Kid Trends – Fall 2004

Music

Ones to Watch and Why

- **Modest Mouse** – These indie rockers started off as a low-fi traditional rock band and although they've been around for a while, the mainstream kids are now getting into them. This could have something to do with their latest album, *Float On*, being better produced noise pop than their last. Either way, we're glad kids have caught on, cuz they're cool.
- **Houston:** This R&B singer with a hip hop edge has a big party hit out right now called "I Like That" and his CD guest stars Chingy and Nate Dogg. Plus, he's cute. So that makes him one to watch in our books.
- **Aselin Debison** – She's a Canadian from Cape Breton on a "back-to-school" mall tour. Her sound is "earthy pop" with a folksy feel and our former Prime Minister, Mr. JC called her "the next Celine Dion." This could be a huge compliment—but we're not sure...

Let's Get Digital

The Black Eyed Peas have entered into an interesting partnership with video game publisher Electronic Arts as they provide and produce the soundtrack to the **The Urbz: Sims in the City** video game. The game will include nine tracks from their upcoming album "Monkey Business" and band members Will. I. Am, Fergie, taboo and Apl. de. Ap appear as musicians who teach players to groove to their custom mixed Simlish (the game's exclusive language) songs. This is the first time a band has gone back into the studio to re-record their album in another language, specifically for a game. This ought to fare well for BEP as the Sims is an incredibly popular series with a very desirable audience. We predict that these two industries will continue to work together as the video game industry flourishes and CD sales dwindle.

Spend Worthy

Here are some albums we think kids might actually *BUY* this fall:

- Tegan and Sara (*So Jealous*) – cool Canadian girl band
- Nelly (*Sweat*)
- Say Anything (*Say Anything is a Real Boy*)
- Hilary Duff (Self titled album) – Yup, she's back with another album, just when Ashlee Simpson thought she could be the reining pop princess!

Movies

Holidays Already?

Get your warm and fuzzies ready folks; the lucrative holiday box office is upon us! Here are the movies you'll be seeing, hearing about, sick of, sickened by, or all of the above this fall/winter…

- Thanks to YTV, Canadian kids everywhere are crazy for SpongeBob and his crustacean cronies. So if the television ratings are any indication, we expect **The SpongeBob SquarePants Movie** to be a box office and licensing behemoth!

- On the CGI front, the Pixar/Disney juggernaut is back, this time with superheroes in **The Incredibles**. And following the huge success this summer with Shrek 2, Dreamworks will present its latest adventure entitled **Sharktale**. And holiday movie **Polar Express** exploits new technology that digitally captures human performances, including Tom Hanks. The book is a classic, but we're not so sure the movie will have the same appeal. The technology makes Hanks and cast look like zombies, putting into question the stamina of this new technique and Christmas movie.

- In the live action arena, **Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events** will hit the big screen with Jim Carrey as Count Olaf and Jude Law as the melancholic, titular author. This is sure to be the live action success of the season. In **First Daughter**, Katie Holmes stars as the daughter of the U.S. President. Although everyone has probably forgotten, Mandy Moore recently starred in this same movie. Hollywood must think people are stupid enough to watch the same thing twice. Hollywood must think people are stupid enough to watch the same thing twice.

- **Fat Albert** hits the silver screen this winter and it targets kids—they didn't grow up with the cartoon so will they line up for the movie? With the dismal showing for **Thunderbirds** this summer, we think not.

** Speaking of Thunderbirds, While Team America: World Police may resemble the original Thunderbirds TV show, this is not going to be a movie for kids. Trey Parker and Matt Stone (of TV's South Park) have created a movie that more puppet violence than a Sunday afternoon puppet show.

Anime Movies

Anime continues to be a strong force in the entertainment world, increasingly influencing movie productions. Tokyopop Inc. has made indications that they are interested in turning some of their magna titles into features length films. For YTV fans, Dragon Ball Z is also in the process of getting the big screen treatment.

TV on Film

And because we love old TV shows being turned into movies, we're happy to report that the Wayans brothers have begun production on an adaptation of "**The Munsters**."

FASHION

Fashion Bytes

- Pencil skirts and tutus (a la Avril Lavigne) are big this season, although girls will still be wearing their minis – pairing them with tights or pants during the colder months.
- Hippie chic (again!)– Frye boots; coloured corduroy pants; suede bags; fringe jackets; patchwork anything; cowboy boots and antiqued floral patterns.
- Sequins – the more glam the better! Our fave is the elasticized sequin waist-cincher belt.
- Fooler shirts – casual kids will continue to wear their graphic T with a long sleeved shirt underneath.
- Mix n' match – tweed; fur; stripes; floral; plaids and even tie-dye – the sky is the limit with what can be paired together. And since the Olsen twins are doing it, expect millions to follow.

It's a Wrap!

Even the most fundamental fashionistas have probably taken note of the fact that the poncho is the new pashmina. One cool thing about this trend is that kids are crocheting their own. Recently, Lycos reported a 375% increase in poncho pattern web searches and with the huge DIY craze, it's no surprise. This and the fact that ponchos offer a welcome cover-up to the belly barring look, make it our favourite massively trendy item this fall.

From the Sheets to the Streets

The "just rolled out of bed look" is big, starting from the carefully careless ponytail right on down to the toes with girls wearing slipper-style shoes. For many teenage girls, sleepwear is part of their everyday look – pajamas, lounge pants, boxers, tanks & short sets. Many believe that comfort and shock value are the reasons behind this trend.

Peak of the Geek

Thanks to the movie Napoleon Dynamite, Outkast's Andre 3000 and the technological revolution, nerdy is the new cool (kind of): truth is when it comes to fashion, kids are trying to look classically uncool, with cardigans, elbow-pad blazers, broaches, capelets and other formerly matronly items, making tweens look like they just raided their grandparent's closet. On a related note, **UGG** footwear have come out with an outerwear line.

Video Games

As Options Wear Thin, More Kids Shoot Hookers

As the video game industry skews older and older, the well of kids' games is drying up. This year's Electronic Entertainment Expo (E3) showed plenty of head-choppin', robo-babe action titles, but there was a noticeable dearth of material aimed at a younger audience. As a result, far more children are playing **Mature-rated titles** like the Grand Theft Auto series, which allows players to "have relations" with hookers then murder them with a chainsaw to reclaim their money. Currently, there is a law prohibiting the sale of Mature-rated games to minors; the ESRB game ratings remain a "helpful guide for parents."

Celebs Give Face in Popular Video Games

It's no secret that the video game industry pulls in more money than the film industry, and that celebrities have been voicing characters in games since the advent of CD-ROM technology in the early 90's. With today's advanced graphics, a current trend sees celebs' images mapped to character models in many games. From EA's Lord of the

Rings games, which feature a passable Viggo Mortensen, to James Bond: Everything or Nothing, with its excellent face-scans of Pierce Brosnan and supermodel Heidi Klum, Hollywood talent is being used to throw more big-budget muscle behind games than ever before.

Video Games Offer No Hope—our gaming expert chimes in…

With increased focus on childhood obesity and video games sharing a hefty portion of the blame, various media outlets have been touting exercise peripherals—dance mats, cameras, bongo drums, treadmills—as the next big thing in gaming. The truth is, these peripherals have been around for many years (remember the floor mat for Track n' Field on the NES in 1987?), and they've never really caught on. When they're in "game mode," gamers will do things as lazily as possible, which means cheating the mat by slapping it instead of running on it to power their on-screen character! The most successful peripherals to date have been dance mats for use with Dance Dance Revolution, which mimics the expensive arcade setup, and Sony's Eye Toy, a camera that allows players to physically interact with the action on-screen. Still, these devices meet a niche market at best, and have as much chance at slimming down the nation's tiny tubbies as they did in 1987—zero.

However, if it is destined to work, here are some properties that might beat the bulge:

- **EyeToy: Groove** is a game targeting 7-to-11 year-olds; players dance to pop tunes — and it comes with a calorie counter!
- **EyeToy: AntiGrav**—a skateboarding/snowboarding game expected this fall. Unlike other EyeToy games, players don't see themselves on the screen. Instead they use their body to control a character on screen; the camera uses motion tracking technology that instantly translates body movement into on-screen interaction—good luck cheating this one!
- **Spider-Man 2 Web Action Video Gaming System**, which has Spider-Man mirroring a child's movements on the TV screen using sensors strapped on the child's wrist and ankles.

Technology

Plead Or Need?

If a member of your bankroll has been trying to convince you that an iPod, cellphone, digital camera or PDA are essential back to school items, they're not necessarily making it up. As more and more tweens pack them, these gadgets have become the ultimate "me too" accessory for fall. However, these high tech toys are not just hip to have, in many cases they're also being put to good educational use. Gone are the days of paper to record homework due dates, school club schedules and notes. Today's kids live their lives electronically and want to keep it organized the same way.

Why The Hang Up?

Not surprisingly, the number of kids that want a cell phone exceeds the number that own one. According to a recent YTV.com poll that showed 30% of kids 6-18 have their own or easy access to one, while 60% want one.

Most wireless companies have back-to-school ad campaigns that feature fancy phones – so these kids are being targeted hard – some ads even mention their convenient offer of having the charges go directly to mom or dad's bill.

There are 101 reasons why kids would want their own cell phone: ring tones, wallpaper and games naturally appeal to kids, but here are a few more reasons why kids clamoring for cell phones will only increase…

1) Lifeblog
Many mobile-savvy youngsters collect large amounts of information on their phones – text messages, pictures and even video, so Nokia came up with Lifeblog, a PC program that scrapbooks information and releases space on the cell phone.

2) Concerts
The first live concert was recently broadcast over a mobile phone system to promote DJ Tiesto's new album "Just Be." The company responsible, A-Stream, claims they are the first worldwide company with the ability to stream a high-quality concerts at a low bandwidth. So in the long run owning a cellphone could save you money on concert tickets and allow kids to see and hear cool concerts no matter where they live.

3) Multiplayer gaming
Cell phone gaming just keeps advancing and soon kids will be able to play against each other to win prizes in contests and tournaments. The service has launched on various services throughout the U.S. so that means us northerners can't be too far behind.

Toys

Virtual Petdemonium
If you know a kid that's clamoring for a pet, but isn't quite ready for the responsibility, they should test their nurturing skills on **Gupi**, the high-tech guinea pig gigi pet with a pre-programmed personality, voice-overlay technology, and an internet connection for instant messaging. With pets like this, who needs puppies?

AniMinis
Robotech AniMinis are 3-inch DVDs each containing one episode of anime. Disks include favourites like Hello Kitty, Robotech, Happy Lesson and Kino's Journey. With portable DVD players on the rise—our predicted favourite being the $99 TeenTech portable CD, MP3 and DVD player—and the popularity of anime, these tradable mini discs may be the biggest collectable since Yu-Gi-Oh! cards.

Who Ya Gonna Call?
Ghostbusters!? Umm…no. Today's supernatural scaredy-cats have a new product to rely on - **Monster Zappers**. Become a "team member" to score such supplies as the spray zapper, flashlight and the essential "Keep Out Monsters!" door hanger. Currently they're only sold through a 1-800 number and website with mass market retail release scheduled for spring 2005. And of course, with any great idea comes an animated series – but kids will have to keep the light on till 2006.

Hands-On Role Playing
It's not often that a toy line comes from a video game, but with the popularity of the Sims role playing game (esp. with girls); it's no surprise that **Electronic Arts and Atomic Toys** have partnered to create and distribute a toy line based on the series. Girls can now take the role playing from the screen to the playroom and use their imaginations to create scenarios that even EA couldn't have dreamed up. The first line of toys is based

on the characters from the new game The Urbs: Sims in the City both are available this November.

Next Aboard The Nostalgia Train

American Greetings have done a fab-o job of reviving Gen X classics like Care Bears and Strawberry Shortcake, so we're pleased to report that they've signed a deal with Nickelodeon Consumer Products to license **Holly Hobbie**. The line will include such items as home video, toys and apparel…could a television series be far behind?

New Mini Dolls

Mattel has these new mini dolls sold in packs of three appropriately named **We 3 Friends** that could potentially put an end to the "three's a crowd" mentality of little girls. Everyone knows how the dynamic changes when a third kid is added to playtime and although Mattel may not have created the toys for such a purpose, we know that role playing is tops when it comes to teaching kids valuable lessons, so here's to We 3 Friends having a "we girls can play nicely" effect.

Television

Totally Tubular!

Joshua Peck stars as Josh in the highly anticipated **Drake & Josh**, and we've got him pegged as a breakout star to watch. He also has a teen drama movie out called Mean Creek, which is getting rave reviews—comparisons to both Stand By Me and River's Edge which brought forth the careers of Kiefer Sutherland, River Phoenix and Keanu Reeves.

Josh co-stars with Drake Bell, another talented young teen sensation who is reminiscent of David Cassidy from the 70's. Drake not only acts, but writes and sings his own music too. Drake performs all the music in the teen comedy series and is an active member of the Teen People "style council."

Drake & Josh can be seen on YTV and is sure to be a hit.

YTV ANIME DECODER

Not an anime otaku? That's cool; our resident **Anime Master** put together a list of commonly used words to get you up to speed…

Dojinshi: Fan produced items, usually fan drawn manga

Manga: Japanese word for comic book

Otaku: Mega fan of something, usually anime

Seiyuu: Japanese word for voice actor or actress

Sentai: a live action show with costumed heroes and villains (such as the Power Rangers)

Shoujo: Anime or manga aimed at young girls

Shounen: Anime or manga aimed at young boys

Baka: Japanese word for stupid or to insult someone

Kawaii": Japanese word for cute

Glomp: A term used to describe running up to someone and giving them a big hug, to heavily tackle and hug someone (usually demonstrated on fans and voice actors at conventions)

DISCLAIMER: The trends that the YTV Trend Huntaz comment on come from the buzz on the street, the mall, the Internet, and numerous publications. YTV does not guarantee that all of the above information will come to fruition, but you can pretty much believe us as we are obsessed with this stuff.