

Trends in children's footwear for spring-summer 2020



The Micam Fashion Square, located in one of the two halls that the Milan-based shoe exhibition dedicates to luxury footwear, is always a hub of activity. The opulent décor and a steady supply of refreshments are key to the allure from a social point of view, but it is the show's wide variety of presentations and catwalk shows that draws large numbers of professional to this particular corner of the Rho exhibition complex.

The trend talks delivered by trend forecasting group WGSN have been an important part of Micam since September 2014, when they were brought in as part of the new conference event. At February's edition, their consultant Amy Hendry offered information about the key children's footwear trends for the spring-summer 2020 season.

Her presentation was based around their three macro trends. As the organisation is wont to do, they were creatively named: Code Create, Empower Up and Designing Emotion.

Code Create

Ms Hendry described this macro trend as "very technological", explaining that it will take inspiration from

science fiction and will have a futuristic vibe. Clean lines will be prevalent and personalisation is likely to be important. In terms of colour, the message was the brighter the better, with a contrast offered between "bright synthetic colours" and more natural tones such as dark greens and browns.

Breaking 'Code Create' down into micro trends, there will be playful and fun design elements, such as celestial prints on shiny fabrics. One of these micro trends, called 'Newtivity', is said to be an imagination of "how we used to envisage 2020". Another focuses on practical and multi-functional shoes that favour outdoor pursuits.

Sustainability will be a key consideration for the spring-summer 2020 season, with recycled materials proving popular. At the same time, there will be a balance between natural fibres and synthetic ones.

Empower Up

Inspired by "diversity and inclusivity", the influences on this macro trend include African culture and art. Ms Hendry was quick to emphasise that this should be interpreted as "appreciation" of such things, rather than "appropriation".



The proximity of the 2020 Summer Olympics in Tokyo, which take place in July and August next year, is also expected to have an impact; this will be mostly in the sportswear sector. It could see design elements being borrowed from the cultures of the nations competing in the Games. Given the importance the organisers of Tokyo 2020 have placed on sustainability – the medals will be made from recycled electronic waste – it is no surprise that WGSN expects recycled and ocean plastics to feature prominently.

The colour palette for the 'Empower Up' trend will be led by summer tones. There will be lots of tropical and flowery prints, which will take their cue from the aforementioned influence of Africa. There will be some hints of customisation, although this will likely come in the form of more subtle features such as different coloured laces. Ms Hendry pointed to "1980s nostalgia" as another inspiration.

Micam invites children's footwear brands to exhibit at the iKidsSquare, a space set aside in one of the seven halls the exhibition occupies at the Rho complex in Milan. ALL CREDITS: MICAM

Designing Emotion

This macro trend will reflect the increasingly close relationship between human beings and technology, according to Ms Hendry. This will result in soft textures and muted tones. Prints will be inspired by nature, with floral designs featuring. In contrast, warm, natural colours will bring a retro feel.

In general, detail will be kept to a minimum, but one of the micro trends, which WGSN calls 'Sundaze picnic' will apply the maxim: "More is more". This will see the incorporation of patchwork designs as well as cartoon motifs and slogans. Orange and yellow will be the dominant colours. A separate micro trend will have a sporty theme, with tennis at the forefront. There will also be inspiration from traditional summer camps. 🎯

KEY FOOTWEAR STYLES FOR SPRING-SUMMER 2020

The presentation in February included a round-up of some of the key children's footwear styles WGSN expects will make an impact in spring-summer 2020. It split these by gender and by age range. Below is a selection of the styles it highlighted in each category:

Girl's

- Sporty, slip-on bootie with knitted upper;
- Wedge sneaker sandal with modular sole;
- Leather T-bar shoe with a sporty twist;
- Slingback slipper with slim leather sole;
- Ballet espadrille with cotton upper.

Boy's

- Artisan weave sneaker made with recycled materials;
- Crafted hybrid sneaker with upper in suede or vegetable-tanned leather;
- Minimalist slip-on in soft leather;
- Slingback loafer with colour blocking;
- Fisherman sandal in subtle leathers.

Young women's

- Translucent ankle bootie with wedge sole;
- Asymmetric Hi-Top sneaker with knitted upper;
- Performance sandal with sporty rubber sole;
- Square mule sandal in simple leather;
- Noughties knee-high boot in crocodile-pattern leather.

Young men's

- Modular caged sneaker in transparent/translucent materials;
- Colourful sock boot sneaker with lower height than in previous years;
- Explorer sandal with thick rubber cleated soles;
- Sports hybrid slip-on in athleisure style;
- Elevated loafer with formal shape in soft leathers.