differentiation and its positioning challenge.

Category	Representative players	IAM overlap
School SEL curricula (B2B)	Peekapak, GoZen! (schools), Sesame in Communities	Courses for teachers
Consumer SEL / journals	Big Life Journal, GoZen! (family)	Book trilogy, app
Kids meditation / wellbeing apps	Moshi, Mightier, Woebot (defunct)	AI guides, mirror features
Kids ed-tech / learning apps	Khan Academy Kids, Duolingo ABC, ClassDojo	App, future LLM
Character / IP entertainment & physical	Slumberkins, Yoto, Lovevery; Disney/Pokémon/Sesame	Characters, merch, collectibles, festival
Adaptive-AI tutoring / companions	Duolingo Max (model), Character.AI (cautionary)	Personality-adaptive AI guides

Competitor comparison

Competitor	Focus	Model	Funding / scale (verified)	Key weakness
Big Life Journal	Growth-mindset journals	DTC e-commerce	Bootstrapped; ~$1.8M rev; 2M+ customers	Print only; no app/AI/IP
Slumberkins	Plush + books	DTC + retail + TV	~$25.3M raised; ~$3M rev (2022)	Preschool; no adaptive layer
Moshi	Sleep/mindfulness audio	B2C sub (~$40/yr)	$12M Series B; 100k+ subs	Passive; no products/progression
GoZen!	Anxiety/SEL video	B2C + schools	Bootstrapped (unverified); 1M+ families	Static video; no AI/flywheel
Peekapak	K-12 SEL curriculum	B2B2C licensing	VC-backed; rev ~$4–10M (approx.)	School-B2B only; long cycles
Mightier	Biofeedback game	B2C sub + HSA/FSA	~$29M raised	Clinical; hardware dependency
Woebot	CBT chatbot	Digital therapeutic	~$123M raised; **shut June 2025**	Cautionary — AI+kids regulation
Khan Academy Kids	Early learning	Nonprofit / free	Free; Khan 100M+ learners	Academics; no IP/values/products

Duolingo (ABC/Max)	Language + AI	Freemium → AI sub	Public; **$748M rev (+41% FY24)**	Academics, not values — *the blueprint*
ClassDojo	Classroom comms	B2B2C + consumer	~$231M raised; **~$1.25B val**	Distribution, not IP/AI
Yoto	Screen-free audio	Hardware + sub	~$80M+ raised; ~$128M rev 2024	Audio only; no AI/coaching
Lovevery	Developmental toys	DTC sub (~$40/mo)	~$132M raised; **~$800M val**	Ages out at 5; no AI/character
Sesame Workshop	Character-IP + SEL	Nonprofit + licensing	$170–271M rev; reaches 156M kids	Preschool, broadcast, nonprofit

Funding figures from Crunchbase/PitchBook/press and company filings; where no raise is surfaced (Big Life Journal, GoZen!) companies are noted bootstrapped/unverified. Peekapak revenue and Goally figures are approximate. No figures fabricated.

Aspirational IP comparables (not direct competitors)

The Pokémon Company / Nintendo
Highest-grossing franchise ever (~$115B+ lifetime); >$100B from merchandise vs. ~$30B games. The template for the WA-SEE-MO collectibles flywheel.

Disney
~$62B annual licensed-product retail; the full content → character → merch → licensing stack.

Mattel
Converts toy IP (Barbie, Hot Wheels) into film/media flywheels.

Scholastic
Owned school-distribution (book fairs/clubs) plus IP (Clifford, Goosebumps).

All four monetise the same loop — **narrative** → **beloved characters** → **merch/collectibles** → **licensing** → **games/content** — across formats a single-vector competitor cannot match.

The white space

1. **No one combines all four vectors.** Lovevery/Yoto have physical + subscription but no AI or character-coaching and age out below 6–12. Sesame has character-IP + SEL but is broadcast, preschool, nonprofit. Duolingo has adaptive-AI + scale but teaches academics. ClassDojo/Khan have reach but no IP/values monetisation.
2. **AI personalisation for values/character (not academics) is essentially empty.**
3. **Most SEL is single-format and channel-locked.**
4. **Proven revenue templates IAM can cite:** Lovevery ~$226M, Yoto ~$128M, Sesame $170–271M, Duolingo $748M. Valuation benchmarks: ClassDojo ~$1.25B, Lovevery ~$800M.

Adaptive-AI-for-kids: the safety moat

AI companions for children face intense, fast-moving scrutiny — a risk and a differentiation opportunity:

- **Character.AI** settled teen-safety lawsuits with Google in January 2026 after a 2024 teen-suicide case.
- **FTC 6(b) inquiry (Sept 2025)** ordered seven companies to answer for chatbot harms to minors.
- **California SB 243** (eff. Jan 2026) — first companion-chatbot law (disclosure, break reminders, crisis protocols); New York, Utah HB 452 and the federal GUARD Act follow.
- **Woebot shut down (June 2025)** despite ~$123M raised.

> **Investor implication:** a safety-first, non-open-ended, curated, values-focused AI guide — no companion dynamics, human-in-the-loop guardrails, COPPA + state-law compliance from day one — is a genuine moat. But compliance must be front-loaded, not retrofitted. IAM's current direct-API prototype must move behind a backend proxy with age-gating and crisis protocols before any real launch. This is priority #1 in the use of funds.

Sources

Mordor Intelligence & Future Market Insights (SEL market); Crunchbase, PitchBook, TechCrunch, Forbes, CB Insights, CNBC, SEC filings (funding/scale), STAT News & Woebot Health (Woebot); Sesame Workshop financials & ProPublica; Wikipedia & PocketGamer.biz (Pokémon); CNN, Fortune, Davis Polk, DGLaw (AI safety & litigation). Full URL list retained in the project research files (competitor-analysis-raw.md).
