

# KidsFoodTrends

A resource on children's food & beverage products, market statistics and lifestyle trends



## From the Children's Researcher's Desk

### "Thanks for the memories!"

A study of moms in the US has unveiled some powerful insights into what drives them to be regular purchasers of certain products. Personal memories have a resounding and lasting influence on the present day.

When moms declared that they had positive memories of a product from their youth, this positive impression lasts to an extent that they will try and impress similar memories upon their own children.

This enamors certain brands to families and allows them to become something of a tradition within the household.

### "Licking the Lid of Life"

Kids love to play with food, especially when told not to! However, acceptable food play can become ritual in nature when it comes to certain foods and products.

A fine example of this is pudding or yogurt. The lid will be licked and the inside scraped clean with spoon or even fingers. When kids like something they "don't want to waste a drop!"

This shows that kids not only enjoy getting their hands on food, but also don't want to miss out on any remnant of great taste.

What are you doing to enhance kids' eating ritual of your product?!



## A Trail of Carbon Footprints

**K**ids today are more clued up on the carbon footprint than ever before. The hope is that educating youth about their carbon footprint will have a positive reaction in the way they think about the world as they grow up.



We have all heard of the idea of a carbon footprint, usually with trepidation and concern. But what exactly is the carbon footprint? In a nutshell a carbon footprint is:

*"A measure of the impact human activities have on the environment in terms of the amount of green house gases produced, measured in units of carbon dioxide"*

Simply put, it is a means of measuring the amount of harmful CO<sub>2</sub> gasses that we produce in day to day life. The idea of a carbon footprint is relatively new, although the theory of it stems back to ecological footprints.

A more 'green minded' generation is expected to have an impact on many aspects of life, from packaging to pollution, kids are likely to start pushing for the greener options.

But what is a carbon footprint exactly? The footprint is a way to gauge how individuals and organizations can reduce their CO<sub>2</sub> output, one of the greatest causes of environmental

change. In principle there is no fault with the idea of the carbon footprint, it seems a wise and reliable means of judging how to improve the quality of life for us all.

This is especially relevant today, as

the human race is currently rapidly exceeding the natural resources that the earth can replace.

The rate is currently around 23% more than the earth can handle, meaning that it takes at least one year and two months to regenerate what we use in a year. Currently this rate is increasing and will continue to do so if measures are not taken.

The Kyoto Protocol was set up in 1997 as a series of guidelines that could be used by nations to monitor and reduce the vast carbon dioxide

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# The Kings of Convenience

**O**ver the past century, major changes in the way we live and work have changed what we eat. Since the 1950s, the food industry has developed a wide variety of processed foods, which reduce preparation time. The popularity of these convenience foods reflects the ways in which our lives have changed, and the choice that many of us have made to spend less time in the kitchen.

Consumers are cooking less but still wanting to eat at home, which means the opportunities for prepared foods and ready-in-minutes meal products are exploding. From pizza to hand-held meals to prepared entrees to soups, all of the segments within this category have experienced a boom in new products.



Ready-to-eat, prepared foods are convenient, quick to prepare and tasty, making them a great fit for today's typically time-crunched Americans. Whereas convenience used to mean sacrificing quality for speed, frozen foods now score high in both quality and flavor, with items like frozen meal kits making it easy for consumers to put a "home-cooked" meal on their table with little fuss, and with many newer pizza products claiming to be every bit as good as—if not better than—restaurant take-out.

Since its rise in the 1950's, the convenience food industry has been adult centered and generally not something that was seen as being particularly influenced by the purchasing power of children. Ready-to-eat and prepared foods were generally stacked in tall and intimidating freezer cabinets, or in boring chilled shelves. Although certain items were clearly designed to attract children, it was generally the parents who made the purchase decision, while the kids had little or no influence.

Research indicates that kids are now starting to have a much bigger influence on this sector. Kids are increasingly becoming the decision makers when it comes to mealtime. They have more say in which food products are purchased for the family, and they are spending more time actually preparing their own meals.

Three key segments that are emerging in the conven-

ience market today are:

★ The rise in 'homemade' ready meals - There is a strong desire to reintegrate the family dinner and increase cooking activity. This desire is coming from government bodies and schools but also from the families themselves who want the nostalgia of homemade dishes. Ready meals manufacturers have a role to play in developing meals which give people the feeling they have cooked a homemade dish, even though it may not be from scratch.

★ The rise in kid centered ready meals - More and more marketers are involved in developing innovative convenience meal options for kids that are tasty, wholesome, convenient and healthy.

★ The rise in healthy/natural ready meals - Natural food is becoming a growing trend in the ready meals market. People want healthy food and have become concerned about artificial ingredients such as preservatives, artificial flavors and colors.

The health focus in the food world has overall pervaded the prepared foods category, with healthier options being introduced in many different segments—from pizza to soups to frozen entree meals. Many of the newest product entries are offering consumers either less time, less fuss or less of the substances consumers are trying to avoid, such as fats, sodium or calories.

Future trends in health include natural, functional, satiety enhancing and low GI ingredients. ConAgra Foods has taken action by reformulating the Kid Cuisine frozen meals to improve nutrition and cut fat. They have improved their school food service pizza, The Max, by incorporating Ultragrain - their groundbreaking whole-wheat flour with a taste and texture similar to white flour. Kids love the pizza with its added protein and fiber, and reduced fat and sodium.

The Chef Boyardee brand is among the most recent ConAgra products to see its recipe updated to reflect new nutritional science and the USDA's dietary guidelines. In all of their children's offerings, they're creating more nutritious foods, through such means as adding calcium or fiber.

An Excellent Source of Lean Protein, Packed with Essential Nutrients and Heart-Healthy Omega-3 Fatty Acids, Del Monte's StarKist® Tuna Fillets (TM) was the winner of the "Best in Foods" Awards 2006. StarKist Tuna Fillets(TM) is a delicious and healthful entree-style tuna fillets conveniently packaged in the revolutionary Flavor-Fresh Pouch(R) with no artificial preservatives added. Great taste, convenience and the heart-healthy benefits of Omega-3 fatty acids have taken tuna to the next level with these new fillets.

Amy's Kitchen offers a variety of delicious kids meals

that includes Baked Ziti Kids meal, Mac n' Cheese Kids Meal, Mexican Quesadilla Kids Meal and Pasta Bowls. Interestingly, these meals are prepared to meet the needs of children who suffer from different kinds of food intolerances - dairy, corn, nut, lactose and gluten. They are also light in sodium, low in fat and with no cholesterol, varying from meal to meal.

Ian's frozen kids' meals have no artificial colors or flavors, preservatives or trans fats. The meals are available in Mini Hamburger, Mini Cheeseburger, Chicken Finger, Turkey Dog, Popcorn Turkey Dog and Mini Chicken Patty Sandwich varieties. The meals also come with sides such as Alphonso potatoes, apples and cinnamon and chocolate cake.

Only 20 per cent of children are getting their recommended five portions of vegetables a day and Heinz Hidden Veg offers moms help to achieve this. Carrots, red peppers, parsnips and zucchini will be blended into the tomato sauce to cater for Moms with young children who are looking for ways to give their children more vegetables.

Research and customer feedback has shown that moms want their kids to eat more vegetables without having to struggle at the dinner table. Heinz Hidden Veg allows moms to do just this. The pureed vegetables allow the kids to enjoy the great taste of Heinz beans and pasta, while moms are reassured about feeding a healthy meal to their kids.

Heinz also offers the 'Little Kids' menu which includes

Chicken and Pumpkin Risotto, Macaroni and Meatballs, Pasta Chicken and Vegetables, Spaghetti with Extra Calcium and Spaghetti with Fibre. The Steggles Fairysnacks and Dinosnacks contain 30% less fat and less salt than the usual nuggets.

Beans & Wieners, Cheezy Mac 'N Beef, Mini Beef Ravioli, Spaghetti Rings & Franks, among others in the Hormel® Kid's Kitchen® Microwave Meals Menu are delicious shelf-stable entrees that are quick, convenient and easy to prepare. According to Hormel, nutrition experts consider the microwave meals a good source of protein for kids, and the kid-friendly variety of flavors makes them ideal for tasty snacks, lunches and dinners.

The key growth opportunities lie in the healthy convenience, portioning, kid's convenience, ultra convenient, on-the-go, personalized convenience and premiumisation trends. Consumers today are also seeking out more intense experiences from products and are more willing to experiment with new products. A growing number of marketers are tapping into the fascination with foreign cultures and flavors by introducing ethnic foods in the convenience market. Successful products must be founded ideally on these trends but the challenge will be maintaining a close eye on how these trends evolve. ★

Sources and Further Information:

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[www.foodnavigator.com](http://www.foodnavigator.com)

[www.dairyreporter.com](http://www.dairyreporter.com)

## Kid Bits of Information

**Aug 27- Flexnews - Struggling soft drink maker Cott Corp said on Wednesday that customers in its key retail market are turning to big national-brand rivals to help attract traffic and drive sales at their stores.**

The world's biggest maker of store-brand soft drinks said that "very, very aggressive" promotions from carbonated soft drink (CSD) competitors such as Coca-Cola Co (KO.N: Quote, Profile, Research, Stock Buzz) were partly behind the sharp cut to Cott's 2008 profit forecast on Tuesday.

"There are many retailers that are looking at the big national-brand CSD leaders as people that they can count on to drive volume and bring traffic in the store," interim Chief Executive David Gibbons told analysts on a conference call on Wednesday to discuss the warning.

**31 July - AP - Coca-Cola is believed to be developing a new range of drinks made from Chinese herbal remedies.**

The soft drink's giant is keeping tight-lipped about activities at its Research Center for Chinese Medicine in Beijing, which opened last October.

However, even when the world's media were given a tour of the facility earlier this month and the centre's director Zhang Huaying confirmed the company was developing specific drinks, she declined to give any details about the products.

"We're really working on it, and there are lots of things happening," she said, before adding the company was very "serious" about this line of products.

Analysts are already anticipating with some relish the drinks that could spring from the work at the Chinese centre with Shanghai-based market-research firm Access Asia reportedly saying that Coke's bid may be "the new product for the new millennium." ★

# Picky Eaters, The Bane of Family Meals

**C**hildren are notoriously indecisive, especially when it comes to food. Even previously established favorites can overnight become foul abominations unfit for human consumption. Most of us have been through a similar situation (one writer for KFT recalls a love of salmon that has turned into a lasting hate!), but what drives a child to change their established habits?

There are no medically recognized causes of picky eating in children. Studies have shown however that picky eating peaks at the pre-school stage and usually declines by the time the child is 10 years old, although some decisions may last into later life.



The key word when thinking about picky eating is neophobia, the fear of something new. Young children are especially neophobic as they want the small portion of the confusing world that they "know" to remain constant. Changes in food, however small can impact on 'their world' and cause rejection and stress for both parent and child.

Some argue that neophobia is an evolutionary trait, designed to protect the child from possible threats to their health that can be found in unfamiliar foods. One suggestion as a means to avoiding neophobia is to introduce kids to a wide variety of foods very early on, even before the tricky ages of 2 to 10.

After 10 years of age, a child's food habits tend to settle down and become fairly steady; which brings no end of relief to parents. However, it can be important to observe what foods are refused by the child.

Picky eaters could be displaying signs of allergies towards the foods that they refuse to eat. Thus, forcing kids to eat these foods might be an unwise choice, and could have severe consequences. Other problems can be tooth or gum issues such as sensitivity or disease, or disorder of the digestive tract.

Obviously this is a worst case scenario and the bulk of picky eating problems comes from simple child preference. It is certainly advisable to consider the more serious possibilities however, just in case!

Color is usually a reason for rejection of a food type. One day the child might simply decide that they do not like green and as a result won't touch anything colored green. Texture is also another popular reason for rejection by kids, as mouth feel is a vital part of enjoying

food; if something doesn't feel right in the mouth, it's easy enough to just reject it.

Of course there are many means of dealing with picky eaters, one of the easiest (and most devious) is to simply hide the offending food. Sauces for food such as lasagna are perfect for hiding such loathed ingredients as mushroom. Diced up fine the picky kids are unlikely to notice it at all. Hiding sliced mushroom under cheese on pizza is another novel way of sneaking nutritional food into kid's diets.

Appearance is another means of appealing to kids. Most children are swayed by something that looks attractive, or more importantly looks funny. Making shapes out of vegetables, or even using cookie cutters to form mashed potato into an amusing design are easy ways to rekindle a picky eater's interest.

Other simple tricks can be to get rid of all sorts of food distractions, for example it would be a smart move to get rid of all chips and chocolates in the household, replacing them with carrot and cheese sticks.

Hungry kids are more than likely to go for what's available, and so making the options healthy ones is a good means of getting the right stuff into kids. Apple slices, grapes and raisins are all other easily eaten options.

Turning eating into something of a game can also help. Telling kids that their expert opinions on new dishes can help set out what they are prepared to eat. With this knowledge in hand, creating a menu that the kids are content to eat becomes much easier.

If all else fails, providing the child with a multivitamin every day can ensure that they are getting at least



some nutritional intake. This will also ensure that the essential mineral intake is healthier which will help the child to develop much better than without.

Picky eating usually ends fairly swiftly, however, if the child begins to show certain signs it is wise to consult a doctor. Rapid loss of weight or failure to gain weight can stunt child growth permanently and as such should be addressed rapidly.

Stomach pains after eating can signify serious problems, as can vomiting and gagging whilst eating. Fortunately the most severe course of action for picky eating is to simply 'grin and bare it' and hope that the phase passes swiftly!★

# Kids And Crime - A Worrying Rise

**T**here was a time when crime and kids were not really associated with each other, but that time has passed. Now many fear to step outside their front doors at night, not wary of adults, but marauding gangs of kids.

As it stands, youth crime is on the rise and would appear to be unabated. The CDC reports that in 2003, 5,570 young people ages 10 to 24 were murdered, an average of 15 each day. Of these victims, 82% were killed with firearms

These figures, scary as they were in 2003 are rising still. Around 750,000 children and youths are treated in hospitals every year for life threatening, crime related injuries. The most common injuries are stab wounds and gunshot trauma but physical beatings are also very apparent.

But why is this occurring? As a society are we becoming more violent or are there underlying factors to take into account? Some observers have laid the blame on the American government and its allocation of finances.

States and cities often complain they don't have enough money. This complaint has now become a chorus, and is getting louder. Tight budgets and an emphasis on terrorism have shifted federal and state money from police and programs for youths.

*"It should be no surprise that the streets are more violent"*

Minneapolis Mayor Rybak says. Since 2003, he says, Minneapolis has lost at least \$35 million a year in state funding for city programs.

Police are reporting spikes in juvenile crime across the United States. A surge in violence involving gangs and weapons has raised crime rates from historical lows early this decade.

The nation's rate for violent crimes such as murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault rose dramatically in 2005, the first time in five years. The figures suggest that crime of this nature has dropped outside of the 17-25 year bracket and risen within it.

Minneapolis police estimate that this year, juveniles will account for 63% of all suspects in violent and property offenses there, up from 45% in 2002. Often the problem swings back to the relatively easy access of firearms in the United States (for example, recently it was reported that a car dealership was giving away free handguns with all purchases).



Crime prevention programs that do exist and are geared towards children have also not been greatly successful. Many inherent challenges arise when working with children, including their tendency to perceive themselves as invulnerable to injury, limited ability to apply lessons learned, their innate curiosity, and peer pressure that may encourage reckless behavior.

The goal of gun safety programs in particular (usually administered by local firearms dealers and shooting clubs), is to teach older children and adolescents how to handle firearms safely.

The NRA for example runs the Eddie Eagle program, designed to teach young children about the dangers of firearms. The principles of the program are simple. Stop, don't touch, leave the area and tell an adult.

There has been no true and systematic evaluation of the effect of these programs on children. For adults, no positive effect on gun storage practices has been found as a result of these programs and there is no reason to believe that the child schemes will be any different.

Also, researchers have found that gun safety programs for children may be likely to increase a child's interest in obtaining and using guns, which they cannot be expected to use safely all the time, even with training.

Without a significant investment in prevention and policing it is difficult to see the violent trend of kids and weapons ceasing. Keeping the weapons out of kids hands and keeping the kids out of 'gangs' will be a strong means of preventing child crime.

Sociologist James D. Wright suggests that to convince inner-city youths not to carry guns:



*"Requires convincing them that they can survive in their neighborhood without being armed, that they can come and go in peace, that being unarmed will not cause them to be victimized or intimidated"*

Making such things happen is tied neatly to a larger investment in community programs and inner city youth.



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<http://www.nra.org/>

<http://www.mcgruff.org/>

# Overly Impulsive Adolescents

**E**ver wondered just why teenagers behave the way they do? It's all to do with brain development. Recent research by the National Institute of Mental Health has shown that while the body is normally fully developed by the middle to late teens, the brain does not reach full maturity until the age of 25.



As they grow older, teens' bodies begin to develop and they reach physical and sexual maturity. However, in their late teens and early twenties their brain is still not fully developed, and is not equipped to deal with these physical changes. On top of this, as they mature, teens are faced with a new found freedom that will expose them to various social situations that they are not yet ready for - those impulsive decisions and reckless nights out are all the result of their developing brains.

After birth, the synapses within the brain begin to grow and develop, enabling infants to understand and interpret the world around them, using the five senses of touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing. Through the use of imaging technology, scientists now know that a second growth spurt occurs in the brain during adolescence. The younger, more active synapses of childhood are replaced by synapses associated with memory, decision making, and emotional control. At the same time, the myelin insulation that protects the fibers connecting brain cells is thickened, which makes communication between various parts of the brain more efficient. Dr Sanjiv Kumra of the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, New York, says that this whole process is ultimately about preparing the body for mating. "All these brain changes are happening to prepare the organism to be able to carry out that central and important function."

This second renewal, however, is not complete until the mid 20s, long after the body has reached physical maturity, and this mismatch between body and mind could go some way to explaining why teenagers' behavior can often be so irrational and reckless. This immature brain may be the cause of typical adolescent problems such as underage drinking, sexual promiscuity and drug taking.

Psychiatrist Ronald Dahl from the University of Pittsburgh says that this extended period of brain growth is because of the realities of modern life. "If your adult task it to gather food, have babies or kill an animal with a spear, the interval between puberty and adulthood is

much shorter. Whereas if what you want to do requires finishing high school, four years of college and going to graduate school, it's going to take the brain a lot longer", said Dahl. "What sits in the middle of this stretched out adolescence are incredible increases in behavioral and emotional health problems, and brain changes that take a long time and lots of practice to acquire necessary skills."

Indeed, Jay Giedd, who headed up the team responsible for the study, suggests that it could also explain much more serious problems, such as the high proportion of adolescent deaths in motor accidents. It turns out that the car rental companies may be right not to let people under the age of 25 rent a car, as according to Geidd, the part of the brain that controls multitasking - the pre-frontal cortex - is one of the last to develop. This could explain why young people are so susceptible to road accidents.

At the same time, this second period of brain development means that young people are also at risk from other sources. Exposure to certain external stimuli may lead to permanent reconstruction of key neural pathways in the brain. For example, a recent Indiana University School of Medicine study has shown that when teenagers are shown particularly violent videos, their brains show activity similar that of individuals who are chronically aggressive. In another study, researchers from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York have found that heavy marijuana use may interfere with the connections between those parts of the brain that govern speech and those that govern decision making.

Clearly, adolescence is an important time in each indi-



vidual's growth and development. As marketers focused on kids products, it is our responsibility to help nurture young people through these years. "There's an important role for parents, coaches, teachers, other responsible adults and social systems to help support kids so that they can take some risks, but not spiral into those terrible outcomes - death, disability, addictions, reckless sex, HIV, and all the other problems that are so rampant in adolescence", said Dahl. ★

Sources and Further Information:  
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# In-Game Advertising

Computer games are always striving for more realism, whether it's a simulation or a guns-blazing shooting game. Realism is the key! However realism comes down to more than just impressive graphics.

Game players across the globe seek one thing that games readily offer: immersion. Involving stories, good graphics and believable physics all help to establish this. Yet there is another, subtle method of making a world seem believable.

Advertising has been used on and off in games since the 90's, but it wasn't until 2000 that marketers discovered this possibly lucrative means of approaching kids and adolescents.

Immersion is a very powerful tool in game advertising. Unlike passive TV viewers, game players are focused and actively involved in the gaming experience. Constantly alert and responsive to every element on the screen, gamers are an intensely captive audience.

This makes it a feasible means of reaching a new market for advertisers. There are already several agencies dealing exclusively with in game advertising. IGA, Massive and Engage are all in-game exclusive marketers and currently dominate the industry.

To be successful, in-game advertising in general has to be subtle to avoid backlash from gamers. There have been several examples of large failures in in-game advertising. Usually the problem is an overpowering message that impedes gameplay and sticks out as blatant advertising.



Gamers who 'pay to play' are often particularly unresponsive to advertising. The usual argument is that they are already paying for a service and they do not wish for commercials to be forced upon them. The massively multiplayer online first person shooter Planetside was a prime example of how not to advertise.

The game had an overt science fiction theme and was set on a planet nowhere near earth, yet players were bombarded with in-game billboards displaying

brand name fizzy drinks and films. In an instant the immersion that had been offered was stripped from the game: On top of this the game remained pay-to-play, despite the additional advertising income to the games' publisher.

The game quickly became a ghost town, players left for less intrusive games and Planetside failed to gain new players. Another online shooter named Battlefield 2124 came under heavy flak for a similar move. Battlefield however shipped with spy-ware that collected information about the pc user's tastes and preferences and then adjusted the advertisements accordingly.

The backlash was much more minimal from the players however, as the ads were often themed more towards the sci-fi atmosphere and blended in with 'fake' adverts designed by the developer.



Typing phrases like 'in-game advertising' into a search engine will display swathes of forum posts by gamers about the subject and their dissatisfied opinions on it, particularly from the first person shooting game community. Ruining a player's immersion will often give them bad views towards those that impede on their world.

Sports games and racing games have traditionally had a much more positive reaction from players when it comes to advertisements. Real life brands serve to add realism and believability to the gaming environment. It would be strange to see a soccer pitch without billboards ringing it, or racing cars without brand sponsors.

Sporting games have to date been the safest and most realistic way of getting advertising into computer games and the least annoying to those that are playing the game. ★

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# KFT Book Review: The Kids Market : Myths & Realities

**T**his month's KFT book review covers *The Kids Market: Myths and Realities* by Dr. James U. McNeal. As opposed to recent reviews, McNeal's book is very unlikely to appeal to many people outside of the food or marketing industry. It's a much more heavy duty read. But is it worth the time investment involved in reading it?

As the name suggests, the book is themed around marketing to kids. This can be a particularly prickly department, with ethics to take into account as well as the fickle nature of kid's tastes and preferences.

McNeal's book sets about establishing the playing field, listing the do's and don'ts of the kid marketing industry. He comes from a strong kid centered background and has worked in the industry for many years.

This book is a follow up to McNeal's previous book *Children as Consumers* that identified kids as a powerful force in the market. This follow up to *Children as Consumers* expands upon McNeal's previously argued beliefs. Industries have come to accept kids as a vast part of marketing. What McNeal attempts to do is produce a guide on how to do it right.

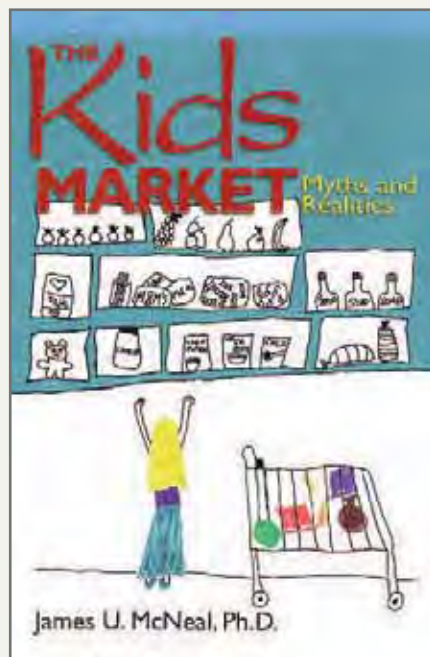
Initially the book was somewhat inaccessible, and took some perseverance to 'get into'. However, once the ice was broken and the findings of McNeal's work began to reveal themselves the pace eased somewhat and the book became much more 'readable'.

McNeal has clearly done a large amount of research. This is demonstrated by his superbly argued points, each backed up by a wealth of concise evidence and examples. The strong point of the book is that McNeal doesn't simply focus on Western children. He instead conducted his research 50-50 between the West and the East, with children from China and other countries contributing to the book.

This makes McNeal's points all the more convincing when the children half a world away in China behave and act in much the same manner as those children McNeal studied in the west.

The combination of east and west is an unusual one in books of this type, however, *Myths and Realities* manages to pull the information together in a very concise and believable manner.

There are also a large amount of features that break up the monotony of text blocks. The margins on each



page are routinely filled with informative paragraphs separate to the main body of the book. These paragraphs surmise additional points or provide examples and quotes in order to support the arguments being made in the main body.

For the most part however, these short paragraphs are simply excerpts from the main body of the argument. As a result it reads much like a newspaper article, the highlighted sections drawing in the casual reader. However, it is somewhat misleading, as the information is by no means easy to digest.

There are also repeated uses of pictures throughout the book (although only the central section employs color). Offset from the main body, these pictures have been

drawn by children and work to support the arguments that McNeal makes.

The pictures serve to break up the sometimes heavy paragraphs, making the book much more accessible and not as daunting.

However this still remains a book that requires a significant time investment to read through and understand. McNeal deals with complex and ethical issues that require a good deal of thought and understanding, but which are ultimately rewarding.

The pictures are a nice touch that really do show the similarities between children, no matter where they are in the world. The central color section is also a welcome sight compared to the less vibrant black and white images. There are some genuinely charming pictures drawn by the kids that McNeal studied.

Compared to many marketing books, McNeal's work is remarkably fresh and, more importantly, insightful. It blends theory and fact together in a plausible way and also steers clear from teaching the reader to 'suck eggs'.

To sum up, McNeal presents the reader with an excellent source of fact and approaches to research with kids. He also exposes and debunks many of the myths and mistakes associated with kids and marketing, a section of the book which certainly makes for entertaining and thought provoking reading.

According to McNeal, listening to kids and acting on their advice will reward in the way that nothing else can. This advice is sensible and, based on common sense, but judging by McNeal's research, it is clearly a good road to take. ★

overflow. It came into force in 2005 after a period of preparation for those that signed the protocol. Most western nations signed up to the protocol and have begun to start employing measures to reduce the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> they emit.

Much of the responsibility for reducing carbon emissions falls upon individual companies. In the US, companies are not forced to alter their carbon emissions. The country signed the protocol as a symbolic gesture, and the US government has yet to ratify the protocol.

This is not to say that the US government does not agree with the protocol, rather the lack of ratification is a form of protest against China, who received special treatment, despite being the second largest producer of harmful greenhouse gasses and CO<sub>2</sub> at the time of the protocol's inception.

China, who are currently opening coal power stations at a rate of 1 a week, felt that as it has the largest population in the world, it should be allowed to have some leeway with emission figures. Latest figures show that China has now exceeded the USA in terms of greenhouse gas production.

The US, had the largest emission levels at the time of the Kyoto protocol. They were to receive no treatment similar to that of China and refrained from implementing the protocol as a result. The US government insists that it is on target for reducing its greenhouse gas emissions however, hoping for an 18% decrease by 2012, compared to the 8% that China hopes to achieve.

Almost every single developed country is making efforts to reduce their carbon emissions that they emit. It is, however, the undeveloped countries that pose a greater threat to global CO<sub>2</sub> levels. Such countries are forced by necessity to use cheaper production methods and sources of power.

Generally the cheaper the source, the more polluting it is, especially when considering power. Coal fired power stations are a massive cause of CO<sub>2</sub> pollution and in the third world are essentially unregulated. This leads to staggeringly massive outputs of pollution, both regular and CO<sub>2</sub> based.

As this doesn't fall under the Kyoto protocol countries jurisdiction, those that did sign have to work doubly hard to make up the difference. However, there are more problems with the protocol.

Harvard scientists and economists who study climate change express almost universal criticism of the accord, which they fault as economically inefficient, unobjective, inequitable, and worst of all, ineffective.

By selecting a time scale that was almost immediate (a completion date of 2008) the Kyoto Protocol mandated economically inefficient measures to achieve its targets.



*"The economic lifetime of a power plant is maybe 30 years," says professor of environmental science Michael McElroy, "and the average automobile in the U.S. is on the road for 11 and a half or 12 years. If you try to change the energy economy too quickly, you are going to*

*have to retire equipment that is still economically productive."*

The scientific community mostly feels that the climate is changing for the worse and are unsure as to whether the Kyoto protocol will have any effect what so ever. This could be because of the ineffective economical aspects of the protocol, and the limited time with which countries had to comply.

Some energy companies are now talking directly to kids about carbon footprints and other green issues. British Gas in the UK has recently started an educational scheme called Generation Green. The design of their website and activities help to emphasize the important messages being taught. As young people are more frequently exposed to these issues, in time it is likely to impact their choices of products and services. ★

Sources and Further Information:

[www.carbonfootprint.com/](http://www.carbonfootprint.com/)  
[www.nature.org/](http://www.nature.org/)  
[www.generationgreen.co.uk](http://www.generationgreen.co.uk)

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## KidsFoodTrends

KidsFoodTrends newsletter is published 10 times a year by the Consumer Knowledge Centre.

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