



New Environmental Virtual World Launches: Arbopals Plants Real Trees as Kids Play

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Arbopals – a safe, fun, environmental Virtual World and Website aimed at users 5-10 – is now in active beta testing. The site is www.arbopals.com (“arbo” is the word in Esperanto for “tree”).

“What separates Arbopals from other web-based activities,” says Peter O’Brien, President and CEO “is that as users play on the site, Arbopals plants real trees, in the names of our users, in many countries around the world. We believe there is a strong desire – among kids, parents and teachers – to connect online gaming and social networking with ‘real world’ activities that help the environment. Trees are essential to the planet’s survival and they are the basis of everything we do at Arbopals.”

Arbopals Inc. is based in Toronto, Ontario. The company partnered with InfiniteSpaces, the Virtual World Design Centre at Loyalist College in Belleville, Ontario, to develop the site.

“InfiniteSpaces is a leading creator of fun, educational and interactive simulations for a range of clients in various industries across North America,” said Mark Kirkpatrick, the Director of InfiniteSpaces.

“We believe that visitors to Arbopals will be very pleased with the games that are up on the site now, and with the games and other locations that are in active development,” says Kirkpatrick. “From our initial testing and focus groups, we’re seeing kids – especially young kids – having lots of fun on the games and enjoying the site’s various creative activities.”

Arbopals Advisor Tim Flannery, author of *The Weather Makers*, and one of the world's leading scientists and thinkers about the environment, says: “I think the site is a great way to encourage young people around the world to get involved with important environmental issues. It is, of course, their world that we all have to start cleaning up, and we have to do it now.”

The United Nations says that to compensate for the damage we have all done to the environment, we should be planting “14 billion trees every year for 10 consecutive years,” notes O’Brien. “Arbopals is part of the solution. Even during our beta testing, we will plant a tree for every Arbopals avatar created, up to 1,000 avatars. And we are sure that number will increase as we move toward our full launch.”

The subscription-based site will go fully live and public – with all subscription and merchandise payment systems in place, as well as a series of new games and other creative activities – on April 18, a few days before the 40th anniversary of Earth Day, on April 22.

For further information, go to www.arbopals.com or contact:

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