FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - May 29, 2018

Children can learn computer science...without computers.
MIT-spinout company, Learning Beautiful, will present new educational toys to teach children computational thinking through hands-on play specially-designed for public libraries, at the American Library Association Conference in New Orleans (June 22 - 25, 2018).

BOSTON, MA, April 5 — After a successful launch in the Thomas Hughes Children’s Library in Chicago Public Library in 2017, Learning Beautiful announces their Public Library Initiative, a limited launch of computational learning materials specially designed for public libraries across the country. Learning Beautiful will attend the American Library Association Conference in New Orleans June 21 - 25, exhibiting these materials, and providing purchasing opportunities for libraries.

Learning Beautiful is a company that spun out of the Social Computing Group of the MIT Media Lab last year. The toys are hand-crafted from natural materials, and designed to teach children computational logic as they play. The set is composed of modules focused on concepts including programming, binary numbers, image representation, and data structures, complete with lesson plans and play books.

Learning Beautiful was founded by Kim Smith and Yonatan Cohen with a mission to enable Montessori-inspired education in new subject areas, beginning with computer science. “There is growing evidence of the negative effects of screen time for young children, yet computational thinking is vital for this generation,” said Kim Smith. “Our materials provide a foundation, in a tactile way that is fun and engaging.” The unique and developmentally-appropriate methods have been developed and tested over several years, through research at the MIT Media Lab and with pilot schools.

Chicago Public Library Commissioner Brian Bannon first discovered Learning Beautiful through the Library’s collaboration with the MIT Media Lab, where the Public Library Innovation Exchange in the Learning Initiative cultivates opportunities between MIT researchers and public libraries. The educational materials by Learning Beautiful are a perfect way to provide computer science education for young children and their parents – through joyful play.

About Learning Beautiful: Boston-based Learning Beautiful provides a simple yet effective, beautiful yet practical platform to teach children the basics of computer science – without computers. Begun as a research project at the MIT Media Lab, the company has completed its first 2 pilot studies in 4 Montessori classrooms in Cambridge, MA. Later this year they will release these materials in additional libraries and schools, with educational toys available to the home consumer in fall of 2018.

For more information, please contact Kim Smith at (623) 261-3157 or email at kim@learningbeautiful.com.