Kid, Inc.

They're on a mission to upgrade the world!

Whether they're recreating dodos and dinos with a DNA printer, selling apps that do your homework for you, campaigning for a 4-day school week, or fantasizing about big ideas like time travel and A.I., these young entrepreneurs are determined to make the world a better place — for them, at least.

SYNOPSIS

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK 3.0

- 10 *real* sick days for when you're really sick + 5 *fake* sick days for when you're just sick of work.

- 12 "Get Out Of A Pointless Meeting" cards. Note: Card must be played prior to *start* of meeting. If meeting has already begun, you must forfeit a "Died of Boredom" card to leave...

YOU CAN'T JUST GIVE AWAY SICK DAYS! WE'RE CAPITALISTS! AND WHAT DO YOU MEAN, **POINTLESS?** ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT MY POWERPOINT PRESENTATION, "OVERTIME IS NORMAL TIME?" YOU **ARE**, AREN'T YOU?!

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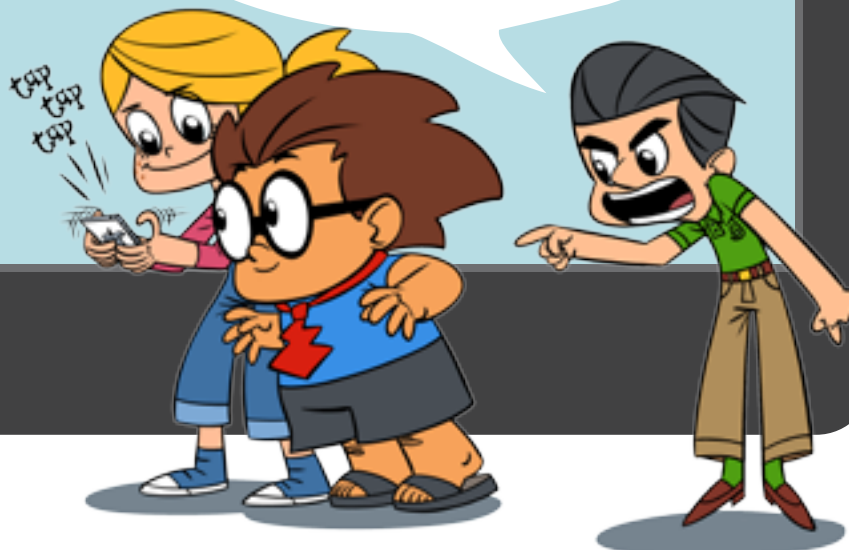
Kid, Inc. follows the adventures of an ambitious group of 5th graders who launch their own tech company...

Raised in the age of Google and social media, these kids feel empowered to challenge the grown-up view of the world. Like innocent rebels, they question everything, eager to upgrade the way things *are* done to the way things *should* be done. And thanks to the leveling-power of technology, they just might pull it off!

Whether causing a statewide panic by releasing an app that writes essays for kids, creating an A.I. who seems more human than they are, organizing the STEAM club (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) to hack the school's wireless network so they can all attend 5th grade virtually, or using social media as a protest platform (#HomeworkIsKillingMyChildhood) — their inventive plans create humorous and heartfelt conflict with parents, teachers, and sometimes even with each other.

And that's just what they're up to in the *real* world. Ideas that are too big for current technology are brought to life through computer simulations, virtual reality headsets, homemade smartphone movies, online games, and plain old daydreams.

These smart and zany adventures are aimed at tweens, but include plenty of slapstick humor and big ideas to amuse *all* ages.

CHARACTERS

Like software development, *human* development is an ongoing process. After eons of beta testing, V1 was finally released around the time of the industrial revolution. It was buggy to say the least. Fortunately, fixes and new features were introduced with each new release, leading (finally!) to our species' greatest achievement: Us (also known as Generation 3.0).

Feature Chart Subject to Change w/o Notice	Generation 1.0 18th-19th Century	Generation 2.0 20th Century	Generation 3.0 21st Century
Manual Labor	✔	✔	✔
Automation & Industrialization	✔	✔	✔
Corporations (New Feudalism)	✔	✔	✔
Self-Determining Technology		✔	✔
Global Social Network			✔
Creative Capital Economy			✔
A.I., Nano, & Quantum Solutions			✔
Extraterrestrial Opportunities			✔
	Out of Stock	Used*	Now Shipping!

USED. OH, BROTHER.

* User manual missing. Buy at your own risk.

Media Jean

As the 5th grade CEO of Kid, Inc., Media Jean considers it her job to challenge the status quo...

The problem (for adults, at least) is that she's *really* good at it. Media Jean is smart, articulate, funny, and seems to have an instinct for finding flaws in grown-up logic.

For example, when told she has to write an essay by hand, she makes a YouTube video (interviews with kids, side-by-side pencil vs. laptop speed tests, animated charts) — proving that digital writing is more efficient *and* improves retention. Or when she's told there's no support for virtual education in 5th grade, she sets up a web cam and speakers — and charges other kids for access. Or when parents campaign for less screen time, she suspects *they* spend more time online than their kids — and figures out a way to prove it.

In the end, she loses most of these battles and the status quo is restored. The fact that she doesn't mind reveals an essential truth about Media Jean: to her, challenging the norm is *fun.*

Chip Salinas

Chip is a gentle nerd with absolute (and perhaps naive) faith in the future, a future he claims will be "all Star Trek and zero Hunger Games."

This makes Chip the perfect Chief Technology Officer (CTO) for Kid, Inc. — and the ideal best friend for Media Jean. Whatever new product Media Jean thinks up, Chip is eager to build it.

Some of his gadgets work great, like the "4-In-1 Halloweener" (a 4-way mask that allows kids to visit the same house 4 times) or "My Teacher Checker" (an app that searches Google in real time, checks everything your teacher says, and prompts you with rebuttals).

Other gadgets, beyond the reach of current tech, turn into fantasy episodes — such as Chip's Personal Transportation System (PTA). Using pneumatic tubes and wind turbines, Chip designs a system of "cushioned air travel" that allows people to fly around town. He extends the tube network into space and through worm holes to other dimensions. It works great, until greedy space invaders follow the tubes back to earth. But that's another story…

Johnny Green

Capitalism runs in Johnny's blood. What other 5th grader wears business casual clothing and has his personal logo stitched on every shirt?

As Business Manager of Kid, Inc., Johnny wants to run things like a real company. This puts him in conflict with Media Jean, who thinks all that corporate stuff represents the *old* way of business.

Johnny writes an Employee Handbook, creates a mission statement, implements a dress code, and wants to implement a draconian overtime policy ("Overtime is a myth. Outsourcing your job overseas at a fraction of the cost, now *that's* reality!") And when Media Jean and Chip campaign against homework? Johnny argues that homework is a job skill. "The overworked kids of today," he says, "are the overworked employees of tomorrow!"

Johnny is so committed to success that he considers play and pretend a waste of time. This creates a fun and ongoing dynamic: he tries to get Media Jean and Chip to "grow up," and they try to get him to "be a kid."

Bob Salinas

Bob is an old-world man trying to fight off technology. The fact that the most tech-loving kid in town is his son, Chip, makes the battle all the more personal.

Bob has worn many hats over the years: construction worker, carpenter, electrician. So when the kids need something serious built, they turn to Bob. He's always happy to help them do physical stuff (usually with a Thoreau-esque sermon thrown in).

As a single father, Bob has tried to give Chip a hands-on childhood, especially when it comes to nature. Chip, wanting his dad to have the best, tries to pull Bob into the future. It's a tender, humorous, and sometimes profound tug-of-war between father and son, past and present, physical and digital.

This has led Bob to coin several personal mottoes, including: 24/7 is 16/2 too long; Face to face is better than Facebook; Birds tweet, people have conversations; and, What do I know? (his default motto).

Alice Stillwater

Teaching isn't just her job. It's her passion and purpose. Alice wants to instill a lifelong love of learning in each of her students.

Like Bob, Alice is old fashioned. She believes in the classroom environment, in group dynamics, in face-to-face education, in taking time to learn.

All this becomes a challenge in a world where students want to access rather than learn, where attention spans shrink, and where multi-tasking and media consume ever spare moment. "Dystopian YA novels," Alice says, "have nothing on the dysfunction of the modern classroom."

Determined to show her students the benefits of a hands-on education, Alice bans technology from her classroom — which creates constant and often hilarious battles with Media Jean.

Alice's love of the old ways resonates with Bob, Chip's dad. Soon, Alice and Bob are dating, adding a sweet thread of romantic comedy to the Kid, Inc. world.

Other Characters

Ella Robertson

Kid, Inc.'s tiny 3rd grade "intern," Ella often wants to push things farther than even Media Jean would go. This has the ironic effect of making Media Jean and Chip feel, now and then, like grown-ups.

Henry Green

Johnny's dad is not only a tough businessman, but a great father as well. He's a capitalist through and through, yet hasn't sold his heart (at least, not completely). He's grooming his son to take over the family investment business one day.

The STEAM Club

STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math. These smart and curious kids act as a single character, becoming a fun and energetic resource for Media Jean and Chip.

Girls Who Code

Within STEAM are three girls belonging to the local chapter of "Girls Who Code." They're under Ella's precocious leadership, so when Kid, Inc. needs serious coding, these girls get it done.

BOB'S BLOG

To process his feelings, Bob keeps a typewritten journal where he pounds out his ideas, hopes, dreams, fears, and frustrations.

His son, Chip, thinks Bob is the best dad in the world. In fact, Chip wants Bob's to turn the journal into a blog so *everyone* can see what a great guy he is. But for a private, hands-on man like Bob, a "blog" is as disgusting as it sounds.

So Chip upgrades Bob's typewriter to wirelessly post every keystroke online — and Bob becomes a blogger *without knowing it.* As Bob types, we see a split screen with the kids (the only ones who know the blog exists) commenting on Bob's private thoughts.

Bob tries to get the kids to slow down, to listen to what he has to say. They don't listen to his sermons, but they *do* read his blog—and of course, the sweet irony is: Bob doesn't even know.

When I was a kid, **dads** were the internet. Dads were **Google.** When I wanted to know something, I turned to my dad. Today, kids can learn *anything* on their own. No mentoring or discussion or exploration. Just click and know. It's kind of depressing. They're getting all the information, and none of the knowledge.

Your dad cracks me up. He wants to slow *everything* down.

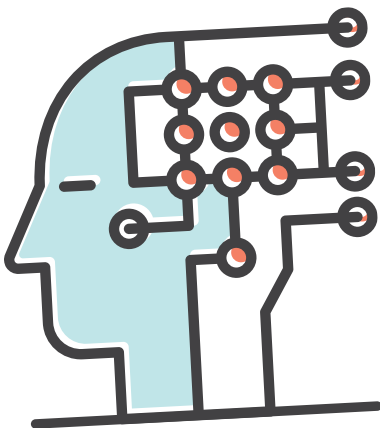Maybe he has a point. Some days I feel all clicked-out.

Not me. I like "Click & Know." That's my new motto!

Emma's right. That phrase is **gold!** Apple would kill for it!

Hey! We could print t-shirts and give one to your dad!

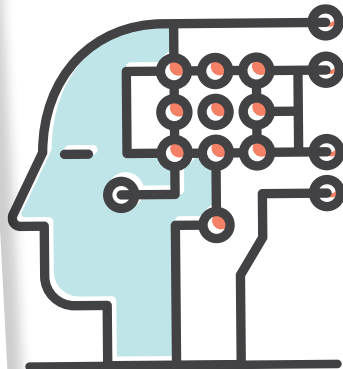I don't know. Somehow I just can't see my dad wearing "Click & Know" on his chest.
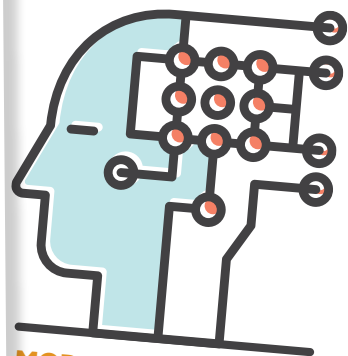
Homework Protest

The kids are so sick of homework they start an online campaign *and* picket outside school — only to be assigned an essay on the pros and cons of homework!

That's the last straw. With Ella's help, they code an app to write the essays for them. The app goes online, Googles the topic, and prints an essay in 60 seconds — it even imitates their own writing styles.

Alice bans the app. Too late! Johnny has uploaded EasyEssay® and it hits #1 in the all the App stores. Thousands of kids are using it.

Bob "blogs" about his confusion. Yes, kids get too much homework these days, but isn't this app (coded by his son!) cheating?

Kid, Inc. releases apps for junior high, high school and college. Teachers can't tell real essays from fake ones. EasyEssay® sweeps America, becoming, in the words of one TV news show, "An academic epidemic!"

Earth Backup

When scientists recover DNA from a mummified dodo, Kid, Inc. poses as a research lab to get a sample — which Chip uses to clone *real* dodos.

The dodos are gentle and goofy. They'll make perfect pets. Johnny wants to patent them, like in Jurassic Park — and make millions. He and his dad set up a sub-division within Kid, Inc. called Dodo Corp.

Media Jean and Chip fantasize about de-extinction. They imagine a secret government agency that has created an Earth Backup Database containing the DNA of *every* species that ever lived — and a DNA printer that can print (clone) extinct life forms. They allow their fantasy to run wild until dinosaurs re-claim the earth. Maybe, the kids reluctantly admit, some things are better left as they are.

Meanwhile, Bob and Alice play with the dodos. Alice says restoring these gently birds seems like a good thing. But Bob is skeptical, and "blogs" his concerns. Media Jean and Chip log on and, for once, agree.

Too late. Johnny has moved the tech to his dad's office. Dodo Corp. is online, taking orders and cloning birds. Hilarious infomercials flood the web. Johnny has the hottest product since Beanie Babies — until the government rolls in and puts the entire town under quarantine!

Screen-Free Week

Media Jean's worst nightmare comes true when Alice announces the class will participate in Screen-Free Week!

Media Jean won't sign the screen-free pledge. Instead, she Googles a defense. She claims books are another type of screen, quoting Plato who said reading books would "implant forgetfulness" because we'd no longer *own* information but only *access* it. "You must hate Google sometimes," Bob says to Alice. Alice sighs, "You have no idea."

Meanwhile, Johnny (who goes to a different school) writes the Employee Handbook. The more severe the rule, the bigger kick he gets out of it. He fantasizes about the new, corporatized Kid, Inc.

Bob blogs about our culture of screens, and for once the kids (who can't access the blog without their devices) don't comment.

Media Jean creates a YouTube protest titled, "Trapped in 1870." We enter a fantasy segment: kids in period clothing, writing on slate tablets with chalk, playing catch with a ball made from an inflated pig bladder, etc. The video ends with a plea: "Return to sanity!" But the video backfires: it inspires Alice to escalates Screen-Free Week to Little House on the Prairie Week. *Now* what will Media Jean do?

The New Halloween

Johnny says there are no gift-giving holidays between Father's Day and Christmas. Halloween could fill that gap. If they start a campaign and link to online retailers, they'd get a commission on all sales! But for that to work, they have to *rebrand* Halloween in the public's mind.

Bob and Alice also want to make Halloween about more than candy. They plan a Día de los Muertos parade: fun, culture, *and* meaning. But getting permits from City Hall feels like a zombie movie.

The kids launch a monster spokesmodel campaign: Frankenstein buys gold-plated jumper cables for his bride; Vampira gives Dracula a "blood of the month" subscription. It goes viral. Online retailers see a big spike and Kid, Inc. is making a fortune. But as candy sales plunge, candy companies (and children) start looking for someone to blame.

The Batcave of Childhood

Johnny wants to partner with ad agencies. Who better to research how to turn kids into consumers than Kid, Inc?

The ad agency shows how they use brain scans, eye trackers, and hidden video to plumb a child's mind — it's like a dystopian movie!

Media Jean finds herself resisting the future for once. She and Chip make costumes, call themselves The Kid Crusaders ("Back to childhood!") and ask Bob to build a fort dubbed the Batcave of Childhood. Not to be outdone, Johnny creates his own identity, Kid Capitalist ("Consuming kids, unite!") We enter their fantasy world where they wage hilarious battles for the "soul" of childhood.

Meanwhile, Bob and Alice try to save a local park, saying kids need *natural* spaces. Henry wants to develop the area into boutique shops, saying families need more *consumer* spaces. The Kid Crusaders and Kid Capitalist join the battle. Soon, the town takes sides — then the country as the story goes viral. Bob turns to his "blog," wondering how this (and the future it represents) can possibly be resolved.

Johnny Sim

Media Jean and Chip are working on personality backups that can be downloaded (one day) into cloned bodies. Immortality! Johnny agrees to be their beta tester.

Ella and the Girls Who Code create an A.I. based on his personality and give it a 3D avatar that looks just like Johnny. Dubbed Johnny Sim (for Simulation), the A.I. is loaded on a laptop. The more time they spend together, the more Johnny Sim learns to replicate Johnny's identity. Media Jean runs a Turing Test—and no one can tell the two apart!

Johnny Sim analyzes the family business and sends a report to Henry, Johnny's dad. Henry hires Johnny Sim as a consultant. Johnny has nightmares about a future where he's replaced by his digital doppelgänger. They get into hilarious debates about who is more *real*.

Bob blogs about all this, finding it funny until he falls into a funk over his own mortality. Alice takes him for a walk in the woods. Love and nature — the perfect cure for the blues.

Johnny asks Media Jean to delete his avatar, but Johnny Sim argues he has become a self-aware life form now. What a modern moral dilemma! Chip offers a surprising solution — with unexpected consequences.

We believe Kid, Inc. can have a life beyond the show, extending into the world in many ways.

For example, we can work with STEAM and Girls Who Code, along with organizations like the National Invention Convention for Kids or National Science Fair, to get kids excited about science and the arts. We can brand and sell kits to support all these efforts.

The show's website can include weekly science challenges, kid entrepreneur spotlights, code tutorials, art galleries, and more.

The characters can endorse science-based curriculum and products, designed for families in the home and for teachers in the classroom.

We can create a vibrant, hilarious, and topical social community: give Media Jean a Twitter feed, give Alice a Facebook account, create a LinkedIn page for Johnny (with real job-related resources), and, of course, post Bob's heartfelt "blog" online for the world to see.

The possibilities are exciting!

We hope you enjoyed your visit to Kid, Inc. We believe this show offers a smart, zany view of our modern world that will thoroughly entertain young audiences — and amuse "older" generations too.
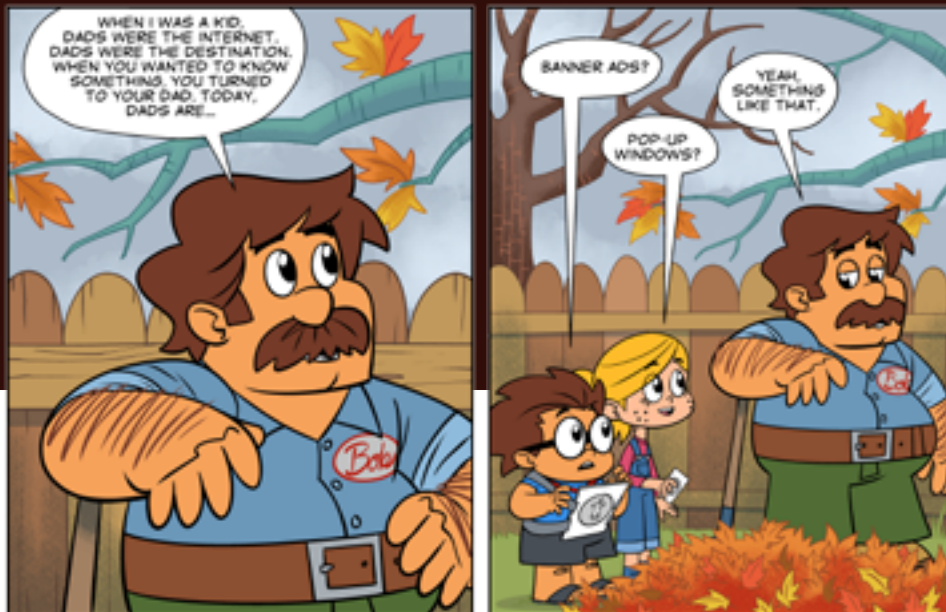
Kid, Inc. Created by Charles Duffie • Character Designs by Erich Owen