When American parents are shopping for clothing for their beloved toddlers, they seldom imagine that the cute little outfits were produced by much less fortunate children abroad, but all too often, that is the case. Dan McDougall describes a typical scene of this kind of exploitation in his article for the Observer:

Amitosh concentrates as he pulls the loops of thread through tiny plastic beads and sequins on the toddler's blouse he is making. Dripping with sweat, his hair is thinly coated in dust. In Hindi his name means “happiness.” The hand-embroidered garment on which his tiny needle is working bears the distinctive logo of international fashion chain Gap. Amitosh is 10.

McDougall reports that Amitosh is one of millions of children who are forced into labor, and who become enslaved by corporations, such as Gap. Barbara Ehrenreich reinforces this view in her report, “[Gap Kids: New Frontiers in Child Abuse](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/barbara-ehrenreich/gap-kids-new-frontiers-i_b_70638.html).” She explains that the enslaved children are “working 16 hour days, fed bowls of mosquito-covered rice, and forced to sleep on a roof and use over-flowing latrines. Those who slowed down were beaten with rubber pipes and the ones who cried had oily cloths stuffed in their mouths.” Although most Americans would abhor such practices, children all around the globe work to produce the products and services that many of us enjoy. In a recent issue, *The Observer* reported that Gap was found subcontracting to a factory in India where children were being used to mass produce the up-coming 2007 Christmas line (McDougall, “Child”). After the fallout from its 1999 child labor scandal, Gap went to great lengths to assure its customers that it no longer used child labor, but the fact that Gap has recently been accused again shows the incredible demand for child labor, how easily an American company can use this kind of labor, and the hypocrisy that exists between American ideals and American consumerism.

# Ehrenreich, Barbara. “[Gap Kids: New Frontiers in Child Abuse](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/barbara-ehrenreich/gap-kids-new-frontiers-i_b_70638.html)”. 31 October 2007. *The*

# *Huffington Post.* Web. 7 November 2007.

McDougall, Dan. “Gap Plans 'Sweatshop Free' Labels Observer Story Prompts Clothing Giant's Pledge.” *The Observer.* 4 November 2007. Web. 7 November 2007

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