

YMA YOUTH MARKETS ALERT

TRACKING CRITICAL TRENDS AMONG YOUNG AUDIENCES SINCE 1988

High School Bands Seek To Expand On Promotional Opportunities, But Remain Relatively Untapped

It appears that the marketing world isn't immune to the hierarchies found in high school. Similar to the cool kids in 1980's John Hughes movies, marketers all too frequently overlook "geeky" band members in favor of reaching out to the popular cheerleaders and athletes.

Yet now it appears band members might be edging their way onto the A-list and into marketers' consciousness. For instance, according to Ken Martinson, founder of Marching.com, a site that serves the marching band community, in the past year there have been significant marching-related milestones, including:

- ▶ The introduction of *Halftime* magazine, a bi-monthly publication focused entirely on marching activities;
- ▶ A documentary film, *From The 50 Yard Line*, that has been winning awards at film festivals;
- ▶ Publication of several new fiction and non-fiction band-themed books.

Martinson adds his website has received inquiries from MTV and the producers of the NBC reality show *America's Got Talent* who are looking to include marching bands in their programming.

In addition, for the past two years, ESPN has aired the All-American Marching Band's performance during the nationally-televised Under Armor All-American High School Football Game. "At a luncheon the day before the game, Howie Long even introduced the [selected] band members at the same time as the [selected All-American] football players," underscoring the fact that "band members were just as visible and important as the athletes," says the National Association for Music Education's Earl Hurrey.

Bands As A Viable Category

This increased exposure is beginning to attract attention from marketers. But since this isn't the first time marching bands have received interest, many are working hard to justify their relevance and show that this commu-

nity isn't just the flavor-of-the-month.

"[The 2002 movie] *Drumline* stoked the fires [in raising awareness of bands as a viable category] and we came pretty close to signing some national deals. But for whatever reason, they all fell through," says Sean King of the non-profit Youth Education in the Arts (YEA), one of the larger national coalitions which oversees more than 700 marching bands.

The band world offers many diverse possibilities for marketing tie-ins. There are weekend events that are similar to rock festivals. This weekend, somewhere in the U.S., more than 15,000 band kids and their supporters will gather in a stadium. "It's almost like a huge festival. Kids are mostly just sitting around for 4-5 hours and their parents are all in the stands watching," says King.

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VIRTUAL WORLDS CONFERENCE

Kid-Targeted Virtual Worlds Seek Impact, Revenue

Virtual worlds may be viewed by adults as a new entertainment medium, but today's kids don't see any difference between navigating in these worlds and, say, playing a boardgame. In fact, Mattel's Charles Scothon acknowledges that Barbie.com "is as much a toy to [kids] as Barbie dolls [are]."

The 2nd annual Virtual Worlds Conference last month in New York City addressed the evo-

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REASONS PEOPLE PLAY IN VIRTUAL WORLDS

	AGE 13-17	ADULTS
Be someone else	22%	20%
Create and manage my avatar	29%	21%
Escape real life	22%	29%
Play/interact with others	21%	19%
Play games	46%	36%
Satisfy my curiosity	17%	23%

SOURCE: Parks Associates

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High School Bands

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There's also the tight clique of band members that tend to stick together outside of band practice. "It might only be 5% of a student body," says King, "but if you put 100 kids in the same t-shirt, it's going to cause a reaction." Online band-related sites, such as Marching.com or BandGeek.com, have passionate and devoted followers, including even those who stopped playing years ago.

Band members, collectively, would seem to be a desired demographic for marketers since a large majority come from middle- to upper-class families, are high achievers and nearly all (96%) go on to college, according to King.

Realistic Expectations

Right now, the marching band community remains relatively untapped, but not entirely brand-free. Instead of mass consumer products and automotive brands, the current partnerships largely derive from band-related categories, such as instrument makers and uniform manufacturers, as well as local or regional businesses.

"I get that we are not [something like the well-known] Little League [organization]. We aren't going to get the Coke's or Pepsi's, but [rather] their associated brands, like Vitamin Water, who also have something to prove. There's not enough in [major brands'] budgets to make sense until we are proven," says YEA's King.

Several organizations, including YEA and Drum Corps International (DCI), have created executive positions specifically designed to attract sponsors and spread the word that these organizations have a national reach. Even more, DCI — which calls itself "The Major League Of Bands" — annually holds a two-day seminar to bring together tour event partners to exchange ideas and offer support.

DCI has certainly had the most success with promotional partners, largely because its membership base skews broadly to college as well as high school students. DCI events, which annually attract 400,000 fans in addition to its participants, feature numerous branded booths that offer samples from headache medicine to bottled water.

AeroBed Products recently signed on with DCI to provide air mattresses for its members on a

135-city summer tour. "[DCI] showed us footage of these packed arenas full of kids using our beds. It's definitely a new big audience for us that we didn't know was out there, since we typically target moms," says Aero Products' Ann Gonzalez. Aero Products' deal with DCI includes offering its products to DCI members at a discount, as well as ads on the DCI website.

The two sides are also working on a member kit to give to band members at the start of the summer that includes a pamphlet with helpful tips, AeroBed coupons and everyday essential items, such as toothbrushes.

However, most of the marketers currently involved with these groups have done so only after being approached. Major marketers, for their part, aren't intentionally overlooking band members, but say they prefer to utilize other more proven targets. For instance, cheerleaders tend to be ripe for tie-ins with health & beauty products. Varsity sports athletes typically are good for word-of-mouth campaigns, since athletes tend to share information in the locker room and their opinions tend to have added weight among their peers.

That ever-present stereotype that band members are just geeks with no influence over their peers definitely impacts why marketers tend to prefer athletes over band members, though no marketer will admit it on the record. Interestingly, many band coordinators will. "We embrace the geek label," says King. Hurrey adds, "I don't think we will ever get the recognition that athletes receive, but that's not a bad thing. We have a cohesive small community that is beginning to thrive in its own way." [EDUCATION/MARKETING]

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National Association for Music Education, Earl Hurrey, Deputy Executive Director of Business Development, 1806 Robert Fulton Dr., Reston, VA 20191; 703-860-4000, x231; www.menc.org.

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Virtual Worlds

Continued from page 1

lution of virtual worlds, especially in regard to how they generate revenue. Key figures within the virtual world community — including advertisers, brands and game developers — also announced plans to work with Forrester Research to create a standardized metric to measure their impact.

Can Virtual Worlds Make Money?

Companies that develop virtual worlds as an adjunct to and promotional vehicle for their core products walk a tightrope of sorts. It can be difficult to balance between introducing an online site that is attractive to kids, yet at the same time keeping that same site from drawing them away from the core product. It's a problem, because "you need to create a model that rewards the kid for buying the product, but isn't so time consuming that it takes the kid away from playing with a toy," says toy analyst Sean McGowan.

Even Webkinz, whose business model, McGowan jokes, consists of "selling a code [to the online world] with a product wrapped around it," is leaving revenue on the table because its online world is so popular, he says.

Other virtual worlds aren't financially prudent either, he adds. For instance, Neopets — which is entirely free for users, supported by ad revenue — will "see kids spending billions of hours on Neopets, yet [Neopets] does not see any revenue, minus what [its parent] Viacom earns selling ad space."

The preferred business model for virtual worlds will likely involve offering free content to its users, while generating revenue via paid subscriptions to enhanced levels of the worlds, as well as online advertisement and product place-

ment, says McGowan. To that end, Mattel's BarbieGirls.com will implement a VIP membership subscription model this month, with VIP users' avatars identifiable via a virtual tiara.

However, McGowan adds, traditional retail sales will still remain the source for a company's core revenue. Virtual worlds are nothing more than one of the many ways to extend the brand experience, he says.

Also from the conference:

- ▶ Paramount Digital Entertainment partners with MTV's virtual world vMTV and Makena's virtual world There.com to allow users to use short movie snippets from popular teen and PG-13 rated movies, including *Zoolander*, *Clueless* and *Mean Girls*. Instead of quoting lines from *Ferris Bueller*, avatars will be able to use the actual clip, which appears over his or her head, says There.com's Ben Richardson. The service, operated by VooZoo, is priced \$1.00 for unlimited use of a clip, with the beta version launching this month. [ONLINE]

CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS: Mattel, Charles Scothon, GM/SVP Girls Brands, 636 Girard Ave., East Aurora, NY 14052; 716-687-3000; www.mattel.com.

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There.com, Ben Richardson, VP Business Development, 1825 S. Grant St., 4th Fl., San Mateo, CA 94402; 206-948-0878; ben@thereinc.com; www.there.com.

Things Kids Want Most In A Virtual World

1. Fun
2. Control
3. Meet social needs
4. Allow for self-expression
5. Safety

SOURCE: MTV Kids and Family Group

ONLINE USERS, BY AGE, 2008

AGE	13-18	18-34	35-54	55+
Social networks	18%	49%	27%	6%
Virtual worlds	14%	49%	34%	3%

SOURCE: Parks Associates

TOP VIRTUAL WORLDS THAT ONLINE AMERICANS HAVE EVER VISITED, 2008

Neopets	21%
Second Life	19%
Webkinz	19%
Disney ToonTown	15%
Club Penguin	15%

NOTE: Those surveyed include adults, but shows how popular "kid" sites are.

SOURCE: Parks Associates

Kia Sponsors Vans Warped Tour

Kia Motors America signs on as an exclusive sponsor of the 14th annual Vans Warped Tour, the skate-shoe brand's 45-stop, 100-band alternative music outing that kicks off June 20.

The automaker plans a sweepstakes ahead of the tour launch that includes giving away trips to tour stops and passes to artist meet-and-greets. Kia then will host a vehicle sweepstakes on the tour, staging a tent with model information as well as a VIP section for fan photo opportunities, artist interviews and signing sessions. [AUTOMOTIVE/ENTERTAINMENT]

CONTACTS & CONNECTIONS: Kia Motors America, Tim Chaney, Director Marketing, 9801 Muirlands Blvd., Irvine, CA 92618; 949-470-7151; tchaney@kiausa.com.

Vans Warped Tour, Kevin Lyman, Producer, 804 South Fair Oaks, South Pasadena, CA 91030; 626-799-7188; kevinwarped@aol.com; www.vanswarpedtour.com.



promotions monitor

EDUCATION

Florida State University's Creative Writing Program

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Works with children's author N.E. Bode to create a 30-day regimen for young writers. Teachers sign up online at www.southeastreview.org to receive weekday morning email for six weeks that includes such elements as a creative writing exercise, poetry, a quote from a famous author, or a word to prompt a free-write activity, among others. Twice a week, the program will send email "Craft Talks" from top children's authors — including Anne Ursu, Kate Bernheimer and Paul Shepherd — discussing how they became authors. The program costs \$10 per class, though there are scholarship and fee-waiving opportunities. (N.E. Bode, Author; jcbaggott@aol.com; www.theanybodies.com)

ELECTRONICS

Samsung Mobile

Jenny Goodridge
Marketing Manager
105 Challenger Rd.
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201-229-4000
www.samsung.com

Dreaming Tree Films and title sponsor Samsung Electronics produce Samsung Fresh Films, a national teen film-making program, currently in its third year, that selects 99 teens in nine cities to work on teams to create a short film. Teens also receive Samsung mobile phones to use during production. After the seven-day shoot, the nine films receive feedback from industry professionals and then are posted online for a popular-voting contest. The crew from the highest-rated film receives the title "2008 Freshest Filmmakers." Teens can enter through May 5 at www.fresh-films.com. (Dreaming Tree Films/Samsung Fresh Films, Kelli Feigley, Partner/Client Marketing Director, 1807 W. Sunnyside Ave., #2E, Chicago, IL 60640; 773-334-8380, x116; kelli@dreamingtreefilms.com; www.fresh-films.com)

FOOD/BEVERAGE

General Mills

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www.cheerios.com

For the sixth consecutive year, General Mills teams with non-profit First Book for its "Cheerios Spoonfuls of Stories" program. Characters based on books by actor/author John Lithgow are featured on more than five million Cheerios-branded books supporting the initiative. In addition, the program is also introducing an online book donation challenge — www.firstbook.org/lithgow — in which five states who generate the most online votes receive 20,000 books. The books will be distributed to children through various non-profits. (First Book, Kyle Zimmer, President, 1319 F St. NW, #1000, Washington, DC, 20004; 202-393-1222; www.firstbook.org)

Subway

Tony Pace
CMO
325 Bic Dr.
Milford, CT 06461
203-877-4281
www.subway.com

Offers boy- and girl-targeted promotions to encourage purchase of its Subway Fresh Fit For Kids meals, both of which are supported with in-store signage and on the Subway website. The promotions run through May 11 in the U.S., Canada, UK, Australia and New Zealand. The girls promotion involves Hit Entertainment's *Angelina Ballerina* property with a giveaway of either a free *Angelina Ballerina* Dancing Arabesque or Dancing Pirouette toy. The boy-targeted property is 4Kids Entertainment's *Yu-Gi-Oh! GX*, with either a free *Yu-Gi-Oh! GX* Monster Spinning Top or *Yu-Gi-Oh! GX* Monster Etching Plates with a purchase of a Subway Fresh Fit Kids Meal. (4Kids Entertainment, Al Kahn, Chairman/CEO, 1414 Avenue of the Americas, 5th Fl., New York, NY 10019; 212-758-7666; akahn@4kidsent.com; www.4kidsent.com. Hit Entertainment, Dana Laufer, VP Promotions, 230 Park Ave. S., #13, New York, NY 10003; 212-463-9623; dlaufer@hitentertainment.com; www.hitentertainment.com)

RETAIL

American Eagle Outfitters

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Named the exclusive retail partner for the youth voting initiative Declare Yourself. The awareness campaign includes in-store signage, online ads and targeted emails to American Eagle customers, as well as streaming celebrity video content promoting the campaign on ae.com. American Eagle has also created a limited edition "Vote" t-shirt — available online and in its stores May 23-June 24 — in which \$5 of each purchase benefits Declare Yourself's outreach efforts. In addition, American Eagle's online entertainment channel, 77E, will direct its visitors to Declare Yourself's site, so they can register to vote online. The initiative is supported with an advertorial in the May issue of *Seventeen* magazine featuring stars of MTV's reality series *The Hills*. (Declare Yourself, Elizabeth Rosenberg, Communications, 100 N. Crescent Dr., #250, Beverly Hills, CA 90210; 310-385-4186; www.declareyourself.org)



market research

Teens On Their Looks, Self-Esteem

Teens aged 13-17 spend an average of \$27 per month on health and beauty items, with deodorant (84%), whitening toothpaste (55%) and lip balm (54%) as the products most likely to be used daily, according to research company OTX and marketing firm the Intelligence Group.

HEALTH & BEAUTY PRODUCTS TEENS USE DAILY

Deodorant/antiperspirant	84%
Whitening toothpaste	55%
Lip balm/moisturizer	54%
Perfume/cologne	52%
Face scrub/cleanser	44%
Body spray	44%
Acne products	43%
Hair styling products	38%
Make-up	31%
Moisturizer	31%

SOURCE: OTX, The Intelligence Group

A large majority of teens (81%) say they are at least somewhat happy with their lives, with 31% considering themselves to be very happy. The relationship that teens have with their friends makes them the happiest (85%), followed by their talents and abilities (80%), how they look online, such as on their Facebook profile, (78%) and their school performance (74%).

That said, nearly two thirds (61%) worry about their looks, and nearly half (48%) compare the way they look with friends and classmates.

A teen's significant other has the most influence over a his or her self image, followed by his or her religion (82%), friends (79%) and parents (72%). Less than half say their self esteem is influenced by celebrities (49%), magazines (38%) and advertisements (33%).

Given two choices, teens would rather...

- ▶ Get a new car (96%) than plastic surgery (4%) for high school graduation.
- ▶ Get a college degree (90%) than win *American Idol* (10%).
- ▶ Have a lot of friends (76%) than lots of money (24%).
- ▶ Feel good (69%) than look good (31%).
- ▶ Be told they have a great personality (68%) than be told they are hot (32%).
- ▶ Be comfortable (68%) than fashionable (32%).
- ▶ Be the smartest kid (55%) than the best-looking kid (45%) in school.
- ▶ Be one of *People* magazine's 50 Most Beautiful People (53%) than one of *Forbes* magazine's 50 Richest People (47%). [CONSUMER ATTITUDES & SPENDING]

SOURCES: "Teen Topix," The Intelligence Group, Jane Buckingham, President, 162 5th Ave., 6th Fl., New York, NY 10010; 212-277-9090; jrbuckingham@youthintelligence.com; www.youthintelligence.com.

OTX Research, Bruce Friend, President Media & Entertainment Insights, 10567 Jefferson Blvd., Culver City, CA 90232; 310-736-3400; bfriend@otxresearch.com; www.otxresearch.com.

High School Graduation Rates Differ Widely Between City, Suburban Students

High school graduation rates, in general, are 15 percentage points lower in urban districts than in the suburbs, according to a report released by the non-profit Editorial Projects in Education and funded by America's Promise Alliance and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Seven in 10 U.S. high school seniors (70%) graduated in 2003-04 (the study derives its figures from the number of 9th graders who ultimately earn a diploma). However, there is a vast difference in graduation rates by gender, race/ethnicity and region. For instance, graduation rates for males, on average, are eight points lower than for female students. In addition, White and Asian students have graduation rates higher than the national average, and Native American, Black and Hispanic seniors have lower rates than the national average.

Only half of students living in the 50 largest cities in the U.S. earn a high school diploma. Seventeen of these 50 cities had graduation rates lower than 50%. Even more, districts in Baltimore, MD, Cleveland, OH, Detroit, MI, and Indianapolis, IN, see fewer than 35% of their students obtain a high school diploma. Baltimore, MD, and Columbus, OH, experience the widest gap between urban and suburban graduation rates (47 and 40 percentage points, respectively).

The areas with the highest percentage of students graduating included Mesa, AZ (77%), San Jose, CA (77%), Nashville, TN (77%) and Colorado Springs, CO (76%). [EDUCATION]

NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES, 2003-04

All Students	70%
RACE/ETHNICITY	
Asian	80%
Black	53%
Hispanic	58%
Native American	49%
White	76%
GENDER	
Male	66%
Female	74%
RESIDENCE	
Rural	73%
Suburb	75%
Town	71%
Urban district	60%

SOURCE: Editorial Projects in Education

SOURCES: America's Promise Alliance, Marguerite Kondracke, CEO, 1110 Vermont Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20005; 202-657-0600; joinalliance@americaspromise.org; www.americaspromise.org.

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Patty Stonesifer, CEO, P.O. Box 23350, Seattle, WA 98102; 206-709-3100; www.gatesfoundation.org.

Editorial Projects in Education, Christopher Swanson, Director, 6935 Arlington Rd., Bethesda, MD 20814; 301-280-3100; cswanson@epe.org; www.edweek.org.

Parents Don't Know What Issues Face Their Teen Daughters

More than three quarters of parents (78%) say their daughters aged 14-18 can talk to them about anything, but just 54% of teen girls agree, according to a survey by the Women's Entertainment TV network. Similarly, 73% of parents think they know what's happening in their daughters' lives, but only 45% of girls say their parents really know what's going on with them.

Further evidence that parents don't know what's up with their daughters: more than half of teen girls (87%) are stressed about how their bodies look. But a much lower percentage of parents (52%) think their daughters could develop an eating disorder. Meanwhile, 12% of girls have binged or purged in an effort to control their weight.

Nearly three quarters of girls (74%) know someone their age who has been pregnant, and 47% have never had a conversation with a parent about sex. But just 21% of parents are concerned that their daughter might become pregnant. Meanwhile, 25% of girls feel pressured to have sex.

Teen girls are nearly twice as likely to ask friends (42%) rather than a mother or stepmother (23%) for advice about a problem. Yet, more than half (52%) follow the advice they get from their parents. [HEALTH/BEAUTY, WOMEN]

SOURCES OF STRESS FOR TEEN GIRLS, 2008

Preparing for their future	97%
Getting good grades	95%
Relationship with parents	87%
How their bodies look	87%
Relationship with friends	83%
Feel pressure to have sex	25%
Feel pressure to smoke, drink, or do drugs	21%

SOURCE: Women's Entertainment TV

SOURCE: "High School Confidential Survey," Women's Entertainment TV, Karen Versoza, Director Public Relations, 11 Penn Plaza, 19th Fl., New York, NY 10001; 917-542-6218; kversoza@we.tv; www.wetv.com.

FAST FACTS ABOUT TEEN GIRLS:

- ▶ 96% are involved in an extracurricular activity at school.
- ▶ 54% volunteer.
- ▶ 41% of juniors and seniors have part time jobs.
- ▶ Teen girls get an average 6.8 hours of sleep per night, but say they need 8.4 hours.

SOURCE: Women's Entertainment TV

Recession Fears Hit Prom-Goers

Although the U.S. is not officially in a recession, both teens and parents are cutting back. Parents have decreased the amount they spend annually on their teen's clothing and accessories by nearly half (\$883 in 2008 vs. \$1,487 in 2007), according to Piper Jaffray's bi-annual teen study.

In another indicator, many high school students are finding their prom plans being impacted. In fact, one notable shift finds students (or their parents) putting down deposits for items, such as tickets to the event and limo rentals, rather than paying in full upfront as most have done in years prior, according to a YMA spot check with companies in several cities.

Most evidence of this shift is anecdotal. Yet regardless of region, the majority of businesses, ranging from limo operators to florists, echo the same concerns: that students are prioritizing their prom budgets, in which the amount spent on dresses and attire remains unscathed, and funding for flowers, limos, and food are being trimmed back.

Several catering halls in the Northeast say they're serving lower-priced options — chicken and pasta instead of steak and seafood — to prom attendees and their parents. Also, after-party plans are smaller, with many students opting for more intimate gatherings at a friend's home, rather than renting hotel suites.

Even more, prom-related businesses say they are bracing for a brutal 2009 prom season as well. "The [2009] season typically starts as early as August [when halls are being booked], and I doubt any recession fears will be over by then. No one is in a festive mood right now. A lot has to do with the mindset where people are spending less across the board," says Stav Vaisman of FAME Media, a marketing agency that helps coordinate prom activities.

One caveat: not all students are feeling the crunch. Price remains irrelevant among wealthy and upper-middle class students. Interestingly, it's also not a factor among Blacks, Latinos, and most lower-class students, says Vaisman. "I think this event is just so important to them that they have planned well in advance and are doing whatever it takes to get the money together." [CONSUMER SPENDING & ATTITUDES]

CONTACTS AND CONNECTIONS: FAME Media, Stav Vaisman, Chairman, 7767 Grand Ave., Ridgefield, NJ 07657; 201-969-2250; stav@famemedia.com; www.famemedia.com.

Piper Jaffray, Jeffrey Klinefelter, Senior Research Analyst, 800 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN 55402; 612-303-5537; jeffrey.p.klinefelter@pj.com; www.piperjaffray.com.

Teen girls are nearly twice as likely to ask their friends (42%) than a mother or stepmother (23%) for advice about a problem.

—Women's Entertainment TV

↑ marketers on the move

Razor & Tie Entertainment promotes **Marty Gottesman** to Director Licensing and Administration from Manager Licensing & Royalty Administration (212-473-9173).

Girl Scouts of the USA names **Laurel Richie**, ex-Ogilvy & Mather, as its first CMO (212-852-8000).

CBS Films names **Debbie Miller**, ex-Warner Bros., as EVP Worldwide Marketing (323-575-2345).

Casey Patterson is named SVP Event Production and Talent Development at MTV Networks' Spike TV and TV Land, overseeing tie-in relationships with film studios (212-846-7035). She was Spike TV's SVP Talent Development and Casting.

Media agency Horizon Media promotes **Gene Turner** from Managing Director to VP Managing Director (212-916-8600). **Jill Nickerson**, formerly of MediaVest, is named VP Director Out-of-Home.

Lightyear Entertainment promotes **Allan Canter** from VP to SVP Sales and Marketing (212-353-5084).

Nickelodeon and MTVN Kids and Family Group names **Mark Taylor** SVP/GM of Nickelodeon Animation Studio.

UK-based Entertainment Rights promotes **Chloe Van Den Berg** from Director of Sales to Executive Director of International (011-44-208-762-6200).

Elmer's Products names **Tony Heffner**, ex-MeadWestvaco, as Associate Licensing Manager (614-985-2633).

Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing promotes **Kara Sargent** from Editorial Director to Executive Editor for Simon Scribbles and Simon Spotlight (212-698-7000).

Joanne Ruelos, ex-McGraw Hill, named Senior Editor of Licensed Publishing at Scholastic Trade (212-343-6100).

United Media names **Shawn Lawson Cummings**, ex-Major League Baseball, as SVP International Licensing (212-293-8500).

B*tween Productions, creators of Beacon Street Girls, names **Denis Haskin** VP Engineering, overseeing online initiatives (781-863-8228).

YMA welcomes news of youth marketing personnel changes. Please send information to Larissa Faw, Editor, Youth Markets Alert, EPM Communications, 160 Mercer St., 3rd Fl., New York, NY 10012; 212-941-1633, x16; lfaw@epmcom.com; fax: 212-941-1622.

CONFERENCE CALENDAR

Logging Into The Playground: How Digital Media Are Shaping Children's Learning Symposium. May 9, New York, NY
CONTACT: The Joan Ganz Cooney Center, Ellen Lewis, 212-875-6396; ellen.lewis@sesameworkshop.org; www.joanganzcooneycenter.org

Kid Power 2008. May 19-22, Disney's Yacht Club & Resort, Orlando, FL
CONTACT: Kid Power Exchange, Chris Brown, Marketing Manager, 800-882-8684; chris.brown@iqpc.com; www.kidpowerx.com

Book Expo America. May 29-June 1, Los Angeles Convention Center, Los Angeles, CA
CONTACT: Reed Expo, Lance Fensterman, Event Director, 203-840-5507; lfensterman@reedexpo.com; www.bookexpoamerica.com

Effective Education Partnerships Conference. July 10-11, Fairfax, VA
CONTACT: DeHavilland Associates, Karen Swofford, Project Manager, 704-944-3135; karen@dehavillandassociates.com; www.eepc2008.com

Y-Pulse National Mashup. July 14-15, San Francisco, CA
CONTACT: Y-Pulse, Anastasia Goodstein, Founder, 415-652-4437; anastasia@ypulse.com; www.ypulse.com

Comic-Con. July 24-27, San Diego Convention Center, San Diego, CA
CONTACT: WonderCon, David Glanzer, Director of Marketing, 619-414-1020; cci-info@comic-con.org; www.comic-con.org

U-Turns Teen Showcase 2008. July 31-August 2, Atlanta, GA
CONTACT: Teen Leaders of America, Saqirah Redmond, Program Director, 404-419-6053; saqirah.redmond@teenleadersofamerica.com; www.teenleadersofamerica.com

Virtual Worlds Expo. Sept. 4-5, Los Angeles, CA
CONTACT: Virtual Worlds Management, Chris Sherman, Executive Director, 512-633-4132; chris@showinitiative.com; www.virtualworldsexpo.com

New York Animé Festival. Sept. 26-28, Jacob Javits Center, New York, NY
CONTACT: Reed Expo, Peter Tatara, Programming Manager, 203-840-5334; ptatara@reedexpo.com; www.nyanimfestival.com

The Millennials. Sept. 27, Scandinavia House, New York, NY
CONTACT: Digital Media Wire, Ellen Gildersleeve, Director, Marketing and Events, 310-855-0033; ellen@digitalmediawire.com; www.millennialsconference.com

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research notes

One In Five Young Adults Are Frequent Fast Food Eaters

One in five young adults (20%) get their meals at fast food restaurants at least three times a week, according to researchers at the University of Minnesota. However, as they age, males increase their frequency of fast food meals by a third, while female eating habits remain constant.

However, females working 40 hours or more per week are 26% more likely than female part-time workers to frequently consume fast food, whereas those attending a 4-year school and living on a college or university campus are 14% and 10%, respectively, less likely than those not in school to be frequent fast food eaters. Unsurprisingly, those from lower-income families are most likely to frequently get their meals from fast food restaurants. [FOOD/BEVERAGE]

SOURCE: University of Minnesota, Division of Epidemiology & Community Health, Project EAT: Eating Among Teens, Nicole Larsen, Lead Author, 1300 S. 2nd St., #300, Minneapolis, MN 55454; hans1621@umn.edu; www.epi.umn.edu.

Brand Logos May Influence Behavior

College students subliminally exposed to the Disney Channel logo behave more honestly than those participants who were exposed to the E! Channel brand, according to a study published in the *Journal of Consumer Research*.

Researchers from Duke University's Fuqua School of Business and the University of Waterloo in Canada briefly flashed various brand images in front of college students — quickly enough so they were unaware they had seen the logos — and then asked these students to complete tasks that measured factors such as creativity and honesty.

They found that even the smallest exposure to a well-known brand can cause people to behave in ways that mirror a brand's identity. For example, participants exposed to the Apple logo were significantly more creative than those who viewed IBM's logo.

Researchers are now working to see if unconscious brand exposure influences everyday life, for instance, whether drinking Pepsi makes a consumer behave more youthfully. Or if walking past a FedEx truck makes people pick up their pace. [ADVERTISING/HUMAN BEHAVIOR]

SOURCE: "Automatic Effects of Brand Exposure on Motivated Behavior: How Apple Makes You 'Think Different,'" *Journal of Consumer Research*, www.journals.uchicago.edu; Grainne Fitzsimons, Author, University of Waterloo in Canada, grainne@watarts.uwaterloo.ca.

Moms Aware And Concerned About Marketing Aimed At Their Kids

Marketing messages that encourage materialistic qualities in their children (82%) is a top concern for moms of children under age 18, according to research firm Invoke Solutions. Moms are also wary of marketing that impacts their child's body image (72%), ads that promote childhood obesity (69%)

and those that lower a kid's self-esteem (65%). The company interviewed mothers of children under age 18 on how they feel about youth marketing and marketers' responsibilities over their messages. Among its conclusions:

- ▶ Toys R Us, Scholastic, Kellogg's and Mattel are viewed as marketing appropriately to kids. Fast food and soft drinks are the product categories least appropriate for direct marketing to kids, according to moms.
- ▶ Most moms (89%) say there is too much marketing aimed at their kids, and two thirds (66%) are very or extremely aware of the marketing their child sees.
- ▶ 83% of moms frequently or constantly monitor their child's computer time. Four in 10 (40%) watch TV with their child "most of the time" and 83% decide their programming.
- ▶ Children have the least influence over their family's purchase of cars and furniture (1% each). Parents are most likely to listen to their recommendations for DVDs/movies (58%), groceries (44%) and music/CDs (26%).
- ▶ 92% of moms say their children ask for specific brands and products.
- ▶ The largest number of moms (89%) feel that it's a parent's responsibility to protect a child from inappropriate marketing messages, still 83% believe the government needs to take a more proactive role. [MARKETING]

SOURCE: Invoke Solutions, Josh Mendelsohn, Director of Marketing, 375 Totten Pond Rd., #704, Waltham, MA 02451; 781-810-2710; josh.mendelsohn@invoke.com; www.invoke.com.

Girl Sleepovers Aren't Just Fun And Games

Although the large majority of Canadian moms say their daughters "really enjoy sleepovers," nearly the same percentage say these parties can hurt their self-esteem, according to an Ipsos-Reid poll conducted for Dove. Also:

- ▶ 90% of daughters ask for their moms' help in planning sleepover parties.
- ▶ 25% of girls have come home upset after a sleepover.
- ▶ 17% of moms say their daughters are more self-conscious about their bodies and how they look once they come home from a sleepover. [BEAUTY]

WHAT MOMS THINK GO ON DURING A GIRL'S SLEEPOVER PARTY

Beauty and style makeovers	.82%
Talking about boys, crushes	.72%
Gossiping about other girls	.67%
Reading beauty, celebrity, fashion magazines	.45%
Gossiping about celebrities	.31%
Comparing their bodies and appearances to those of friends	.29%
Comparing themselves to celebrities they admire	.27%

SOURCE: Ipsos-Reid

SOURCE: Ipsos-Reid, Sean Simpson, Research Manager, 416-572-4474; sean.simpson@ipsos-reid.com; www.ipsos.ca.