



Personalized tunes for kids

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[DAPHNE GORDON](#)

THE CONSTANT SHOPPER

THE ITEM: Personalized kids CD from Name Your Tune

THE COST: \$20 for one CD, or \$18 each for orders of two or more, plus shipping

WHERE TO BUY: Only at
<http://www.nameyourtune.com>

"Daphne, you are amazing!"

So said the CD I listened to this morning, a personalized collection of songs sent by Candace Alper, the local mompreneur who's building a basement business called Name Your Tune. Always a sucker for flattery, I instantly took a liking to the CD, even though I'm about 30 years older than the target market.

The *Name Your Tune* disc includes the melodies of nine kids' sing-along faves, and can be personalized so that each song mentions the name of your child several times. For example, instead of "Old MacDonald had a farm," the lyrics say: "Little Daphne had a farm, E-I-E-I-O." There are more than 1,500 names available, with more included as requested.

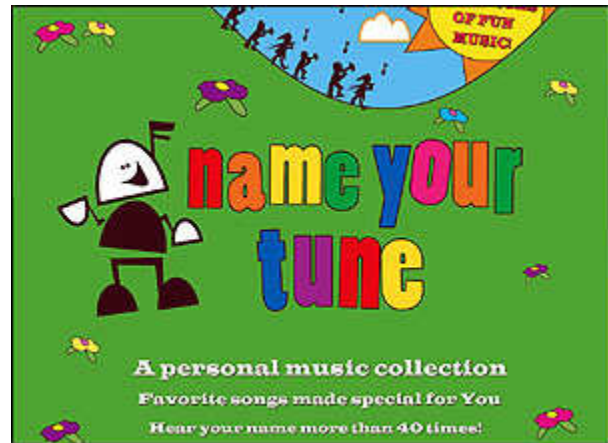
"We're adding more names all the time," says Alper, who produced the CD herself with the help of musician friends — one of whom happens to be Juno-winning kids TV personality Lenny Graf. Working her husband's contacts in the music business — he works for a music distributor — Alper, 32, put together a cast of musicians to record nine songs she had adapted to allow for personalization. They're simple tunes for babies and toddlers that range in tone from playful dancing songs to soft, soothing lullabies.

"I really come at it as a mom," says Alper. "They were the songs I used to sing with my daughter, because they were the ones I sang when I was a kid."

By networking with other local baby business entrepreneurs since she launched a shopping website in 2004, Alper has created a thriving online boutique that features all kinds of personalized items for kids, plus fun and educational books and CDs.

A line of Canadian-made kids furniture called Jollywood is a strong seller. Made by Alper's husband's cousin, the stools, (\$75), coat hooks (\$50) and boxes (\$55) are sturdy Baltic birch, with removable wooden letters that spell the child's name. Putting them back in is like playing with a puzzle, aimed at helping a kid learn to spell her name. Genius!

"It seemed like a natural fit," Alper remembers. "He's family and he has this fantastic, proven product that has been incredibly successful."



Personalized CDs from Name Your Tune feature nine kids songs recorded by Canadian artists. Each song mentions your child's name several times.

From there, she added personalized kids fleece blankets, art, photo brag books, jewellery, towels and robes, and luggage tags — great for avoiding mix-ups with lunch boxes, backpacks and strollers. All are made in Canada, many by mompreneurs.

The Constant Shopper gives a thumbs-up to the well-edited selection of kids music on the site. Not that I have kids, but I'm dying to hear *The Best of Schoolhouse Rock* (remember the classic tune "Conjunction Junction"?) and two hip kids CDs — *For The Kids Too!* and *Mary Had a Little Amp* — featuring toddler tunes by such adult music icons as Matthew Sweet, Ron Sexsmith, R.E.M., Sarah McLachlan and Moby.

FEEL GOOD FACTOR: A portion of the sale of each *Name Your Tune* CD goes to Hear Here, a Toronto-based organization that raises money to provide hearing aids for children through the Hospital for Sick Children.

Daphne Gordon's *Constant Shopper* column appears every Saturday

in the Shopping section and

Monday to Friday online at

<http://www.thestar.com/constantshopper>. Email: constantshopper@thestar.ca.

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