



Peapods

Natural Toys & Baby Care

Sidewalk Sale
June 23-24

Peapods Natural Toys & Baby Care, 251 Snelling Avenue South, St. Paul, Minnesota www.peapods.com June, 2006

A note from Millie

Already we are hosting our sixth sidewalk sale. I remember our first, with baby Riley in a sling. It was about ten times busier than we thought possible. Was that the year we were deluged with rain and we all got soaked through to our socks? Might have been.

A few of you may remember how I used to close the store for half an hour a day so that I could put Abby down for a nap. Or you may have been here when all our work came to a screeching halt because Duncan got his finger pinched. Such are the demands of a child on an apron string.

More than anything, you could say that Peapods has been our attempt to build a livelihood integrated with family. Some days, it's a celebration. Some days, it's a train wreck. The needs of our family and our business are not always the same, but we are seeking balance.

Every family struggles to achieve this balance, but it is a struggle seldom appreciated by our media and politicians. Consider a child separated by a border wall while his parents seek a living wage in another country, unable to visit. Or a child who is denied child support or health insurance because her gay or lesbian parents could not legally marry. Imagine how much more

humane our government would be if we focused on giving all families the support they need to nourish, protect, love, and spend time with their children.

My children have made it clear that time is the only currency I have to spend. I consider myself truly blessed to be able to spend so much of it with my family.

*This summer, I hope you will share many sun-dappled moments with the ones you love. And I thank you for your continued support. Peace and best wishes,
Millie*

New in Store – See Kai Run

Some toddlers get excited about fire trucks, bulldozers, or animals. Our son Duncan loves shoes. Every morning, he finds his shoes and won't give up until we put them on. When we got him a pair of See Kai Run sandals for the summer, he found his sole mates.

With a super-flexible rubber sole, extra-soft leather upper and wide foot box, See Kai Run shoes provide protection and style without tripping kids up. We think they're a great next step up from Robeez. Stop by and try them out, but try to do it when Duncan's not looking—he gets kind of possessive. \$32/pair, sizes 5-9 in sandal and shoe styles.



Take a Look at our Locally Produced Goods!

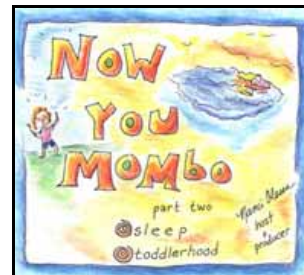


Fairy Finery Dress-Up

One of only a few dress-up makers manufacturing in North America under fair labor conditions, Golden Valley based Fairy Finery's motto is, "Pretty is as pretty does". Their dress-up is lovely and durable. Hand them down to your friend's little sister when you grow out of them and they'll still be ready for the midnight ball. Got boys? Fairy Finery also makes knight, wizard, and robin hood costumes.

Now You MOMbo!

Local radio show MOMbo now offers a 4-CD "best of" called *Now You MOMbo!* We think it makes a great gift for any new mom. It's filled with stories, insights, music, humor and inspiration from host Nanci Olesen and others. MOMbo's show can be heard on public radio stations across the country and at www.mombo.org.



Watch 'em Grow

The folks at Siewert Cabinets in Minneapolis realize that your 10 year old probably isn't into dinosaurs or ballerinas anymore and won't appreciate a cutesy growth chart. So, they created *Watch 'em Grow*, a simple unadorned hardwood chart that tracks your kid up to 6'4" (195 cm if you choose the metric version). There's even room to put two kids on the same chart. Makes a great gift for any age kid.



Kendra's Fine Felting

Kendra, one of our great employees who recently left to resume teaching (boo hoo!), makes these wonderful needle-felted creatures. We've asked her how she gets so much character into her felt, but

the answer remains elusive. Kendra specializes in heirloom farm animals, unicorns and bears. She's also made felted version of our cats Gus and Tombo. She also accepts commissions to depict a favorite pet in felt.



Kangaroo Korner

Made entirely in Minnesota, the Kangaroo Korner adjustable fleece pouch might just be the most comfortable baby carrier ever invented. Tanya, the founder of Kangaroo Korner, developed her sling over many years, testing it with her own kids. If you've got a babe that needs holding, stop in and try one out!



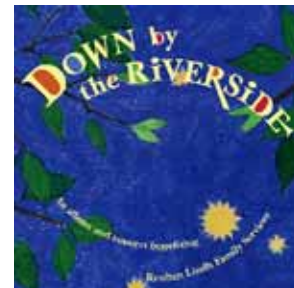
Round Bottom Baby

Made by a St. Paul mom, these baby T's and onesies are the lighter side of breastfeeding advocacy. And look at the label: her outfits are sweatshop-free, made in the USA and now available in organic cotton.

Take a Look at our Locally Produced Goods!

Down By the Riverside

This brand new compilation features classic kid's folk tunes performed by local musicians, including *Mason Jennings*, *The Jayhawks*, *Martin Zeller*, and *Semisonic*. This is the first Minnesota based kid's compilation we know of—and it's a winner. Plus, proceeds benefit Reuben Lindh Family Services of Minneapolis. Looking for more local kids' music? We stock kids' titles from the St. Paul folk & blues label Red House Records and discs from local performers Will Hale, Jenny Mahan, and Peter Himmelman



Vulpine Adaptive Snow Pea Suits

Dear baby, did we mention? The state you were born in happens to get VERY COLD sometimes. So, we can stay inside and be cranky, or we can get you a really warm Snow Pea Suit with integrated mitts, hood, and booties. Made in Duluth (where it's even colder, baby!), these snowsuits will keep you crawling in the snow all winter long while your loving parents shiver. The folks at Peapods will be stocking them again this fall, so we'll take you there to try them out. We'll take a look at Vulpine's extra-warm deerskin booties, too. Toasty!



BEKA Blocks, Easels, and Train Table

The best easels and blocks in the country are made right here in St. Paul. So, we can easily custom-order easels and our prices don't include UPS shipping for such heavy items. This year, the good folks at BEKA have designed (with some free advice from us) an AWESOME solid maple train table. We love it because it's more attractive, sturdier, and less expensive than anybody else's. Choo choo!



Global Mamas Fair Trade Batik Clothes

Global Mamas is a Minneapolis-based fair trade cooperative that provides living income for women in Ghana. They help women grow their businesses and build a sustainable livelihood. At left is Lydia Wright, who sewed this beautiful bright blue dress. Global Mamas dresses, rompers, and shirts for boys and girls have been a big hit since we added them to our store this spring. Truly beautiful inside and out.



Knit'n Jules Casts On

Julie, a St. Paul mom, knits these wonderful 100% cotton baby hats. She's told us she can't stop knitting, so she's more than happy to knit hats for us. They come in rainbow colors, with or without a fancy tassel on top. Several styles are made with Organic cotton.



What's more, Julie offers kid, parent & adult knitting classes so you can learn to make the cutest hats in the world, too (or whatever else you may want to knit!). To learn more, visit www.knit-n-jules.com.

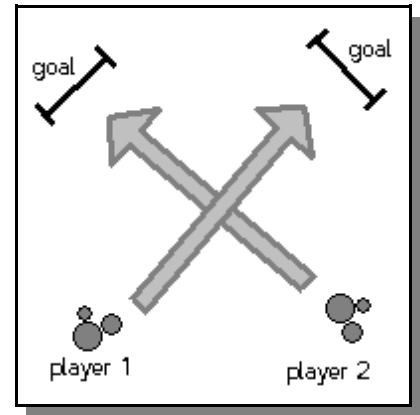
Try this at Home: Grammy's Hyper-Cross Soccer

Millie's mom Jule invented this backyard game the other day to wear out the kids on date night. They had so much fun, now we're all playing it. To play, you will need: 1 back yard, 2 goals about 6 feet across (use rocks or sticks to mark the goals), and 6 balls of varying sizes.

The older the player, the smaller the balls you get. Kids get to use soccer, basketball, or playground balls. Grownups get tennis or softballs, which are harder to kick.

You and your opponent start at the same time, each trying to kick his balls *one at a time* from one corner of the back yard through his goal in the opposite corner. You can only kick one ball at a time and you *can* interfere with your opponent by kicking her ball away or blocking her goal. But don't spend too much time blocking her, or she'll kick all your balls away. The first player to score all three balls wins.

Try a few rounds and see if your kids aren't lying exhausted in the grass!



The Pesticide-Free Door Hanger

Your kids are playing in the yard. Suddenly, the ChemTurf truck pulls up and starts spraying pesticides over half an acre of your neighbor's grass. What can you do? In our experience, not much except go to the park.

That's why the National Coalition for Pesticide-Free Lawns has created a door hanger that can be used in person or hung on your neighbor's door. It's a non-threatening way to spread the word about pesticides and alternatives to



chemical lawn care. The card is free through the website pesticidefreelawns.org. You can also sign their online petition to replace chemical lawn care products with safer alternatives.

The Tao of the Parenting Advice Books Not A Book Review by Millie

There's a growing selection of advice and mommy-lit books out there, and I'm often asked which is best. Which will make a person a better parent? When my first born, Abby, was new, I devoured every book I could find on attachment parenting, breastfeeding or child development. Now on baby #3, I have to confess a certain impatience with most parenting books. I think the problem is that I know what I should be doing as a parent: I should use empathetic listening, let my children experience the natural consequences of their actions, offer a wide variety of healthy food choices, etc. And most of the time I do these things. The problem comes when, well, I don't. When I've been woken up 15 times instead of the normal 5 during the night, I'm so tired I lose sight of being a good parent. Or I'm so overwhelmed I'm no longer even sure that's what I want to be.

One book that helped was *The Path of Parenting* by Vimala McClure, which is, of course, out of print (we do stock her books *The Tao of Motherhood* and *Infant Massage*). McClure's point is that, as parents, we are on our own journey, which requires as much mindfulness as our children's development. To put it more broadly--finding our spiritual center helps us to be better parents, and the task of parenting helps us to grow spiritually. You are helping your children to grow and your children are helping your spirit to grow.

As you read a book that tells you what to do, remember that your path must ultimately be found within yourself. Your journey is your own and no book can light your entire path, only throw sparks that may burn bright enough to see the next step. When the going gets tough, the right book might help. But also take a moment to calm your mind. Slow down, do less. The crucial moment is the present moment. What nourishes you ultimately nourishes your children. Breathe.

G Diapers, the New Hybrid Diapers

Introducing G Diapers—the world's first cloth/disposable hybrid diaper, designed to offer the best of both worlds without compromising the environment.

Basically, G Diapers are a reusable cotton velcro wrap with a nylon snap-in liner that holds a disposable (and flushable or compostable) insert made from chlorine-free wood pulp and super-absorbing sodium polyacrylate. So the inserts are similar to chlorine-free disposables found at natural food stores. But because the waterproof liner is reused, the insert is much smaller than a disposable and is completely biodegradable.

We've been test driving G Diapers on our toddler, Duncan. We've



Flushing, however, has been a learning experience. You have to rip the inserts apart and use a provided swizzle stick to prepare for flushing. You may learn more about your toilet than you wanted to know.

That being said, we think G Diapers have successfully married the ecological advantages of cloth diapers with the convenience of disposables.

In our opinion, cloth diapers are still the greenest, healthiest, and most affordable choice. But, for combining convenience with green design, we think G Diapers are a great new alternative.

been impressed with their ability to contain messes and their ease of use. They travel well and work well overnight, performing better than disposables.

We've also found that they work great inside other diaper covers. You don't have to invest in the cute G Pants if you already have some Proraps, Bummis, or other covers.



Here is the space where we write about an incredibly obscure kids album by some incredibly obscure alt-rockers from Vancouver (the artist Veda Hille, her friends, and their children). It's *Ablum by Duplex*, our favorite new kids' album from the past year. It makes us happy just to listen to it, although 10 year old Abby admonished us with a wan look of private embarrassment as we danced around the kitchen with Riley and Duncan. The best we can describe, *Ablum* is like early B52s with a disdain for leafy green vegetables.

Coupon: Putting the Cart before the Horse

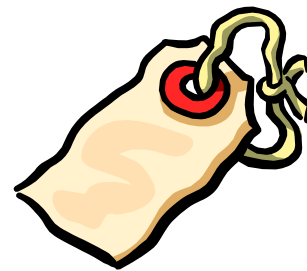


Valid June 19 thru July 14 or while supplies last. Purchase \$40 worth of regularly priced wooden figures (birds, squirrels, polar bears, knights, princesses—a horse, perhaps?) and receive a free wooden hay wagon. Made in Germany, it's about 11" long and 4" high. A perfect fit for any wooden horse. A \$28 value.

One Coupon per family. Cannot be used with other coupons. Hay not included. Supplies are limited.

Sixth Annual Sidewalk Sale!

Yikes! This Sidewalk Sales is getting carried away! Half our basement is full of sale items. You might call it our "Growing Pains Sale". Even though we doubled our space last fall and added dozens of new items, we still have BUNCHES of things we don't have room for, as well as mountains of samples, returns, repaired toys, scratch 'n dents, odds 'n ends, leftovers, and slow sellers—all at discounts from 25-75% off. Let our growing pains be your gain!



June 23rd and 24th 10am to 6pm

The fine print: Because our sidewalk sale is a busy event next to a busy street, we recommend shopping without small children. Our sale will take place rain or shine. Sidewalk sale purchases are final—no returns or exchanges. We are unable to giftwrap sidewalk sale purchases. Also, just a reminder that we are not able to accept personal checks for purchases over \$100. No fair arriving early!

Whoa! We've GROWN!

That's right! In case you haven't heard, we've doubled our space. That means we're no longer bursting at the seams (for now). We have more toys, baby clothes, books, cloth diapers—everything. Plus, you can now turn a stroller around in our aisles and our new main floor bathroom means you won't have to take your children into our cavernous basement any more.



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Detail from Elsa Beskow's "Christopher's Harvest Time" ©1999, used by permission.



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