

5-2015

## The Purchasing Power of Tomorrow: An Analysis of the Buying Habits of Children Ages 6-15

Peter Collins  
University of Rhode Island, petecoL93@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/srhonorsprog>



Part of the [Marketing Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Collins, Peter, "The Purchasing Power of Tomorrow: An Analysis of the Buying Habits of Children Ages 6-15" (2015). *Senior Honors Projects*. Paper 431.  
<https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/srhonorsprog/431>

This Article is brought to you by the University of Rhode Island. It has been accepted for inclusion in Senior Honors Projects by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons-group@uri.edu](mailto:digitalcommons-group@uri.edu). For permission to reuse copyrighted content, contact the author directly.

## The Purchasing Power of Tomorrow: An Analysis of the Buying Habits of Children Ages 6-15

### Absract:

Today's children are tomorrow's consumers. It was stated in my Consumer Behavior class that children in the household have a lot of power in terms of what is bought by the family. In the day and age of technology that we currently live in, children have so much more access to information than children of even ten years ago. They do not even necessarily have to into a store's physical location, but rather just go online. Young children play with dolls and action figures, and as they age they lose interest in those toys and tend to shift to sports, videogames, and other extracurricular activities. As children age they change, and so do their interests.

It is my goal to hone in on a particular age or age range to explore if there is a certain age or age range that these shifts tend to happen. I am looking to identify an age or age range when the child's focus shifts from having their parents buy them action figures and dolls to buying clothes they want or sports apparel and equipment that they want. I chose to select this as my topic to combine my experience of working with children as a summer camp counselor for the past seven years and my knowledge as a marketing major in the College of Business Administration.

### Summary:

“Children and adolescents play an increasingly important role in buying decisions. Kids in the United States spend over \$200 billion a year on personal items such as apparel, toys, snacks, sports, and entertainment.” After learning this fact in my consumer behavior class this is how I chose to segment the markets in the questionnaire distributed.

After looking at the ages at which children move from segment to segment there are many things that can be deduced from it. Boys typically move from the toys segment to the sports market at age 10. This is approximately when community and travel sports leagues become available to them and more popular. Girls switch to the clothing segment around age 11. This marks the end of elementary school and the beginning of middle school age as well. However, there were outliers in each market with both boys and girls. There were young boys who were already interested in sports and older boys who were still in the toys segment. Similarly, there were younger girls who were already choosing the clothes segment as their primary segment. After going back to the questionnaires and looking for these responses, I found that these younger children had older siblings and the older boy had a younger sibling. This has to do with the average household age; the younger children's age gets pulled up and the older children's age gets pulled down because of their siblings.

It was also helpful analyzing the marketing communications of different stores in the segment, specifically Nike, Old Navy, and Toys R Us. All the companies used a member or a group of members from their target market. There was a younger boy in the commercial for Toys R Us, Nike used a group of boys around the age of 10 in soccer gear, and Old Navy used girls around the age of 11 or 12 in their advertisement. Through the use of members of the target market in their communications and advertisements, we are more likely to see the ages of the children in the target market match with those in ads. This directly aligns to the ages that correlated with the preference in market segment.