



Mostly White

**Children's Fashions
from the
Collections
of the
Museums of Mississauga**

Children's Fashions

Children's clothing styles have varied throughout time. The clothing worn by children in the late 19th and early 20th centuries was usually smaller versions of that worn by their parents.

Changing attitudes towards the upbringing of children helped to change all of this. Children's garments became more comfortable, with a focus on the ability to move.



Oh Baby!



Displayed are the everyday dresses of babies from 1820 to 1900. The style in baby's clothes changed little during this time. The shorter sleeved, low neck styles were common in the early to mid 1800's and the longer sleeved and high necked dresses are later versions. The elaborate trimmings reflect women's dress during this time period.

A common mistake is to think that all long baby gowns are christening gowns. Until they started to walk, both boys and girls wore long gowns over top of many petticoats.

Why White?

White clothing for children was a way to separate the upper class from the lower classes of society. Originally, this was done by the elaborate hand made trimmings and lace. With the advent of the sewing machine and inexpensive clothing, the upper classes turned to white.

White indicated that you had servants to keep your children's clothing clean, that you were unconcerned with the durability of fabrics used, and that you had money enough to buy more than one set of clothes for your children.

Part of a Museums of Mississauga display, 2001



For more information, contact

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