

Spring and summer fashions for moms and kids

By SUZANNE KENNEDY

Spring is coming and that means shopping trips for warm weather clothes. If your kids are anything like mine, they've outgrown everything and are in desperate need of new apparel. And if you're anything like me, a little something for mom makes everyone happy.

According to those in the know, earthy is in. Is it the '60s again? Browns and yellows combined with gemstone-like purples and blues will be popular. There are lots of patterns on everything, including shoes and shorts. Think fringe and lots of it.

Happy prints in muted colors, printed messages and words will be worn by kids all over this summer. Sarcastic and sassy sayings like "I'm awesome ... deal with it" are out and kindness is in. "Be kind" and "Save the rainforest" are way better than "You're boring me" any day of the week. Sayings are becoming more encouraging and motivating. Pastels are popular, and pre-washed colors like blues and greens are making a comeback. You'll also find a lot of retro styles of T-shirts that look like they're vintage.

Fabrics will be very soft, like terry, natural cotton and linen. Lots

of companies are going organic and making a big deal about how they source their products and where they are made. There will be lots of athletic wear making its way into mainstream like it has been for adults these last few years.

What else will you see on everything? Ruffles ... everywhere. Fringe ... on everything. Embroidery in pretty patterns. Prints ... smiley faces, messages and vintage rainbows.

Once your children are set, what's a mom to wear? Experts say to work on your basics first, and then add in a couple of trendy items that speak to you. What basics should every mom have in her closet?

A great fitting pair of jeans. I'll take this one step further. You need a great fitting pair of comfortable straight or boot leg jeans and a great fitting pair of stretchy skinny jeans. If they don't fit perfectly, do not buy them! Don't think to yourself that they'll shrink in the wash or stretch as you wear them. If they aren't perfect



now, they won't ever be.

A solid color cardigan. It can be short or medium (save the long ones for the winter), but it needs to be a solid, neutral color. It can dress up a pair of jeans, pull together an outfit and keep you from getting goosebumps in the air conditioning.

Layering tanks. These are a must in a few colors — black, white, ecru and grey. They aren't heavy and they tend to camouflage the muffin top.

A white V-neck T-shirt, relaxed but not too relaxed. They can be dressed up with jewelry, or look clean and cool on a hot day without any jewelry at all.

Black leggings. Yes, please! Worn dressy with boots and long top or made casual with cute sneakers.

Comfortable! I follow the rule that leggings aren't pants and the rear end must be covered!

Flats in a neutral color. You can wear them with jeans or dress slacks.

Ankle boots. It took me a while to jump on this bandwagon, but the right pair will make you jump for joy as they are so much less restricting than knee length boots. Hint: your socks should not show when you are wearing ankle boots.

Finally, finish off your look with some **jewelry.** Light and feathery, big and chunky, or simple and delicate ... it doesn't matter. Every outfit looks better with a little bling.

Now you're ready to add in a couple of trendy items. Look for ruffles, tassels and fringe. Button

up with a higher waistband is in, and skinny jeans are still the most popular. Also still going strong are raw hems paired with espadrilles of every height or low sneakers like Converse or Vans. Not sure how this '80s item fits in with the '60s, but hold onto your hair because scrunchies are back!

Dressing well and feeling put-together can actually affect your mood. Compliments make you feel happy, and certain outfits can make you feel powerful, confident, successful and motivated. Looking good equals feeling good!

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