

Canadian kids TV news: Tobi! to debut, Backyardigans soap

By Nicholas Moreau

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Treehouse TV debuts *Tobi!*, March 7 "It's a show about a little boy who wants to make the world a better place to live in. The series tackles difficult issues such as poverty, extinction and homelessness, but does so in a gentle, poetic and pre-school appropriate way," *Tobi!* co-creator Josh Selig told website Licensing.biz.

Launching on March 7, the premiere takes place the same day as the International Children's Day of Broadcasting, according to *Animation Magazine*. The International Children's Day is a UNICEF concept that asks broadcasters to air programming about or created for children. It will premiere on Nickelodeon Australia, the same day.

The series is created by Little Airplane Productions, known for its other creations like *Oobi!*, *The Wonder Pets!*, *Go Baby!*, and *3rd and Bird!* (They love their exclamation marks, apparently.) A rarity these days, it'll be hand-drawn animation.

Green-certified kids hygiene products to feature Backyardigans

In April, Frank T. Ross & Sons, Ltd. will release a line of "personal care products" for kids (think shampoo, bubble bath, hand soap) based on Nelvana characters. The Markham-based company has the rights to the Toronto-based animation studio's *The Backyardigans*, *Max & Ruby*, and *Franklin*

the Turtle. The products are certified as Eco-Logo, by a third-party, and are based from plant and mineral sources. According to a report in *The Globe and Mail*, the company is no newcomer to all things "green"; they launched a line of products called NatureClean, in 1963.

Scare School, Dive Olly Dive! coming to Francophone TV

According to *Kidscreen*, a selection of Canada's Francophone TV channels have bought rights to series distributed by Parisian distributor Moonscoop. TVA is getting dubs of *Dive Olly Dive!* (which once aired on Treehouse TV) and *Ava Riko Teo*, TeleQuebec is going to air the second season of *SamSam*, TFO has chosen *Chloe's Closet*, while *Casper's Scare School*, which currently airs in English on YTV, will show on VRAK.