

Girls want lace, boys get jeans

Nautical look also gains popularity

by JAN COOLEY
for The Outlook

From infants to pre-teens, the nautical look has the ayes. "One of the most popular trends is the nautical look — anything in red, white and blue," says Barbara Hopfner of Sanfords Childrens Wear.

"Everything seems to be sailor cut right now," says Pat Olson of Small World Childrens Shop. "We even have the little sailor things for the baby."

The look is carried out in blouses and dresses with wide collars, tie trims and striping. Pants that button or lace at the sides vary in length, from beachcombers ending just below the knee to pirate pants that are caught in elastic bands at the ankles.

Pants come in plenty of other styles as well. "The trend for the active look is pull-on pants with piping down the leg," says Hopfner. "In that area you're seeing a lot of brights and, of course, purple."

Jeans are going back to the slightly flared leg, according to Olson, with the painter style still in great demand. Casual pants for boys include a safari style accented with side leg pockets, and light blue and white pinstripe pants.

Sally Smoke of J.C. Penney's says boys seem to prefer designer jeans and numbered baseball shirts for everyday wear. "Boys tend to want to say something with their clothes," she explains.

Boys' shirts, says Judy Souders of W.R. Hicks, "have gone to the fashion look with drop sleeves and insets. Boys don't wear cut and sewn shirts anymore except for really dressy occasions." She adds, "The shirts have to have an emblem. It's a status symbol."

Meanwhile, girls are dressing up. "The whole look for spring is bright and feminine," Souders says. "Lots of ruffles and lace." She calls it the Gunne Sax influence and expects it to last "quite a while."

Full, gathered skirts topped with camisoles continue the trend toward frills with eyelet and ribbon trims. For a sportier look, stores are showing split skirts and soft, knit rugby shirts. Pastels dominate the color palette and Smoke predicts, "Lavender is going to be a number one color."

Spring accessories for girls include fashion shoe laces, belts decorated with hearts, flowers and other designs and novelty barrettes, some accented with long ribbons or vinyl ties.

Monogramming names or initials on backpacks, stretch belts, sweaters, sweatshirts and jackets is a new way to accessorize children's wear. "Personalizing has really become very popular," says Hopfner.

Jogging suits, from infant sizes on up, are another important look for spring. "This is the season for them," explains Olson. "A lot of kids are in softball and baseball," but the weather doesn't always cooperate."



Olson models a red split skirt by Harbor Belle.



Staff photos by Kelly James

Trisha Olson, 10, wears a blue "Rumble Seat" pirate pants with blue plaid shirt.

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