



MARIE-FRANCE COALLIER THE GAZETTE

Teen models Melissa Makecha (left) and Jennifer Kigoma hit the catwalk for annual fashion show organized by TRENDS Montreal yesterday.

TRENDS girls make an upbeat fashion statement

Classy show counters hypersexualized look

DAVID JOHNSTON
THE GAZETTE

They are bright and happy teenage Canadian girls. They read books like *Girls Gone Mild* – not wild. And among their favourite websites is thegoodgirlrevolution.com. They are members of a Canadian “anti-fashion” fashion movement

known as TRENDS. And yesterday afternoon in downtown Montreal’s upscale Cours Mont Royal, they held a decidedly upbeat fashion show in front of a few hundred appreciative fans and curiosity seekers. TRENDS, which was born in English Canada in 2004 and came to Quebec in 2007, is a movement dedicated to what the Associated Press has begun calling the “modest fashion movement” – in support of a style of dress that is different from the hypersexualized image of teenaged girls often presented in mass media. The 14 Montreal girls, age 14 to 18

who walked the catwalk yesterday in clothes that they picked out for themselves, went through three months of fashion “finishing school” in Montreal from January through March. Once a week during those three months, they attended seminars given by designers, stylists, feminist theorists and a host of other women appalled by the way some elements of the fashion industry portray girls and young woman. TRENDS stands for Teens Reacting Effectively aNd Discovering Style. The non-profit organization, supported by national and local

sponsors, is devoted to encouraging teenaged girls to assert their sense of individuality and resist media and peer pressure to look “bad.” Supported yesterday by some of Montreal’s industry technicians who share their views, Montreal’s TRENDS girls put on a lively and upbeat show for 50 minutes that made a sophisticated political statement. For more information about TRENDS, visit its website at www.trendsfashion.ca djohnston@thegazette.canwest.com