

## **Parenting trends: 4 business opportunities**

*Dr. Maria Costa (AIJU)*

*Presentation of the four most important parenting trends related to child care products. An explanation of social changes affecting segments of families and parenting activities, necessary for understanding the new ways to sell and buy. These trends represent opportunities for retailers and manufacturers to improve their sales, learning about nowadays consumers, products and communication strategies.*

### **SUMMARY**

AIJU(European Institute of Children's Products and Leisure) and AEI-ASEPRI(Association for Spanish Innovative Children's Products Companies), have developed a research aiming to inform European baby product companies about the main points to innovate while taking into account the needs of new parents.

After more than two years of social and market research, four macro profiles of parents have been defined. Targets who represent opportunities to develop new products. To define the profiles more than 300 social and cultural studies were analyzed, the main distributors and fairs were visited internationally, and a specific survey with 1,200 families from 4 European countries was developed (Germany, UK, France and Spain).

The results were presented at Kid's Time fair next 26<sup>th</sup> February with socio-cultural information and market guidelines to achieve innovation in baby product design and marketing strategies while reaching new targets. The presentation included more than 200 pictures of international baby care products and communication strategies to better illustrate these trends.

Summary of the main characteristics of the four profiles of new parents:



ACTIVE  
PARENTING  
TECHNO-GEEK  
PARENTING



**1) ACTIVE PARENTING:** Parents who use, create and share content. They are active reading and getting informed in all aspects related to their children's care. They analyze and consider various theories and parenting methods, choosing in each moment and situation the one they consider most appropriate. Overall, the best for them way to raise a child is following the methods of "attachment parenting" (co-sleeping, breastfeeding as long as possible, etc...), They are very picky about brands, as they are very sensitive to the values they convey. Therefore, they do a lot of research on companies and the features of the products before they buy.

KEYS FOR PRODUCT DESIGN IN ACTIVE PARENTING (childcare, toys, fashion, shoes, furniture):

**Easy attachment parenting.**

**Natural in modernity.**

**My experience, my need.**

**Organic, natural, attachment parenting, DIY, customize.**



1. Revolution Carrier-Wrap by Simplygood
2. NuzzleHUG® by Nuzzle® Textile patches that facilitate the milk flow and soothe the pain of mastitis
3. Co-sleeping cushion Humanity Family Sleeper de Humanity Organics LLC

**2) FASHION PARENTING:** Parents with a life style influenced strongly by fashion. They do not want to give up the habits they had before being parents, so they continue seeking hedonism in the things they acquire for their children. With a strong connection to brands, they accept their advice and its guidance in raising their children. Important for them are other prescribers such as fashion magazines and blogs. The father figure becomes increasingly important in this trend. Brands want to conquer him as a consumer of baby products by marketing and designing strategies aimed at male's interests.

KEYS FOR PRODUCT DESIGN IN FASHION PARENTING (childcare, toys, fashion, shoes, furniture):

**Mini Me**  
**To please dad**  
**Like the fashion industry**  
**Exclusivity**  
**Industrialization and simplification of motherhood.**



1. Maternity purse Bobby, combine with a bag for food and baby bottles by Storksak
2. Stroller Easywalker MINI
3. Crib Dream. Premium Edition in leather by Babyhome

**3) TECHNOGEEK PARENTING:** Parents who are fascinated by technology and innovation, and are very receptive to try with them in their children. They know all the Apps and the latest generation of baby products, the latest materials and designs, etc. Internet is the guru who brings knowledge and self-reliance to their parenting methods. With technology they carry out continuous monitoring of their baby's life with a constant control on their well-being and development, tending to post every thing on social networks.

KEYS FOR PRODUCT DESIGN IN TECHNOGEEK PARENTING (childcare, toys, fashion, shoes, furniture):

**Innovate with apps**  
**Prevention and Well-being**  
**Minimize efforts**  
**LED technologies and screens, futuristic.**



1. Smart diapers by Pixie Scientific. With a QR code and an app, parents are able to know if the baby has urinated or not and also if there is an illness thanks to the urine analysis the product does.
2. Origami, 4moms Stroller with a battery connected to the wheels that generates power while moving and can be used to recharge mobile phones. It also has LED lights and a screen that shows the distance traveled, the average speed, the temperature and position of the child, etc.
3. Pacify by Blue Maestro. Pacifier with a sensor that monitors temperature and sends the information to a tablet or Smartphone.

**4) RATIONAL PARENTING:** Urban parents who delayed parenthood to achieve a career and economic stability. They have always planned the stages of their life, and also the time to have a family. They know exactly what they want; spend good quality time raising their children. With limited space in their homes (most of them live in the city), they look for products easily adapted to their changing needs, with high functionality and versatility. Less but better.

KEYS FOR PRODUCT DESIGN IN RATIONAL PARENTING (childcare, toys, fashion, shoes, furniture):

**Modular, customizable, multifunction**  
**Foldable and portable**  
**The adult world meets the child one**  
**On-the-go, eco, graphic illustrations, nordic, retro, playful.**



1. Baby bouncer and High chair Growi by Moodelli
2. Breakfast set Railway, by Neue Freunde Products
3. Crib Next2me, by Chicco, with adjustable height and allows co-sleeping

#### NOTES ABOUT THE AUTHOR:



*Dr. Maria Costa (PhD in Philosophy and Learning Science) is the director of child consumer department at AIJU, European Technological Institute of Children Products & Leisure. She has 25 years of expertise in children products market: child care, toys, educational products, games, new technologies, furniture, healthy, etc. She has wide experience in coordination and management of European projects. She has published articles and books about social children trends. She is a technical consultant for children's products at international companies.*