



April 2006

CRAFTY KIDS

**CRAFTING
EXPANDS
CHILDREN'S
MINDS—
WHILE
KEEPING
IT FUN**

So much for the "TV nation." According to the Craft & Hobby Association (CHA), the craft industry is at an all-time high of \$30.6 billion, with a 3.8 percent average growth per year since 2002. Scrapbooking and card making are steadily increasing in popularity, as are bead crafts, jewelry making and sewing crafts.

Meanwhile, the educational benefits attributed to crafting is taking it beyond a fun pastime. Studies have shown that crafting helps with mental development, while the social aspect helps children learn behavioral and communication skills. Add to that the number of unique, creative craft products on the market, and it's hardly a surprise that more and more kids are turning off their TVs and turning on their minds.

TREND WATCH

The CHA Winter Show 2006, held late

January in Las Vegas, forecasted what kids will be pulling off the shelves this year. As in previous years, craft kits were a big hit. Kits are easy for busy families, as everything needed to complete a project is included in one convenient package.

Made by Hands, a company launched by two women with crafty children of their own, offers a number of crafting kits that leave the child with a sense of accomplishment and something to show for

their work. Kits include the multi-award-winning Make-Your-Own Puppets, with materials for 12 different puppets, and Make-Your-Own Games, in which children use the game board, spinner, dice and plain white cards to create countless games. The goal of this project is not to

win, but to stretch the imagination in the creation process itself.



Made by Hands (3540 N. Southport #352 Chicago, IL 60657), maker of creative gifts that stretch children's imaginations, offers a number of kits for making greeting cards, photo frames and scrapbook cards. With the Make-It-Trade-It Scrapbook Cards kit (below), kids can create meaningful cards in the scrapbooking style to give to friends and family. The kit includes over 250 "Pop-Outs" easy pop-out shapes, 10 cards, 10 envelopes and a glue stick. Call 773/761-4200.