



Lulu Pierce, 6, of Brookline, browses through merchandise at Zape.

PHOTO BY ZARA TZANEV

# Shirt happens

## *13-year-old starts clothing store*

**By Susan Danseyar**  
STAFF WRITER

Owning a store has been a dream of Zach Rosenberg's since he was, well, a little boy.

The 13-year-old remembers that while in drawing class in fifth grade, he always created designs for T-shirts and sweat-shirts. He thought it would be fun to make clothing available to other kids his age. In addition, his respect for his father,

**ZAPE**, page 9

# Hip-hop meets hippie

**ZAPE**, from page 1

David Rosenberg, came into the mix.

"I look up to my father and want to be like him," Zach said. "He has worked in the real estate business ever since he was in college, and I thought we might be able to do something together one day."

The two talk a lot about ideas and, after a lot of thought, decided to make Zach's dream a reality. Together, they opened Zape on Chestnut Street in Newton Upper Falls on March 6. It's a shop that features a playful mix of clothing, classic toys, sneakers, sunglasses, jewelry and tie-dyed T-shirts.

"I always liked walking around Boston and seeing the hip-hop stores," said Rosenberg. "My father and I went shopping in places just like this and realized we could open our own place."

They had a lot of fun looking for the merchandise Zape now carries, picking out things they like from wholesalers and then dropping the price lower than what other stores are charging so that kids can afford to buy them.

"We're bringing back Woodstock and the hippie era," Rosenberg said. "That's the kind of stuff I and my friends like to wear."

They paid close attention to how the store should be designed, Rosenberg said. The windows are designed "to draw people in" with mannequins dressed in attractive clothing and zany toys and posters surrounding them.

"As soon as you walk into the store, we make sure there's stuff that's appealing," Rosenberg said, pointing out the first display a customer sees which is a collection of T-shirts, tank tops and sweatshirts some of which are tie-dyed and others have the Zape logo on them.

There's a "kids" side and an "adult" side; a large collection of brightly designed sneakers; a display of jeans; a glass case with toys and sunglasses; and posters. There's also a jewelry display for which 8-year-old Molly Rosenberg has the responsibility of selecting items and putting the peace signs together that hang from necklaces.

"Business is definitely in our family," said Zach Rosenberg.



PHOTO BY ZARA TZANEV

**Zape, a new store that opened in March, is the brainchild of 13-year-old Zach Rosenberg and brought to life by his father, David.**

"My older brother and older sister are both studying at Cornell University's hotel school."

Rosenberg is in seventh grade at the Buckingham, Brown & Nichols School in Cambridge, so he's not in the store on a full-time basis. Manager David Goldstein takes care of the day-to-day details, but Rosenberg helps out on weekends. Currently, he's learning to use the cash register and, since its opening, keeps the store "looking right and making sure the merchandise displays are appealing."

Zape is a very relaxing place for customers with its laid-back atmosphere and good music playing, Rosenberg said. "I love being here because I love the feeling of the place," he said.

As for naming the store Zape, Rosenberg said he's not really sure how he came up with it but just knows he used to write the word over and over when he was a child.

This is a wonderful opportunity for his son, said David Rosenberg.

"It gives Zach an opportunity to express himself while also seeing the business side of things — what sells and what doesn't," he said. "Those are skills he can't learn in school."

The store is open daily from 11 a.m.-9 p.m. and ample parking is available in the back of 617-527-ZAPE or visit the store, adjacent to the Biltmore Bar and Grille. For additional information, call www.zapeonline.com.



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