

Pass It On®...

How kids have used their imagination to create some of the most beloved products.

We always talk about the beauty of a child's unlimited imagination, as if we long to capture and access those curiosities into our adulthood. It is indeed a wonder what children come up with. And maybe if we practice seeing the world through their eyes, we might see the world differently ourselves--one of endless possibilities. So here are a few things born of childhood curiosity.

In 1905, 11-year-old Frank Epperson mixed a concoction of soda powder and water. It was the dead of winter, and he forgot about his little experiment until morning. Of course it was frozen when he found it the next day, with the stirring stick still in the glass. The Popsicle® was born and still delights children on summer afternoons today.

Christmas trees once were adorned with candles. The tradition of lighted trees dates back to the 16th century. In 1917, 15-year-old Albert Sadacca strung together novelty lights from his parents' lighting company. Imagine his delight if he could see today's neighborhood light festivals!

Kids invented the trampoline, the snowmobile, earmuffs, and even Braille. Today we see kids building wind generators to pump water, recycling plastic into road bricks, starting community gardens and even developing technology that detects cyberbullying.

Gitanjali Rao is the 15-year-old girl who developed the Kindly app. Using artificial intelligence, Kindly detects cyberbullying at an early stage so kids know when to tune out, call out or unfriend. Gitanjali was named Time Magazine's first-ever Kid of the Year. "Our generation is facing so many problems that we've never seen before," she says in the Time interview. "But then, at the same time, we're facing old problems that still exist. More than anything right now, we need to find what we are passionate about and solve it."

Imagination is an infinite resource. It prompted a young Benjamin Franklin to develop swim fins and, later on, hundreds of inventions like eyeglasses, projectors, even a lightning rod (don't try that at home).

In that deep well of imagination, we can find the solutions to the problems that plague us, even if we are getting a little long in the tooth. So the next time you see a group of kids lost in their imaginations, smile and ask: "Hey, do you mind passing along a bit of that creative thinking?"

Imagination...PassItOn.com

By The Foundation for a Better Life®

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