PACK: Parents and Creative Kids: Developing an Organization for Fostering Creativity in the Family

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by

Michaelene Dawson

A Project
in
Creative Studies

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Science
December 2009
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Dates of Approval:

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Cynthia Burnett
Lecturer

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Michaelene Dawson
Student
Project Abstract

This project highlights the process of developing the foundation of Parents And Creative Kids (PACK), a business organization that serves to nurture creativity, creative thinking and creative problem solving skills in the family. The mission of PACK is to nurture creativity in families through holistic education, exploration and family support. The work of this project consisted of the development, implementation and refinement of PACK programs for children, parents and families.

____________________________
Michaelene Dawson

____________________________
Date
Dedication

To The Mighty Dawson-Globus’s: creative and brilliant, courageous and resilient.

Sammy: The Catalyst

and

Chris: My Companion Binary Star
Acknowledgements

Home Team

Chris: The man who’s got my back, and my heart. Thanks for tagging in and keeping the hearth lit, for being a wonderful father, for relating to my passions, for loving me just as I am, and for making sure I ate at least once a day. I would not have wanted to do this without you.

My amazing Parents: Thank you for your unconditional love, support, trust, and generosity. You are the foundation of my dreams, and the light that guides me home.

Mom: You taught me what it means to be a strong woman and a giving mother. You have nurtured my creative heart throughout my whole life, showing me that everything can be problem-solved with creativity, and allowing me to dance to the sound of my own symphony. Thank you for believing in me, helping me grow, and teaching me about life.

Dad: You taught me how to deeply enjoy the small details of life like: the importance of taking the scenic route, the nuances of summer corn, and the joy that a surprising Portuguese cheese sandwich can bring at the end of a long journey. You have given me the courage to recognize and follow my bliss. And you have blessed me with a wandering spirit that has led me on many grand and glorious adventures.

Ninga: You have been an example of love, faith, and compassion. Thank you for always believing in me. Your love has helped me grow in so many ways. You are a woman without equal.

John: You showed me what strength, forgiveness, and loyalty truly mean. Thank you for being such a great older brother, for teasing me enough that I learned how to stand up for myself, for protecting me from real and imaginary monsters, and for showing me how to dream big dreams.

Steve: my soul’s companion. Thank you for teaching me about transformation: of a creek into an ocean, of an idea into a passion, and of a moment into the universe. What will two kids from buffalo actualize next?

Amanda: We have grown up together and been through the best and worst of sisterhood; and we can still laugh and say, “Cool Beaners, Where’s my room?” Thanks for being the best sister in the word.

Anthony: Thank you for you. You are awesome. Do not doubt the greatness within you; you are rare, beautiful, and brilliantly creative. If you were not my nephew, you would be my best friend.

Garrett: Thanks for the illuminating thought experiments, the awesome logo, and the experience.

Ryan: Seed, thanks for the breath, the amazing way you love, and all of the cheerleading. You are the sentinel of passion. I couldn’t ask for better best friend for Sammy.

♥Vito: The relative position of rainbows...∞
Cyndi Burnett: You are an inspiration: mother, teacher, student, mentor, and creator. Your soulful, brilliant gift to all who know you is your joyful passion for life. You create a sphere of possibility around you that nourishes, challenges, and inspires. You opened the door for me in Introduction to Creative Studies, and you have mentored me holistically throughout this journey. Your guidance, perspective and understanding have been transforming.

John Cabra: You made statistics interesting, offered sage advice, and inspired me with your expansive interests in the field of Creative Studies. You are a fantastic, dedicated, and mindful teacher. I am blessed to have learned from you.

Mike Fox: Thank you for your commitment to the art of teaching. Your passion and knowledge have guided me throughout my academic life. Your honest feedback, understanding, and stories from the trenches have helped me learn and grow in so many ways.

To the Warrior Grad Students of ICSC: Thank you from the bottom of my 4 Ps.

Scott: Thanks for your support, friendship, and perspective. You are such a beautiful person: genuine, compassionate, fun, and generous. I hope your life is filled with the joy of a thousand rainbows and unicorns.

Emily the Great: Thank you for your brilliant collaboration, and for your generous friendship. I hope that we will remain colleagues and friends for years.

Dao-Wen: Thank you for your genuine support and friendship. I am so happy to have met someone who understands the beauty of The Little Prince.

Suzanne: Thank you for all of your feedback on this project, and for your friendship throughout this journey.

Kelsey Hollenbeck: Thank you for your enthusiasm and genuine interest in Wonder Time. I have enjoyed collaborating with you and I look forward to working with you in the future.

The Family Creativity Celebration Team: Susan Coburn, Molly Whitehead, Amy Cappuzzello, Emily White, Scott Luikart, Ryan Reed, Garrett Thomas, Dao-Wen Chang, Suzanne Walker, Jayme Cellioci, Kelly Stromecki, Barbra Warner, and Lindsey Brauer. Thank you for all the time and effort you all put into this project.

Workshop participants: Nancy and Tomas Forsyth, Heather O'Donnell, Ryan Reed, Shelia Thomas, Jessica Combs, Eric Jablonski, Nicole and David Edwards, Emily White, Dao-Wen Chang, Rob Galley, Melanie Boczarski, Robin and Jason Martinelli, Jim and Mary Ann Dawson, and Chris Globus, Thanks for your support and honesty.
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Section One

Background to the Project:

The purpose of this project was to establish the foundation for an organization that I am developing called Parents and Creative Kids (PACK). Although in its infancy, PACK is an organization for parents and kids that seeks to foster creativity within the family. The mission of PACK is to nurture creativity in families through holistic education, exploration and family support. PACK provides educational opportunities, experiences and support for parents and children in order to nurture creative growth.

The catalyst for this project is my son, Sammy. One of Sammy’s nicknames is Sunshine Boy. It is a perfect name for this two-year-old- brilliant, beautiful, and charming, joy-to-the-world. Sammy is the most important focus in my life. He has been since the instant we met. I remember holding him moments after he was born, overflowing with intense love, gratitude, and responsibility for this tiny, beautiful person. Within the first few weeks of his life, these feelings were so overwhelming at times, that all I could do was look at him and weep in thanksgiving and trepidation. I remember thinking he is so perfect; I don’t want to ruin him. I want to guide him through this beautiful, wonderful, challenging adventure. I want to instill in him a deep love, passion and curiosity for life. I want to arm him with a strong sense of self, respect for the journeys of others, personal responsibility, and a sense of the interconnected nature of the universe.

This feeling of responsibility was transforming. It caused me to intentionally recognize the elements of my life that are of the most importance, my philosophy of life, my journey towards self actualization, the holistic knowledge and experiences that have helped me on my
own life path. It caused me to embrace all that I have learned as a creative studies student to address this lifelong challenging opportunity. It strengthened the holistic understanding of my own beliefs about creativity; that creativity is a way of life, a choice in perception and vehicle for actualization. In essence, this feeling of responsibility for Sammy affirmed my purpose in life, both as his mother and as a human being.

As a student of creative studies, I have learned firsthand the transformational power of creativity. I have learned techniques for addressing challenges and opportunities in proactive ways. I have come to understand that creativity can be a way of approaching and living life, a philosophy. All of these learning experiences have shaped me into the person that I am. Creativity has transformed my life in beautiful ways. I realized that the guidance I wanted to offer Sammy throughout his life is deeply rooted in the philosophy of creativity. This realization led me back to the Creative Studies Master’s program. It focused my career vision within the field of creative studies. It led to the vision of PACK.

This project allowed me to develop, implement, evaluate, and refine PACK programs and activities. I have been working on developing PACK since the Spring 2009 semester through extensive personal work and a summer independent study. This project actualized this work in a variety of ways, and provided opportunities to visualize future directions of the organization and myself. It laid the groundwork for establishing PACK as a community organization that seeks to nurture creativity within the family.

Through this project, I designed and implemented PACK programs that endeavor to:

- Help parents and kids embrace their own creativity.
- Educate parents and kids about the nature and nurture of creativity.
Help families understand the importance of creativity in all aspects of life.

Give parents and kids opportunities to develop and strengthening creative thinking skills.

Educate families about creative approaches to problem solving.

Support families in adopting a creative lifestyle.

Promote the value of creativity for families.

Throughout this project, I researched creative development in children, creative climate, intrinsic motivation, creative thinking skills, and creative leadership. I was able to draw solid and expansive connections from the research to creative parenting and design and deliver programs based on this synthesis.

This project allowed me to explore, expand, and articulate my philosophy and beliefs about creativity. These beliefs include: all people are creative, children are natural wellsprings of creativity, creativity is an essential life skill for all people, creativity and creative thinking skills can be intentionally developed, strengthened, and nurtured, the family is first place that creativity is nurtured in children, and creativity can be a holistic lifestyle choice. Through the work of this project, I created a vision for my future and the future of PACK.

Rationale for Selection:

I believe that creative parenting is an area within the field of creativity that has great opportunities for research, development, and practical application. I feel that this area of creativity has vast potential for family, individual, and societal impact, growth and transformation. I want to be part of the exploration, research, and expansion of this aspect of
creativity and leadership. This project was a starting point for my personal and professional aspirations.

This area of creativity is also a synthesis of my greatest passions: parenting, creativity, and lifelong learning. I sustained high intrinsic motivation for this project throughout the semester. This intrinsic motivation has carried me beyond this project extending throughout my life. This project was the beginning of my greater career and life visions. It was a foundational step to actualizing my deep and meaningful personal vision for my life: to continue to grow as a creative parent and a self-actualizing human being, and to make a meaningful contribution to society and the field of creative studies.

I believe that creative parenting has the potential to transform the way we nurture our children, interact within our society, learn, produce, effect change, and grow as individuals and a community. I believe that if we, as a society, move toward self-actualization through a creative life style, we can change the world in small and grand ways.

Section Two

Pertinent Literature:

Throughout my experiences as a creative studies undergraduate and graduate student, I accumulated a substantial body of knowledge on creativity and change leadership. Prior to beginning this project, I had started to make connections between creative leadership and parenting through class assignments and intrapersonal associations to what I was learning in my creative studies courses. My research for this project was a synthesis and expansion of this knowledge. It focused on three areas, the principles of creative leadership applied to parenting, nurturing creativity in children, and techniques for facilitating creativity education.
I began my research by drawing solid connections between creative leadership and parental leadership. The primary resource for this was, *Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change*, written by Puccio, Murdock, and Mance (2007). This book provided me with the framework for creative leadership that I applied to the leadership of parenting.

Puccio et al. (2007) defined leadership as, “the process of positively influencing people, contexts, and outcomes through a deliberate creative approach that is applied to open-ended, novel, and ambiguous problems- both opportunities and predicaments” (p.xvi). I broke down this definition of leadership and made connections to parenting.

*The Process:* Parenting is the process of guiding the growth and development of a child throughout life. It is a lifelong evolutionary process that deals with complex interactions, challenges, opportunities, choices, decisions, transformations, and experiences.

*Influencing people:* Parents have great influence in every aspect of their child’s development. As leaders, parents influence the family environment, including the attitudes, behaviors, communication practices, and thinking skills of the family.

*Creative approach:* Parenting requires a creative approach. Parenting is an art, a craft, a vocation. In using a creative approach, parents can embrace their vocation proactively. Parents can use creative thinking and problem-solving to address the challenges, goals, and visions of the family. They can use a creative approach to lead themselves and all members of their family toward self-actualization through creative growth.

*Open-ended, novel, and ambiguous problems:* Life is the ultimate open-ended, novel and ambiguous challenge. Parental leaders are faced with many problems throughout life that
do not have prescribed answers. These open-ended and ambiguous challenges are the essence of growth and learning. Parents guide their families through the myriad adventures of life.

I applied these principles of leadership to parenting and began to develop my concept of Creative Parenting. I define Creative Parenting as: a parenting philosophy that uses a deliberate creative approach to the process of leading the family, and focuses on nurturing the creative growth of every family member. Creative parents use creativity, creative thinking and creative problem-solving to address the challenges and opportunities of life, and intentionally nurture the creative heart of their family. Developing this definition led me to researching ways parents can use a deliberate creative approach, and how parents can nurture creative growth in their families.

For the first part of this area of research I continued to use *Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change* (2007). Puccio et al. (2007) stated that, “Creativity is a core competence of leadership and creative problem-solving skills enhance leadership effectiveness” (p. 13). The use of Creative Problem-Solving, and creative thinking and affective skills are essential to adopting a parenting style that uses a deliberate creative approach. This creative approach is not only process related, but also person related.

This understanding, formed from the synthesis of previous Creative Studies course work, personal experiences, and many resources including *Growing Up Creative* (Amabile 1989), and *Creative Leadership: Skills the Drive Change* (Puccio et al., 2007), led me to one of the foundational principles of creative parenting: creative parents are creative people. There is a vital intrapersonal element to creative parenting. This became a major focus in my creative parenting workshops. I felt that it was essential for parents to look at their assumptions,
attitudes, and behaviors towards creativity. I felt that this was such an important aspect of creative parenting that over half of my introductory creative parenting workshop focused on personal descriptions, assumptions, and attitudes about creativity, and personal blocks to creativity. *Creative Leadership: Skills that Drive Change* (2007), included a section in the first chapter about Kouzes and Posner’s Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership. These leadership practices were: Modeling the Way, Challenging the Process, Inspiring a Shared Vision, Enabling Others to Act, and Encouraging the Heart (p. 9). These practices contributed to the conceptual development of creative parenting. I found these practices to be excellent ways that parents can take a deliberate creative approach to parenting. I incorporated the essence of these leadership practices into the content of my creative parenting workshops.

My next area of research focused on nurturing creativity in children. A key resource was Amabile’s book, *Growing Up Creative: Nurturing a Lifetime of Creativity* (1989). This book explored creativity in the home and school environment. Amabile examined elements that support or hinder creativity, discussed the importance of intrinsic motivation for creativity, and provided specific ways parents and teachers can keep creativity alive in children. Amabile included interviews with, and stories about highly productive creative adults, children, and parents. She identified patterns in their home and school lives that contributed to their creativity.

A recurring theme in Amabile’s book is that parents and teachers can nurture creativity in children by engaging in creative behavior themselves. This notion of modeling creative behaviors and attitudes, and the intrapersonal dimensions of creativity reiterated the principle: creative parents are creative people.
Amabile stressed the importance of intrinsic motivation as a key element for creativity:

If parents and teachers can understand and apply the *Intrinsic Motivation Principle of Creativity*, they will have an enormous head start in fostering children’s creativity.

‘People will be most creative when they feel motivated primarily by the interest, enjoyment, challenge, and satisfaction of the work itself- and not by external pressures’.

(p. 54)

Intrinsic motivation is a key element in the process of every creative learning experience I designed and delivered throughout this project. It is also one of the major content themes I used in the parent workshops.

My third area of research focused on exploring techniques for facilitating creativity education. I had learned about the Torrance Incubation Model (TIM) for creative learning and teaching, and Leap Skills prior to this project through my studies. The key resources for this learning were: two books written by Torrance and Shafter, *The Incubation Model of Teaching: Getting Beyond the Aha!* (1990), and *Making the Creative Leap Beyond* (1999), and two articles written by Murdock and Keller-Mathers: *Teaching Creativity: Where There’s a Will, There’s a Way* (2002), and *The Foundation of the Torrance Incubation Model: Identifying and Using Creativity Skill Set* (2002). One of my goals for this project was to form a deeper awareness of the art and application of the TIM. Another goal was to form a deeper understanding of Leap Skills, and how to effectively incorporate them into creativity education. My research focused on achieving these goals. Through these resources, I was able to form a deeper understanding of the theory and practice of both the TIM and Leap Skills, and the interwoven application of both as a vehicle to nurture creativity and deepen learning. This understanding was
instrumental in my growth as an educational facilitator. I applied the TIM and various Leap Skills to every activity and workshop I designed and delivered.

Another important resource for this project was the article, *Nurturing Creativity in Early Childhood Education: Families Are Part of It*, by Kemple and Nissenberg (2000). This article validated many of my synthesized theories about how influential parents are on the creative development of their children. The authors stressed the need for educational opportunities that allow parents to understand the importance and practice of fostering creativity in their children, which confirmed to me that I am on a path filled with possibilities and meaningful service through PACK.

The following resources, within the selected bibliography, also influenced the development of various content and process aspects of this project.

**Selected Bibliography**


**Section Three**

**Process Plan:**

My process plan for this project developed around my vision for PACK. I began with a vivid and beautiful vision for my desired future for PACK (see appendix A). I used mind mapping to explore this vision (see appendix B). Through this exploration I discovered four content areas I wanted to focus on for this project: parent education, child education, family activities, and establishing PACK as a business. These areas of focus guided me in developing my process plan.

The following table shows my process plan activities and time table for this project.

**Project Timeline:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Estimated Time Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>-Designed and delivered 4 Wonder Time lessons</td>
<td>Design: 10 hours&lt;br&gt;Deliver: 4 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>- Found a space to host the first parent workshop</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Invited parents to participate in workshop</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Generated and selected ideas for the parent and child creativity celebration.</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Researched the logistics of establishing a small business and met with a wonderful person at the Small Business Association office.</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Explored research on TIM, intrinsic motivation, creative climate, creative thinking skills and vision statements.</td>
<td>20 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Designed the introductory Creative Parenting workshop</td>
<td>12 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Designed workshops on creative climate, vision statements, and creative thinking skills.</td>
<td>15 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Worked on Concept Paper</td>
<td>10 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>- Designed and delivered 4 Wonder Time lessons Design: 10 hours Deliver: 4 hours</td>
<td>10 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Led introductory Creative Parenting workshop, received feedback through evaluation forms, and refined the workshop based on that feedback.</td>
<td>10 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Designed Advertisement for the family creativity celebration.</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Generated and selected ideas about how to present project work.</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>- Lead Vision Statement workshop for parents and non-parents focused on creating a personal vision statement. Received feedback and refined the workshop.</td>
<td>10 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Generated ideas for PACK logo</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>- Wrote the first blog on creative parenting</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Designed and lead a creative story telling activity at Charlotte Avenue's school wide Halloween party for the Parents and Teachers Association (PTA).</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>- Worked on project paper</td>
<td>12 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>- Designed and delivered 4 Wonder Time lessons Design: 10 hours Deliver: 4 hours</td>
<td>15 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>- Designed a family creativity celebration. Led a team of graduate students in designing activities for this celebration.</td>
<td>15 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>- Worked on project presentation</td>
<td>12 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>- Explored ideas about developing the Wondering Woman as a school based program.</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>- Evaluated and monitored project progress</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>- Worked on paper</td>
<td>15 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>- Worked on Project Portfolio</td>
<td>8 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>- Designed PACK logo</td>
<td>6 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>- Created a plan of action for bringing PACK into the community.</td>
<td>3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Established DBA for PACK</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>- Designed and delivered 3 Wonder Time lessons Design: 8 hours Delivery: 3 hours</td>
<td>8 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section Four

Outcomes:

The outcomes for this project are based on the services I want to offer through PACK, and the tangible products that I felt were needed in order to bring these services into the community. I worked on designing five major products for PACK: a creativity education program for children, creativity workshops for parents, creativity based activities for families, a portfolio for PACK, and a plan of action for moving PACK into the community. In addition to these products I established PACK as a small business, and designed a PACK logo.

Creativity Education Program for Children

I designed, implemented, evaluated, and refined creativity activities and lessons within a Kindergarten classroom on a weekly basis throughout the semester. This weekly program is called Wonder Time. Within this program, I led weekly activities and lessons that dealt with creativity, creative thinking skills and creative problem solving. I suggested ideas for daily routines and strategies that foster creative growth. I worked closely with the classroom teacher, Mary Ann Dawson, and the student intern, Kelsey Hollenbeck to develop and refine the program, and share what I have learned about creativity education. I also contributed to a monthly parent newsletter, providing information and suggestions for nurturing creativity within the home. These lessons are part of my project portfolio (for examples see appendix C).

I created a superhero persona that I consistently used in leading the lessons and activities of Wonder Time (see appendix D). I was The Wonder Woman to 22 amazing five and
six year olds. I wore a bright red cape and big red go-go boots. My super power was wondering, and I came to schools across the world to help kids make wondering one of their super powers. Every Thursday I came to Mrs. Dawson’s Kindergarten class for Wonder Time.

Wonder Time was a dynamic and exciting time for everyone in the class. Through Wonder Time, we explored what it meant to wonder, how our senses can help us wonder, how our emotions can be signs for something to wonder about, how wondering leads to learning, how wondering helps us grow, how wondering can give us ideas, and how to teach someone about wonder. We created a Wonder Tree and the students designed special wonder leaves for the tree (see appendix E). Whenever a student had a wondering, they wrote it on a leaf and put it at the top of the tree. When we learned something about a wondering, we moved it to the bottom of the tree and sang the Wonder Tree song.

We also learned about brainstorming, worked in groups to design robots out of newspaper, learned about bats and hermit crabs, and collectively designed a class wonder center (for Wonder Time activities see appendix F).

PACK Parent Workshops

I designed and delivered one introductory workshop on creative parenting focused on exploring and expanding the participants’ personal concept of creativity, the importance of creativity, how parents model creative behaviors and attitudes for their children, identifying personal blocks to creativity, and exploring four important ways parents can nurture creativity within themselves and their children.

I designed and delivered a workshop on Vision Statements. This workshop was not limited to parents; it was open to all people who were interested in creating a personal vision
statement. This workshop explored the concept of vision, the importance of creating a vision, and allowed participants to create a vision statement using a variety of materials and creative thinking tools.

I also designed four other creative parenting workshops that deal with creative climate, creative thinking skills, nurturing wonder, and Creative Problem-Solving within the family. These workshops, although they were not implemented, are part my portfolio of PACK programs that I will bring to the community in the near future. The purpose of these workshops is to provide parents with information, experiential learning opportunities, and practical suggestions for fostering creativity within themselves and their children. I included outlines for all of these workshops in my project portfolio (for examples see appendix G).

PACK Family Activities

I designed a family creativity celebration centered on exploring and celebrating creativity. The celebration consists of a variety of engaging creative activities for families with children ages 18 months to 10 years. Through this event, parents will be able to engage in creative exploration with their child, and practice some of the principles of creative parenting. Children will be able to practice a variety of creative thinking skills. I designed a hand out for parents that introduces each activity, describes the creative thinking skills involved in the activity, and provides suggestions for ways parents can nurture those thinking skills at home. I had planned to implement this celebration prior to the completion of this project, but a scheduling miscommunication prevented the implementation. I will be hosting the celebration in December, 2009.

PACK Portfolio
The PACK portfolio is an organized collection of information about PACK, and the services that are offered through PACK. The portfolio contains five sections.

- **PACK Information:** This section provides an overview of PACK. It includes the vision and mission statements of PACK, the foundational principles of PACK, and a brochure about PACK.

- **Parent Education:** This section highlights the educational services offered for parents through PACK. It includes creative parenting workshop outlines, a number of informational hand outs for parents, further resources about creativity for parents, and quotes from evaluation forms completed by workshop participants.

- **Wonder Time Program:** This section contains elements of the creativity curriculum I designed for the kindergarten class. It includes outlines of lessons and activities, information about The Wonder Woman, photographs, quotes from teachers, parents and children that highlight the benefits of the program, and further resources for parents and educators.

- **Family Activities:** This section contains information about PACK family events and activities. It includes the outline for the Family Creativity Celebration, the event flyer, the program for the event, and descriptions of potential family activities and events.

- **Personal Information:** This section provides information about me. It includes my bio-sketch and curriculum vitae, letters of recommendation, thank you notes, papers and blogs I have written, and my personal mission and vision statements.

**Plan of Action for Bringing PACK into the Community.**

I used the Creative Problem Solving (CPS) process, to develop this plan of action. This plan of action consists of a time table for many action steps that I will take after the completion of this project (see appendix H). Some of these action steps are: facilitate a series of creative
parenting workshops through continuing adult education programs in Western New York, create a business plan for PACK, search for people who may want to collaborate with me, identify organizations that could benefit from PACK services, develop *The Wonder Woman* into a school based program, write articles and books on creative parenting, find community centers throughout Western New York to host PACK activities, design a PACK website, and design social support events for families in PACK such as salons, discussion groups, and online group forums. The plan of action also includes steps for the business aspect of PACK such as: opening a business checking account, designing a system to organize PACK financial records, designing the branding aspects of PACK, designing advertisements and business cards, and sending media announcements of the business start-up.

**Section Five**

**Key Learnings**

This journey has been filled with holistic learning. Every aspect of this project presented meaningful opportunities for cognitive, affective, intuitive, and spiritual growth and learning. My cognitive learnings include content and process aspects of the project. My affective learnings deal with developing a deeper awareness of how my emotions impact my creative process, and sustaining motivation. My intuitive learnings deal with forming a deeper awareness of how intuition guides my creative process, my parenting, and my mental health. My spiritual learnings were based on an amazing synthesis that I experienced over the course of the project. The following sections dig deeper into these learnings.

**Cognitive Learning:**
My key cognitive learnings deal with designing and delivering creativity education, teaching and leading groups, the process of formative evaluation, nurturing creativity, and applying Creative Problem Solving principles and tools to parenting.

Designing and Delivering Creativity Education

This was my first opportunity to design lesson plans and activities for children and workshops for adults. I used the Torrance Incubation Model (TIM) as the framework for each lesson, activity, and workshop. I also used the principles of the TIM in designing my project presentation and portfolio.

This model has incredible power for creating the space for genuine, engaging and meaningful creative learning. The three basic stages of the TIM: Heighten Anticipation, Deepening Expectations, and Keeping It Going, create a simple, yet rich framework for designing learning opportunities, and creating the space for discovery. Each stage included a number of cognitive strategies for the educator to use.

The TIM framework is useful for designing creativity education content and for content within other disciplines. Murdock and Keller-Mathers (2002) maintained, “These dynamics between content and process form the unique metacognitive framework that makes the model so effective in integrating creativity into other content areas” (p. 3). The TIM stimulated my metacognition in discovering how I wanted to facilitate learning.

Throughout this project, I learned about Torrance’s Leap Skills (Torrance & Shafter, 1999). Leap Skills are skills that influence creative behavior and learning. They are skills, that when developed, nurture the creative person and process, and deepen learning. I used Leap
Skills in conjunction with the TIM in designing all of the lessons, workshops and activities for PACK.

Teaching and Leadership

In the process of designing and delivering creativity education, I discovered my personal philosophy of teaching. I view teaching, whether for children or adults, as a facilitative process. I also view parenting as a facilitative process. As an educator, I feel that my role is to humbly provide new perspectives, and ways of thinking, to share what I have learned, to create opportunities for growth and learning, and to continually remain a student. I am not a teacher, I am a facilitative educator.

I learned a great deal about creative leadership throughout this project through both research and application. I led a variety of groups: classroom groups, workshop groups, project teams, teaching teams, and my family. I explored my personal leadership style, developed my strengths and worked on improving my weaknesses. I learned more about how to effectively collaborate, blend creative styles, stretch my own style preferences, and practice Kouzes and Posners’s Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership: Modeling the Way, Challenging the Process, Inspiring a Shared Vision, Enabling Others to Act, and Encouraging the Heart (Puccio et al., 2007, p. 9). These learnings have influenced how I view creative parenting, as well as how I view myself as a creative leader.

One of the key insights I had about my own leadership style is that I approach leadership the same way I approach teaching. I believe that leadership is a facilitative process. My role as a facilitative leader is to guide the group process towards a common vision, establish a climate that nurtures creativity, and humbly serve the group. This is also how I view my role as a
creative parent. I discovered four key aspects of my creative leadership: fostering intrinsic motivation, creating a shared vision, using creative approaches to address challenges, and managing group dynamics such as style preferences, skills, and energy. These aspects were present in all of my leadership experiences. I am much more comfortable in various leadership roles as a result of these project experiences.

Formative Evaluation

Over the course of this project, I learned about the incredible power of formative evaluation. Formative evaluation is the process of evaluating and refining products or programs over time with the intent to improve. I worked to improve all of the products of this project through feedback from others using evaluation forms, conversations, and self-evaluations. I designed detailed holistic evaluation forms for my workshops (see appendix I), and elicited feedback through conversations with professors, colleagues, educators, parents, artists, and others. I used this feedback to refine the elements of this project.

Nurturing Creativity

I learned a great deal of practical knowledge about nurturing creativity in children. I gratefully had the freedom to experiment and explore within the Kindergarten classroom, as well as in my own home with Sammy. I experienced firsthand the power of wondering for learning and creative thinking, and the importance of intrinsic motivation for creativity. These direct experiences validated the research on nurturing creativity for me.

Wonder

I have seen how powerful developing wondering skills can be for a child. The Wonder Time program has allowed students to develop these skills through a variety of interesting
lessons and activities. These students have become Wonder Kids- exploring, creating, and learning about the world - with super-powered wonder. They are intrinsically motivated to wonder, and they have wondered some incredible things.

These students are not just wondering in the classroom. They have taken what they have learned about wondering and brought it home. Many parents have shared how Wonder Time has affected their children at home. Amaya and Anthony wonder all the time. Jacob and Steve are creating Wonder Centers in their homes. Steve is also making his own Wonder Tree. Elizabeth has a wonder notebook that she writes in every night. Molly wonders and asks her mother to help her search for information on the internet and at the library.

Developing wondering skills has had an impact on the students within the classroom environment as well. Mrs. Dawson credits Wonder Time and the skills her class has developed through these lessons and activities for an increase in the quantity and quality of ideas, less interpersonal conflict, and more intrinsically motivated learning behavior (see appendix J).

Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is the driving force behind self-directed learning and creativity. I noticed that the children who were intrinsically motivated either by the content or process of lessons were deeply engaged and produced highly creative ideas and products. I worked to foster intrinsic motivation by listening to the children talk about their interests and incorporating those interests into lessons, providing different processes that work in conjunction with their learning styles, and providing the freedom for self-direction within activities.
As a creative parent, I work to foster Sammy’s intrinsic motivation by being aware of what catches his attention, what excites him, and what arouses his curiosity. I then work to create more opportunities for him to explore those things. Often this is just a fun journey of discovery. Here is an example of one of these journeys:

Sammy and I were in the grocery store a week before Halloween, and he saw a big black bat hanging from the ceiling. He made his “oh?” sound that he makes when he is curious about something. I had just done the lesson about bats for the kindergarten class, so I knew a cool song about bats. Sammy loves music, so I sang him the song. Sammy has this beautiful request he makes whenever I sing a new song to him, “Do again”. So I did again, and again, and again. When we went home I pulled out some of the animal books we have, and we looked at all of the pictures of bats and talked about what bats eat, how they sleep, and what it means to be nocturnal. Then we searched for more pictures of bats on the computer. Later we pretended we were bats sleeping upside down in a cave, and I made small paper bats for him to play with. Sammy was intrinsically motivated to learn about bats, and I tried to foster this intrinsic motivation by facilitating a journey of discovery.

Creative Problem-Solving

Throughout this project, I strengthened my creative thinking and Creative Problem Solving (CPS) skills, as I worked on developing the concept and practice of creative parenting. This combination led to insights about ways principles of CPS can be applied to creative parenting. Being able to apply the principles of creative parenting in my own life has given me personal confirmation that these connections are beneficial for parents.
For example, parenting requires frequent decision making in both everyday and monumental ways. As I explored ways parents can use CPS principles and tools in parenting, I made an interesting connection between making decisions as a parent and using criteria. As a parent, having criteria to base decisions on is helpful. Imagine that your child is knocking all of the books off his shelf with joyful abandon. You can stop him, or you can allow him to continue. Having criteria that speaks to your ultimate vision can help you make this decision. Some examples of criteria could be: Does it keep him safe? Will he learn something? Will it help him grow?

Then you apply this criteria to your thinking: Yes, he is experiencing the effects of gravity, working on muscle coordination, he will learn about consequence of his action (need to pick up books), or No, he is treating books in a disrespectful way, he is learning that it is ok to make a wild mess, he is disrespecting other people’s things.

Based on your interpretation of the situation and the criteria that is important to you as a parent, you can make a quick and mindful decision. As a mother, the criteria I developed includes: Will it help Sammy grow? Will it prevent/remove perceptual blocks for Sammy? Does it nurture Sammy’s creativity? Will it help Sammy self-actualize? Using this criteria has helped me make decisions that are mindful, based on how I want to guide Sammy, and congruent with my beliefs about parenting.

I also developed important criteria for me to use in evaluating options and making decisions for my project, and my life. The criteria I used for making these types of decisions include: Does it bring me joy? Will it help me grow? Will it work in conjunction with my focus on Sammy? Does it speak to my higher self? Will it help me on my journey of self-actualization?
These criteria have helped me make mindful decisions about what I want to bring into my life, where I want to focus my energy, and what is truly important. In addition to the work of this project, I have also been taking two other intensive Creative Studies courses, and being a full time mom. It had been very important for me to find and maintain a balance between my school work and my parenting. The criteria I use to make decisions, has helped me in this area of my life.

Another way CPS can be applied to parenting deals with applying CPS techniques and tools to nurture creativity. Parents can use invitational language, talk about challenges in a way that invites action, use a proactive approach to addressing challenges, and practice the divergent and convergent thinking guidelines with their children. This has helped me become a more mindful and effective creative parent. It has made adopting a creative approach to parenting natural, and allowed me to model creative behaviors and attitudes for Sammy. It is natural for me to use invitational language in my daily conversations with Sammy. I ask Sammy: What are all the ways...? How could you...? What are all the ways we could...? What else...? How else...? What do you notice? Will it...?, etc. I believe that these questions have helped Sammy become more aware of his environment and begin to understand that there are many different ways to explore and perceive the world. Sammy has embraced this to the point that he frequently asks me these questions.

Affective Learning

My key affective learnings deal with becoming more aware of how my emotions impact my creative process, strategies for maintaining momentum and focus, and the importance of taking risks.
I learned how my emotions impact my creative process, motivation, energy, and confidence in my work. As with all things, there was a cycle within this project. This cycle was a dynamic movement from positive, expansive, passionate energy, drive, and confidence, to a strained, forced, cloudy, and often limiting energy, and back again. I learned that this cycle is influenced by my perception. Stress happens. My perception of stress dictates where I am within this cycle. For most of this project, I was able to perceive the circumstances of my life, like responsibilities of school, family, and this project, as wonderful challenges. This allowed me to be mindful, proactive and focused, create balance, and sustain energy. When I became overwhelmed, I was reactive, scattered, unbalanced, and experienced emotional hijacking.

I found that cognitively trying to snap-out-of-it did not work. I realized that I needed a different strategy; I needed to allow myself to experience what I was feeling, refresh, regroup, and refocus on the joy of the experience. To refresh I would play with Sammy, meditate, incubate, and create outside of my responsibilities. To regroup I would revisit my learning goals (see concept paper in appendix M), and diverge on elements of the project as an enjoyable way to reenter the content. I also used affirmations throughout the project as a way to sustain focus and motivation, let go of expectations and fears, and trust. I wrote many different affirmations and placed them throughout my house. These affirmations include: I have infinite time and energy, My life is filled with abundance, I learn and grow from every experience, and I love this joyful journey. I included affirmations in my Plan of Action for bringing PACK into the community. I frequently used affirmations in conversations with people to affirm the joy and learning I was experiencing throughout the project. I also wrote a personal vision statement that is filled with powerful affirmations (see appendix K).
Deliberately taking time for incubation was necessary and powerful. I received deep insights about this project and other areas of my life when I allowed myself to step away from my work. I was able to gain a more positive perspective and renew my intrinsic motivation. This was a vital learning about my creative process; a learning that I will carry with me throughout my life.

I also learned about the great power of taking risks. This project gave me so many opportunities to develop my courage. I am proud to say that I took full advantage of these opportunities, which often meant taking risks, making mistakes, and stretching beyond my comfort zone. I jumped into many new and ambiguous situations with both feet. I had never led a workshop, designed lessons, led project teams, or started a business. I tried new things, made great mistakes, and challenged the process. The risks I took lead to great growth, learning, and increased my confidence. I now find it thrilling to take risks, and I seek ways to stretch myself.

Intuitive Learning

My key learnings regarding intuition deal with recognizing how intuition guides my creative process, my parenting and my mental health, and the importance of creating the space for intuitive insights.

The voice of my intuition is strong, and often gives me clues through my emotions. I will often have an emotional reaction to something, become aware of that emotion, search for the root, and receive intuitive insight through that searching.

I also learned how important it is for me to listen to my intuition, and to create the space for intuitive insights. I found that when I created these spaces, profound and exciting ideas and insights flowed quickly to me. It was as if my intuition was waiting for me to get quiet
enough to listen, and poured out connections. I realized that it was necessary for me to deliberately create the space in my life where I could become centered, and open to intuitive insight. I created these spaces through meditation, incubation, stream of conscious writing, practicing mindfulness, and a variety of intuitive processing CPS tools.

It was the balance between my intense work and allowing for intuitive insights that led me to expansive ideas regarding PACK, my parenting, my vision for my life, and my philosophy of creativity.

**Spiritual Learning**

My spiritual learnings were based on a profound synthesis that I experienced over the course of the project, and led to the realization of my life mission.

As I lived this project, I experienced a synthesis of the cognitive, emotional, intuitive, and spiritual parts of myself. It was as if my studies in creativity sank down deep into my bones, my essence, reaching the core of me, and exploded into synthesis. This was the most important learning and growth experience of not only this project, but also my growth in creativity. It solidified for me that this is the dynamic and soulful path I want to travel.

In my journey as a Creative studies student, I have gone from, thinking this was a wicked cool area of study, to feeling like I found my intellectual home, to experiencing a profound holistic synthesis. I moved from viewing creativity as an academic discipline, to a philosophy of life, to the concrete aspect of my spiritual understanding, to an interesting answer to the big question: Why are we here? I believe this synthesis was a result of me working passionately on a meaningful endeavor, with values I cherish, in service to others. This is how I interpret self-actualization.
This synthesis led me to discovering my life’s purpose: to live my life in service to the self-actualization of others, and through that, my own journey of self-actualization. PACK is one of many ways I hope to do this. I believe that self-actualization is creativity in its highest form. I believe that creative thinking and problem solving is the scaffolding to self-actualization. I believe that if people can learn how to approach life creatively, they can experience the wondrous journey of self-actualization. I believe that if more people are able to experience self-actualization, our world will grow in unimaginable ways.

**Conclusion**

I had this wonderful moment on my way to facilitating my first workshop. I had stopped to buy granola for the workshop at this great bakery shop in my neighborhood. I was given a warm piece of sourdough bread, with just the right amount of sour taste. As I walked back to my car, I became very mindful of the moment: the breeze whispering across my cheeks, the sun dancing on the leaves, the feeling of my feet improvising a rhythm on the pavement. It took my breath away. I had an Ah-ha! I realized, I am living my dream. This day is my dream. This is what I want to be doing in my life, sharing my understanding of creativity. I had been so positively focused on this vision that its actualization snuck up on me. From that moment forward I was in bliss: challenging, exciting, creative bliss.

This project has been a journey of self-actualization. I have traveled this wondrous path with joy and passion. I now know more about how parents can nurture creativity within the family, and how I can help families work towards this aspiration through PACK. I am more confident in my abilities to design and lead programs, collaborate with others to actualize a
vision, and passionately live my life mission of service to the creative self-actualization of others.

My work will not stop with the completion of this project. It will continue far into my future, branching off into exciting and unforeseen directions. I look forward to all of the beautiful ways PACK will grow.

I hope that over the next year, I will find people who would like to collaborate with me to further develop PACK into a strong local community organization. I love the process of collaborating; it combines different talents, strengths, preferences, and perspectives to enable creative action.

My vision for PACK is to start locally, providing parental education and support, and activities for children and families to nurture creativity. I would like to design a training program for others who wish to become PACK facilitative educators and bring the program into their own communities. I envision this growth modeled after programs like Kindermusik, and Boy/Girl Scouts, where locally run PACK programs are implemented across the United States. One day PACK will be described as the following:

PACK is a national cooperative of local community organizations that seek to nurture creativity within families. PACK seeds are springing up across the country in the form of locally run community groups. Founded in 2009 by Michaelene Dawson, PACK membership has grown from 18 members in Buffalo, New York, to 32,000+ members throughout the United States. This national community works to:

- Help parents and kids embrace their own creativity.
- Educate parents and kids about the nature and nurture of creativity.
➢ Help families understand the value of creativity.

➢ Give parents and kids opportunities to develop and strengthen creative thinking skills.

➢ Educate families about creative approaches to problem solving.

➢ Support families in adopting a creative lifestyle.

My ultimate goal is to provide families across the country support and opportunities to nurture creativity in their homes. The bedrock mission of PACK, and my life mission, is to serve in the process of self-actualization. Nurturing creativity is the service. If we can holistically nurture creativity from birth...we can transform the world. This project began with my Sunshine Boy, the light of my life. It is my hope that it will develop into a light for families, communities, and society.

References


Section Seven

Appendices:

A: PACK Vision and Mission Statements
B: Project Mindmap
C: Wonder Time Lesson Examples
D: The Wonder Woman
E: The Wonder Tree
F: Photographs of Wonder Time Activities
G: Creative Parenting Workshop Outlines
H: Plan of Action for Bringing PACK into the Community
I: Evaluation Form
J: Wonder Time Evaluation from Mary Ann
K: Personal Mission Statement
L: Concept Paper
Appendix A: PACK Vision and Mission Statements

**PACK Vision Statement:**

We are a community of families working to nurture creativity in our homes. We value creativity and recognize the importance of creativity in all aspects of life. We value our families and understand the impact families have on creativity. We value community and support each other in making creativity part of daily life.

We are PACK.

**Pack Mission Statement:**

To nurture creativity in families through holistic education, exploration and community support.

**Foundational Principles of PACK:**

All people are creative.
Creativity is essential.
Creativity can be nurtured.
Creativity enriches the quality of life.
Creativity supports growth.
Appendix B: Project Mindmap

- Wonder Time
- PACK
- Parent Education
- Business aspects of PACK
- Project
- Family Activities
- Foundations of PACK
- Vision Statement
- Events
- Family Creativity Celebration
- Excursions
- Museum, Art gallery, farm, garden, etc.
- Creative experiences as a family
- Ask for help
- SBA
- Handouts/pamphlets
- Blogs
- Workshops
- TIM
- Leap Skills
- The Wonder Woman
- Kindergarten class lessons
- PACK principles
- Vision Statement
### Introduction to Wondering

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Overview and Purpose of Lesson:</strong> Students will explore the nature of wondering through open-ended questions and exploration of interesting objects.</th>
<th><strong>Creativity Skill(s) Used in Lesson:</strong></th>
<th><strong>How this Lesson Nurseries Creativity:</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objectives of the Lesson:</strong> To meet the Wonder Woman To view wondering as a fun super power. To understand how exploring something can help you wonder about it. To look at a variety of objects in a different ways To nurture the skill of curiosity.</td>
<td><strong>Look at It Another Way</strong></td>
<td>-Wonder is foundational to creativity, intrinsic motivation, self-awareness and lifelong learning. -This lesson plants the seeds for these vital aspects of personal growth, learning, and creative thinking.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Procedure:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Deepening Expectations</strong></td>
<td><strong>Extending the Learning</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heighten Anticipation</strong></td>
<td>-What are some other things you could wonder about at school and/or at home?</td>
<td>-When you go home, find something to wonder about &amp; tell someone in your family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Wonder Woman (WW) writes a letter to the class.</td>
<td>-What are some other things you could wonder about at school and/or at home?</td>
<td>-Tomorrow during circle time share what you wondered with the class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-W W comes in to class wearing red cape &amp; boots.</td>
<td>-Ask students: “What are some things you wonder about?”</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-WW talks about wondering as a super power.</td>
<td>-Bring out the Bags of Wonders</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Introduce Wrinkles the Wonder Dog &amp; ask students what they wonder about him.</td>
<td>-Divide into three groups, each group gets a bag</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-Explore &amp; wonder about the contents of the bags</td>
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<td>-Rotate wonder bags</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-Debrief activity as a whole class</td>
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# Wonder Tree Lesson

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview and Purpose of Lesson:</th>
<th>Creativity Skill(s) Used in Lesson</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| To introduce the Wonder Tree, make leaves for future wonderings, and introduce the concept that wondering helps things grow. | - Make It Swing, Make It Ring  
- Get Glimpses of the Future (future of the Wonder Tree) |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives of the Lesson:</th>
<th>How this Lesson Nursetes Creativity:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - To understand the purpose and practice of the Wonder Tree  
- To learn the Wonder Tree song  
- To see the Wonder Tree being a place for everyone to share what they wonder about throughout the school year.  
- To begin to form a non-conscious awareness around the process and power of wondering and its impact on learning, growth and creativity. | - Viewing wondering as a way to help something grow introduces the concept that wondering leads to growth.  
- The Wonder Tree will be used in future lessons about self-directed learning, learning outside the classroom and how students can also be teachers. |

## Procedure:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Heighten Anticipation</th>
<th>Deepening Expectations</th>
<th>Extending the Learning</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Set up the tree trunk and branches prior to the lesson.  
- When students ask about it, the teacher just says: “what do you wonder about it?” | - Ask students if they noticed the Tree in the room. Inform them that it is a Magical Wonder Tree.  
- Ask: What are all of the things that a tree needs to grow?  
- Ask: What are all of the things that a magical Wonder Tree would need to grow? As we wonder, the tree will grow.  
- Pretend that we are all magical Wonder Trees. Start as a tiny seed.  
- Pull first wonder leaf, put on tree, and sing the Wonder Tree song (leaf with some of the wonderings that the students have already done)  
- Repeat process 5-6 times. With each leaf grow a bit more.  
- Ask: Do you think that our magical Wonder Tree has enough leaves?  
- Oh no! we are out of leaves. What can we do?  
- Students use a variety of materials at three centers to create more leaves.  
- Put the new leaves in the basket. | - Talk about how we are responsible for how this Wonder Tree grows.  
- Ask: How big do we want our Wonder Tree to grow?  
- Ask: What can we do to help it grow?  
- Discuss the procedure for adding leaves to the Wonder Tree. | Materials Needed  
- Wonder Tree trunk and branches  
- A variety of paper, and materials to make leaves.  
- A basket for the wonder leaves |

Other Resources:
- The Wonder Tree Song: written by Mary Ann Dawson (sung to Frère Jacques)

Wonder Tree,  
Wonder Tree,  
How do you grow?  
How do you grow?  
Every time we wonder, Every time we wonder,  
You grow, grow, grow.  
You grow, grow, grow.
Appendix D: The Wonder Woman

The Wonder Woman Costume

The Wonder Woman and Wrinkles the Wonder Dog
The Wonder Tree

I wonder what my body looks like on the inside. I wonder how the sun and moon stay up in the sky. I wonder why I can’t see butterflies eyes. I wonder how they make paper. I wonder how transformers transform. I wonder how they build buildings. I wonder what hermit crabs eat. I wonder what thunder is. I wonder how spiders make webs. I wonder how spiders wrap bugs. I wonder how they make commercials get on TV. I wonder how people make markers. I wonder why cars need gas. I wonder before people came how rocket ships my teddy bear is wonder how wonder why we wonder why we wonder why we wonder why we wonder why cats can counters and not wonder what my look like. I have bad wonder what wonder if bats wonder if seals wonder how wonder how wonder how sneakers. I wonder if bats have eyes. I wonder if seals have teeth. I Native Americans got here. I wonder what kind of animal a bat is. I wonder what makes day and night. I wonder if spiders have fur. I wonder why bats hang upside down. I wonder how people make tires. I wonder what makes rain. I wonder who made the school. I wonder where the Wonder Woman gets her stuff. I wonder how fireflies glow. I wonder where the geese fly. I wonder if spiders share a web. I wonder how lizards blend in. I wonder why some animals are nocturnal. I wonder what we will learn today. I wonder how birds make nests. I wonder why people

I wonder how they transform. I wonder how they build buildings. I wonder what hermit crabs eat. I wonder what thunder is. I wonder how spiders make webs. I wonder how spiders wrap bugs. I wonder how they make commercials get on TV. I wonder how people make markers. I wonder why cars need gas. I wonder before people came how rocket ships my teddy bear is wonder how wonder why we wonder why we wonder why we wonder why we wonder why cats can counters and not wonder what my look like. I have bad wonder what wonder if bats wonder if seals wonder how wonder how sneakers. I wonder if bats have eyes. I wonder if seals have teeth. I Native Americans got here. I wonder what kind of animal a bat is. I wonder what makes day and night. I wonder if spiders have fur. I wonder why bats hang upside down. I wonder how people make tires. I wonder what makes rain. I wonder who made the school. I wonder where the Wonder Woman gets her stuff. I wonder how fireflies glow. I wonder where the geese fly. I wonder if spiders share a web. I wonder how lizards blend in. I wonder why some animals are nocturnal. I wonder what we will learn today. I wonder how birds make nests. I wonder why people
I wonder why we can’t see the stars in daytime. I wonder if sharks eat people. I wonder what makes shadows. I wonder how people make playgrounds. I wonder why bugs stick to spider webs.

(Mrs. Dawson’s Kindergarten Class, fall 2009)

The Wonder Tree Song

Written by Mary Ann Dawson
(sung to Frère Jacques)

Wonder Tree, Wonder Tree,
How do you grow? How do you grow?
Every time you wonder, Every time you wonder,
I grow, grow, grow,
I grow, grow, grow.

Wonder Tree, Wonder Tree
Every time you grow, Every time you grow,
I learn and new thing,
I learn a new thing,
Wonder, Grow, Know.
Wonder, Grow, Know.
Appendix F: Wonder Time Activities

The Newspaper Robot Challenge
Wonder Time: Learning about Bats

These bats are using echolocation to find food.

Welcome to the Bat Cave

Imagining a nocturnal bat adventure

Bat sculptures

Artist’s capturing their imagined nocturnal adventures

An artist’s representation of his nocturnal adventure
A Brainstorm of Ideas

Observing Crabby, the Hermit Crab.

Wondering about interesting objects

Gathering data about hermit crabs

All photographs are used with parental permission
Appendix G: Creative Parenting Workshop Outlines

Introduction to Creative Parenting Workshop Outline

This workshop is intended for parents who are interested in adopting a creative approach to parenting and nurturing the creative development of their children. The purpose of this workshop is to expand awareness of the nature of creativity, examine the importance of creativity, and explore ways to nurture creativity.

Heighten Anticipation

Establishing Climate:

- Participants enter a relaxed space containing refreshments, toys, and instrumental music. A power point slide show of various quotes about creativity is playing on a large screen. These quotes are intended to serve as an initial exposure to different concepts of creativity that go beyond common assumptions.

Introduction:

- Thank you and welcome: (overview of workshop, Information about presenter, refreshments, name tags, etc.)
- Introductions: Who are you? Names and ages of your children. What is something you love about being a parent?
- Review Agenda
- Expectations: What are some of the things you hope to get out of this workshop? (capture on flip chart)
- Warm up: What are our wishes for our children? (capture on flip chart).

Deepening Expectations:

- What is creativity?
  - **Word Association:** When you look at the word creativity, what comes to mind?
  - **Assumptions:** something taken for granted; a supposition: a correct assumption. Our life experiences create our assumptions...
  - **Common assumptions about creativity.**
    - Examine some common assumptions about creativity.
    - What are the assumptions that resonate with you?
    - How do these assumptions impact your view of creativity?
  - **4 P’s of Creativity:** Person, Process, Press, Product.

- Why is creativity important?
  - Group discussion
  - Share video
  - Return to our wishes for our children and draw connections to creativity.

- What is Creative Parenting?
  - **Definition of Creative Parenting**
    - Discussion
  - **Foundational Assumptions of Creative Parenting**
    - All people are creative
    - Children are natural wellsprings of creativity.
    - Creativity is an essential life skill for all people.
    - Creativity and creative thinking skills can be intentionally developed, strengthened, and nurtured.
- The family is first place that creativity is nurtured in children

- **Creative parents are creative people**
  - The importance of modeling creativity for our children
  - Modeling creativity: How do our assumptions, attitudes, and behaviors influence the creativity of our homes and our children?

- **Blocks and Barriers to our own creativity.**
  - Common blocks to creativity
  - What are some blocks to your own creativity?

- **Pop-a-Block Activity**
- **Debrief Pop-a-Block**

- **4 Great Ways to Nurture Creativity.**

- **Wondering**
  - Define
  - Examples
  - Benefits
  - Ways to model and foster Wonder

- **Intrinsic Motivation:**
  - Definition
  - Examples
  - Benefits
  - Ways to model and foster Intrinsic Motivation

- **Freedom:**
  - Definition
  - Examples
  - Benefits
  - Ways to model and foster Freedom

- **Risk taking**
  - Definition
  - Examples
  - Benefits
  - Ways to model and foster Risk Taking

- **Group Activity:** Divide into four groups. Each group works with one of the ways to nurture creativity.
  - As a group, discuss how you could bring this aspect of creativity into your home? How could you apply it to your parenting?
  - Present ideas to the whole group.

- **Debrief Group Activity**

- **Extending the Learning:**

- **Debrief Workshop Experience:**
  - What do you think about this information?
  - What did you learn or relearn?
  - How could you apply this information to other areas of your life?
  - What is one creative thing you could do within the next 24hrs?
  - What do you wonder?
The Creative Home Workshop Outline

**Description of Workshop:** This workshop is intended for parents who are interested in adopting a creative approach to parenting and nurturing the creative development of their children. This workshop will explore the topic of creative climate: the characteristics and impact of climate on creativity. It will introduce participants to Ekvall’s 10 dimensions of creative climate, and explore ways to incorporate these elements in the home.

**Heighten Anticipation**

**Establishing Climate:**
- Participants enter a relaxed space containing refreshments, toys, and instrumental music. The following question is written on flip chart paper: In what type of environment are you the most creative? Toys, interesting objects, pictures, and books are laid out with a sign that says “free to explore.”

**Introduction:**
- Thank you and welcome: (overview of workshop, Who am I?, refreshments, name tags, etc.)
- Introductions: Who are you? Names and ages of your children. Where are you the most creative? Where do you get your best ideas?
- Review Agenda
- Expectations: What are some of the things you hope to get out of this workshop? (capture on flip chart)
- Warm up: What are some of your favorite things about the way your child looks at the world? Each participant will be given a pair of glasses to decorate that represents how their child looks at the world. The glasses will be used throughout the presentation.

**Deepening Expectations:**
- **Four P’s of Creativity:** Focus on Press
  - Discuss the attributes of the places where we are the most creative. (capture on flip chart)
- **Ekvall’s 10 dimensions of Creative Climate:** Trust and Openness, Idea Time, Idea Support, Dynamism and Liveliness, Debate, Freedom, Challenge, Low conflict, Playfulness and Humor, Risk Taking
  - Present Ekvall’s dimensions of creative climate.
  - With each explanation, ask “In what ways could high levels of... nurture creativity?”
- **Visualization:** Visualization exercise using our “child-colored glasses”. How would your child view and respond to the flowing environments? This visualization compares environments with high and low levels of the following dimensions of climate: Trust, Freedom, Idea Support, Challenge, Playfulness and Humor, and Idea Time. The visualization allows parents to view these environments from their child’s perspective.
- Debrief Visualization
- **Group Activity:** How could we incorporate climate dimensions into our homes? Break up into groups: choose one climate dimension and present an activity or scenario that incorporates it into your home.
- Debrief Group Activity

**Extending the Learning:**
- **Debrief Workshop Experience:**
  - What do you think about this information?
  - What did you learn or relearn?
  - How could you apply this information to other areas of your life?
  - What is one way you could apply something you learned within the next 24hrs?
  - What do you wonder?
- Invite parents choose one or more climate dimensions to focus on for the next two weeks. Invite parents to use the P.A.C.K. face book page to share experiences, receive and offer support and ideas, and discuss challenges.
Vision Statement Workshop Outline

Participants of this workshop will form a deeper understanding of vision, visionary thinking, and the process of making vision statements. Participants will experience the holistic process of creating vision statements, and leave the workshop with a vivid and inspiring personal vision statement.

Heighten Anticipation

Establishing Climate:
- Participants enter a relaxed space containing refreshments, toys, and instrumental music. A power point slide show of various quotes about vision is playing on a large screen. These quotes are intended to arouse curiosity, and give purpose and motivation.

Introduction:
- **Thank you and welcome:** (overview of workshop, Information about presenter, refreshments, name tags, etc.)
- **Introductions:** Your name. What is something you love about your life?
- **Review Agenda**
- **Wild Card:** The process of creating a vision statement includes both thinking and feeling. There may be times in this workshop that you experience some strong emotions. This is a safe place. You are safe here to think and feel anything you need to. You can pass on participating in any activity that makes you uncomfortable. You do not have to share. This whole process is for you. If at any point you need a break, you can use the wild card.
- **Mindmapping Warm up:**
  - Explain purpose of the warm-up: To give us the opportunity to clear our minds and let go of some of the worries, concerns, and distractions we may have brought with us today. We will put these things in the mind map, so that we can let go of them for the next three hours. You can pick them back up after the workshop, or leave them here.
  - Explain Mindmapping process
  - Create group Mindmap: Take a moment to think about some of the concerns or stresses you brought with you today. When you are ready come up and add it to the mind map. You can add branches off the center or branch off other people’s branches. While we create this mind map, if there is something you do not want to write, because it is personal, create an image or symbol that represents it for you.
  - Roll up Mindmap and put it away

Deepening Expectations:

What is a Vision Statement?
- An expression of a desired future state.
- A representation of your values, goals, and dreams.
- A statement of your life purpose.
- A reminder of what you truly want in your life.

The Benefits of Crafting a Vision Statement
- Allows you to look at what you want in your life.
- Expands your perspective.
- Clarifies what is really important to you.
- Provides focus and commitment.
- Encourages you to think deeply and holistically about your life.

Common blocks to creating a Vision Statement
- Expectations of others and society
- Self-Doubt
- Cynicism
• Being trapped in the paradigm. (This is just how it is.)
• Inexperience in dreaming

Allow yourself, for this time, to remove these perceptual blocks and embrace this experience.

➢ Divergent Thinking
  • Defer Judgment
  • Go for Quantity
  • Consider the Wild and Unusual
  • Make Connections

➢ Guiding Questions for Exploring your Vision and Wishful Thinking Activities:
  • The Guided Questions handout contains questions that may help participants begin to form their vision.
  • The I wish handout may help participant begin to form their vision through the use of I wish… statements.
  • Guidelines for activities: Be bold, Be honest, Be holistic, Use Divergent Thinking, use Forced Connections (slide show of images).
  • Allow the group time, space, and freedom to move.

➢ Craft a Paragraph Description of Your Vision: Identify the wishes that are the most important to you. The ones that your really want to manifest in your life (do not concern yourself with thinking about the how)
  • Use the present tense, as if they already exist.
  • I am… I have… I see… I taste… I hear… I smell… I feel… My life is…

➢ Creating your Vision Statement:
  • Explain options: writing, Mindmapping, visual, combination of all three, and show materials: paint, canvas, paper, magazines, crayons, colored pencils, finger paints, etc.
  • Explain options prior to meditation so participants can move directly to creating from the mediation.

➢ Meditation: This meditation brings participants through a relaxation process, an imagined multisensory exploration of their vision, and hopefully inspires them to create a tangible representation of their vision.

➢ Creating Vision Statement: Participants are provided a large variety of materials to create their vision statements.
  • Create a climate of relaxation, inspiration, trust, and playfulness, And allow participants freedom to create.
➢ Share Vision Statements and Insights: Allow participants to voluntarily share the content and process of the experience.

Extending the Learning:

➢ Using Your Vision Statement: Give this information in a handout as well.
  • Display your vision somewhere in your home that you see daily.
  • Create a space in your life to positively focus on your vision.
  • Visualize your vision. Use your imagination and live your vision in evolving detail. Do this regularly.
  • Add to your vision as it expands.
  • Write affirmations based on your vision. Use your affirmations throughout the day.

➢ Debrief Workshop Experience
  • Close Down
  • Return to warm-up Mindmap so participants can reclaim their baggage if desired.
## Appendix H: Plan of Action for Bringing PACK into the Community

### Plan of Action for Bringing Pack into the Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Steps</th>
<th>Affirmations</th>
<th>Target Dates</th>
<th>How</th>
<th>Confirmation of Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Continue developing Wonder Time activities and lessons                      | Wonder Time is growing in wonderful ways.                                    | Over the course of the remaining school year     | - Continue working in K class on a weekly basis  
- Continue working with the TIM Leap skills, and other creative skills                                                                                                                                | - Wonder Time will be a highly developed, fun and enriching program.                                                                  |
| Continue developing PACK parent programs                                      | PACK inspires parents.                                                        | Continuous                                       | - Write more workshops  
- Design social family support activities  
- Design more parent handouts                                                                                                                   | - I will have many workshops, and resources for parents                                                                             |
| Design a system to organize PACK business records and information             | Organizing PACK is easy.                                                     | December 20th, 2009                              | - Research intuitive organizing systems  
- Organize files  
- Develop a simple book keeping system  
- Ask my accountant for advice                                                                                                               | - I will have an easy and intuitive way of organizing all aspects of the business                                                  |
| Perform a SWOT analysis of PACK to assess the current situation and identify gaps/concerns. | I embrace the possibilities and challenges of PACK with creativity, grace, and ease. | December 27th, 2009                              | - Assemble a resource group of people with diverse perspectives  
- Facilitate the tool  
- Identify concerns that emerge  
- Work to overcome these concerns                                                                                                              | - I will have a deeper awareness of internal and external elements of PACK  
- I will have a number of concerns that can be addressed proactively                                                                  |
| Design business cards                                                         | People remember and use the PACK business card.                              | January 1st, 2009                                | - Use Photoshop program to design 3-4 business card designs  
- Get feedback from family, friends, and marketing/branding experts  
- Choose a design and get printed                                                                                                             | - I will have a unique and effective business card                                                                                |
| Look into local continuing education programs                                 | I am aware of opportunities for PACK.                                         | January 1st, 2009                                | - Research local continuing education programs  
- Inquire about teaching through program  
- Allow intuition to guide me                                                                                                                  | - I will determine if continuing education would be a good platform for PACK workshops                                              |
| Generate a list of possible places to advertise PACK                          | Options flow to me easily, & holistically.                                   | January 1st, 2009                                | - Use divergent thinking tools to generate list                                                                                                                                                | - I will have a long list of places where I can advertise PACK                                                                  |
| Get a business bank account                                                   | My life is filled with abundance. Abundance pours into PACK.                 | January 1st, 2009                                | - Find a bank/credit union that offers free business checking accounts  
- Open account                                                                                                                                       | - I will have a PACK checking account                                                                                               |
| Set up Facebook page and discussion group                                     | PACK has an expansive and active                                             | January 1st, 2009                                | - Create PACK Facebook page/group  
- Invite people to join                                                                                                                             | - I will have an effective networking group on Facebook                                                                          |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Get comfortable with networking</td>
<td>As soon as possible</td>
<td>- Create a discussion forum&lt;br&gt;- Read about networking strategies&lt;br&gt;- Join networking groups&lt;br&gt;- Practice discussing PACK&lt;br&gt;- Collaborate whenever possible</td>
<td>- I will feel more confident with business networking&lt;br&gt;- I will have strategies for networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify organizations that could benefit from PACK services</td>
<td>January 20th, 2009</td>
<td>- Generate a list of possible parent, teacher, community, and service organizations that may be interested in PACK programs&lt;br&gt;- Draft an inquiry letter to send to these organizations</td>
<td>- I will have a list of organizations that may be interested in PACK programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Search for community centers to host PACK programs</td>
<td>January 20th, 2009</td>
<td>- Look into local community centers, churches, and schools that provide community space&lt;br&gt;- Create criteria for making decisions about spaces&lt;br&gt;- Evaluate options using criteria</td>
<td>- I will have a number of places that could host PACK programs and events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design PACK tee-shirts</td>
<td>February 1st, 2009</td>
<td>- Find a local tee-shirt printing company&lt;br&gt;- Create a number of design options&lt;br&gt;- Get feedback from family, friends, and marketing experts</td>
<td>- I will have a cool PACK tee-shirt design.&lt;br&gt;- I will print a number of PACK tee-shirts to provide to PACK members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a Business Plan</td>
<td>February 1st, 2009</td>
<td>- Research how to write a business plan&lt;br&gt;- Draft a business plan&lt;br&gt;- Meet with Bill Grieshober for feedback and refinement&lt;br&gt;- Re-write business plan</td>
<td>- I will have an effective business plan for PACK.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start a Hamburg PACK group</td>
<td>March 1st, 2009</td>
<td>- Find a space to host programs and events&lt;br&gt;- Create Advertisement&lt;br&gt;- Contact local parenting groups&lt;br&gt;- Put PACK advertisement in local newspapers, parenting magazines, schools, libraries, etc.&lt;br&gt;- Create a press release for the Hamburg Sun</td>
<td>- I will have a strong local PACK community of families to participate in workshops, Wonder Time, and family events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search for collaborators</td>
<td>March 1st, 2009</td>
<td>- Network for collaborators&lt;br&gt;- Actively search for people who may be interested in developing PACK&lt;br&gt;- Allow intuition to guide me</td>
<td>- I will have a network of awesome PACK collaborators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create PACK website</td>
<td>March 15th, 2009</td>
<td>- Find a knowledgeable friend&lt;br&gt;- Establish domain</td>
<td>- I will have a great website for PACK.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Content Description</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan the first annual PACK summer picnic</td>
<td>Annual SUMMER PACK picnics are highly successful.</td>
<td>March 15th, 2009</td>
<td>- Decide on date, and place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop The Wonder Woman into a program</td>
<td>The Wonder Woman inspires people to wonder, learn, and grow.</td>
<td>May 1st, 2009</td>
<td>- Perform a SWOT analysis of WW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write a series of articles about creative parenting</td>
<td>I easily write wonderful, and accessible articles about creative parenting</td>
<td>Continuous</td>
<td>- Generate a list of topics to write about</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Additional Visionary Actions:**
- Publish a Wonder Time Workbook
- Publish a book about Creative Parenting
- Write the Wonder Time creativity curriculum with Mary Ann Dawson and others
- Develop and implement a training program for PACK educators
- Establish PACK headquarters in Western NY
Appendix I: Creative Parenting Workshop Evaluation Form

Creative Parenting Workshop Evaluation

- Your honest feedback is sincerely appreciated. Your time and effort in providing me with this feedback is instrumental in helping me grow and learn.

Read the following statements and indicate your level of agreement.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The information presented was valuable.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The workshop was fun.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>My view of creativity was enhanced.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The concept of creative parenting is relevant to my life.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I will apply the information presented to my life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>I feel inspired.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>The information presented resonated with me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am a creative parent.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I value creativity.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to nurture creativity in my family.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The presenter clearly communicated information.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want to learn more.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would attend another creative parenting workshop.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would recommend this workshop to other parents.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please answer the following question with as much detail as you would like. Your responses will help me modify and refine the workshop.

What information was beneficial?

What did you enjoy about the workshop?

Did you like the group activities? Why/Why not?

What was your favorite part of the workshop?

How could this workshop be improved?

What worked for you?

What did not work for you?

What can you take away from this experience?

What was not clear?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How did you feel when you walked in?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has your view of creativity changed? If so, how?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has your view of parenting changed in any way? If so, how?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has this experience affected the way you view yourself as a creative person? If so, how?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you explain creative parenting?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you describe this experience?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix J: Evaluation of Wonder Time: Mary Ann Dawson

When Michaelene approached me with her concept for her Master’s project, I was interested and somewhat skeptical. I wasn’t sure all the children would learn creative thinking skills, perhaps the brightest, but not all. I have been pleasantly surprised. Everyone in my classroom, all 22 of them, have learned to wonder, to brainstorm and solve problems given them.

Our Wonder Time has become a popular time for the children and the teachers. The ideas of: What do you wonder? What do you notice? What do you think?- have opened up the thinking, the discussions and curriculum in our classroom.

We have a Friend of the Week activity where the children ask the special person his/her favorites. Usually I start with one or two, then turn it over to the children to come up with things to ask. After about five ideas the children in past years have needed more suggestions from the teacher. This year the favorites were introduced as i.e., “I wonder, what is your favorite color?” I had to stop the children after 30 favorites because we had to go to music.

Wonderings are quite common now during and after fiction and non-fiction readings. The children are making more connections with the text which shows me that they are listening better and thinking as I am reading. This increases their involvement and learning.

In our classroom we have a Wonder Tree where we put our wonderings at the top of the tree on leaves the children designed. When we learn an answer to our wondering the leaf goes to the bottom of the tree, then we sing our Wonder Tree Song. The children become excited as we learn new things and this excitement leads to more wonderings.

Wondering is becoming a part of many children’s lives. Abby has a Wondering notebook she writes in each night. Later she asks her parents to find the answers to her wonderings. Gianna’s mother said Gianna is always wondering. She asks her Mom to go online to help her find the answers. The other day her Mom told her she thought they should go to the library to find some answers. This introduced Gianna to other ways of finding information. Justin and Jason are making a Wonder Center in their homes. Justin is also making a Wonder Tree of his own. Nora and Donald’s mothers commented about all the wonderings their children are talking about.

Brainstorming was introduced with four guidelines. The first one is Be Kind to All Ideas. The children are not only kind to ideas, but kinder when a child has the wrong answer. Instead of laughing, as might have happened in the past, the children are kinder. Often someone will say, “Be kind to all ideas.” Brainstorming before a writing project has brought out more and better ideas. I have always done free art activities but the brainstorming before leads to better thinking and products. The children are thinking beyond the surface. They are connecting ideas and stretching their thinking.

I was amazed with the class when we did the robot challenge. The challenge was to make a robot out of newspaper. The children were divided into groups of four. The group had to work together to make one robot. They had to brainstorm ideas, decide the ideas they would use, assign jobs, and work towards a common goal. I doubted that they could do this without teacher guidance, but I was wrong. Each group had their own system, but each group was able to meet the challenge and made a unique robot.

My teaching has been impacted by this program in that I see all the children as capable of creative thinking, not only those who are academically strong. I believe that I can facilitate instead of direct all the time. My only question now is, “I wonder what we will do next?”.
Appendix K: Personal Vision Statement

My Personal Vision Statement

I endeavor to live my life in a way that I can say...

I love my life.

I live a creative life.

I love the journey.

My life is filled with vitality and bliss.

I wake up every morning grateful for my wondrous life.

I am a passionate, lifelong learner.

I live in holistic dynamic balance.

I am a deeply nurturing, creative and aware mother.

I give and receive love in abundance.

My life’s path is smooth, and filled with surprising opportunities, experiences, and creative growth.

I walk my path with mindfulness, grace, ease, wonder, and intention.

I am open to infinite possibilities.

I manifest my highest and best life with ease and wonder.

I take risks and embrace mistakes as learning experiences.

I am a humble teacher and student.

I gratefully share my passion, creativity, and experience with people in many ways.

This is just the beginning...
Appendix L: Concept Paper

Parents And Creative Kids (PACK)

Name: Michaelene Dawson
Submitted: 9/25/2009

Project Type: Use a Skill/Talent to Improve the Quality of Life for Others

Section One

Purpose and Description of Project:

The purpose of this project is to establish the foundation for an organization that I am
developing called Parents and Creative Kids (PACK). Although in its infancy, PACK is an
organization for parents and kids that seeks to foster creativity within the family. The mission of
PACK is to nurture creativity in families through holistic education, exploration and support.
PACK will provide educational opportunities, experiences and support for parents and children
in order to nurture creative growth.

The catalyst for this project is my son, Sammy. One of Sammy’s nicknames is Sunshine
Boy. It is a perfect name for this two-year-old- brilliant, beautiful, and charming, joy-to-the-
world. Sammy is the most important focus in my life. He has been since the moment we met. I
remember holding him moments after he was born, overflowing with intense love, gratitude,
and responsibility for this tiny, beautiful person. Within the first few weeks of his life, these
feelings were so overwhelming at times, that all I could do was look at him and weep in
thanksgiving and trepidation. I remember thinking, he is so perfect, I don’t want to ruin him. I
want to guide him through this beautiful, wonderful, challenging adventure. I want to instill in
him a deep love, passion and curiosity for life. I want to arm him with a strong sense of self,
respect for the journeys of others, personal responsibility, and a sense of the interconnected nature of the universe.

This feeling of responsibility was transforming. It caused me to intentionally recognize the elements of my life that are of the most importance, my philosophy of life, my journey towards self actualization, the holistic knowledge and experiences that have helped me on my own life path. It caused me to embrace all that I have learned as a creative studies student to address this lifelong challenging opportunity. It strengthened the holistic understanding of my own beliefs about creativity; that creativity is a way of life, a choice in perception and vehicle for actualization. In essence, this feeling of responsibility for Sammy established my purpose in life, both as his mother and as a human being.

As a student of creative studies, I have learned firsthand the transformational power of creativity. I have learned techniques for addressing challenges in proactive ways. I have learned how creativity can be a way of approaching and living life, a philosophy. All of these learning experiences have shaped me into the person that I am. Creativity has transformed my life in beautiful ways. I realized that the guidance I wanted to offer Sammy throughout his life is deeply rooted in the philosophy of creativity. This realization led me back to the Creative Studies Master’s program. It focused my career vision within the field of creative studies. It led to the vision of PACK.

This project will allow me to develop, implement, evaluate, and refine PACK programs and activities. I have been working on developing PACK for the past few months through extensive personal work and a summer independent study. This project will actualize this work in a variety of ways, and provide opportunities to visualize future directions of the organization.
It will lay the groundwork for establishing PACK as a community organization that seeks to nurture creativity within the family.

It is my intention, that through this project, I will develop various PACK programs that will:

- Help parents and kids embrace their own creativity.
- Educate parents and kids about the nature and nurture of creativity.
- Help families understand the importance of creativity in all aspects of life.
- Give parents and kids opportunities to develop and strengthening creative thinking skills.
- Educate families about creative approaches to problem solving.
- Support families in adopting a creative lifestyle.
- Help parents learn how to foster a creative climate in the home.
- Promote the value of creativity for families.

Throughout this project, I will continue researching creative cognitive development in children, creative climate, intrinsic motivation, creative thinking skills, and creative leadership. I will draw solid and expansive connections from the research to creative parenting and design and deliver programs based on this synthesis.

I will continue to develop and articulate my philosophy and beliefs about creativity. These beliefs include: all people are creative, children are natural wellsprings of creativity, creativity is an essential life skill for all people, creativity and creative thinking skills can be intentionally developed, strengthened, and nurtured, the family is first place that creativity is nurtured in children, and creativity can be a holistic lifestyle choice.
This project began with my Sunshine Boy, the light of my life. It is my hope that it will develop into a light for families, communities, and society.

**Rationale for Selection:**
I believe that creative parenting is an area within the field of creativity that has great opportunities for research, development, and application. I feel that this area of creativity has vast potential for family, individual, and societal impact, growth and transformation. I want to be part of the exploration, research, and expansion of this aspect of creativity and leadership. This project will be a starting point for my personal and professional aspirations.

This area of creativity is also a synthesis of my greatest passions: parenting, creativity, and lifelong learning. I am highly intrinsically motivated to work on this project during this semester and throughout my life. This project is the beginning of my greater career and life visions. It is a foundational step to actualizing my deep and meaningful personal vision for my life: to continue to grow as a creative parent and a self-actualizing human being, and to make a meaningful contribution to society and the field of creative studies.

I believe that creative parenting has the potential to transform the way we nurture our children, interact within our society, learn, produce, effect change, and grow as individuals and a community. I believe that if we, as a society, move toward self-actualization through a creative life style, we can change the world in small and grand ways.

**Section Two**

**Identify Pertinent Literature or Resources:**

References

Creative Education Foundation Press.


Section Three

Plan to Achieve Project Goals and Outcomes:

My desired goals for this project are:

1. To design a number of PACK programs and activities for children that could be implemented within the community. To accomplish this I will be developing,
implementing, evaluating, and refining creativity activities and programs within a Kindergarten classroom on a weekly basis throughout the semester. Within this class, and with the assistance of the teacher, I will offer suggestions for daily routines and strategies that foster creative growth. I will lead weekly activities and lessons that deal with creativity, creative thinking skills and creative problem solving. I will also be contributing to a monthly parent newsletter, providing information and suggestions for nurturing creativity within the home.

2. To have a number of PACK programs for parents that could be implemented within the community. To accomplish this, I will lead three parent workshops throughout the semester focused on the art and application of creative parenting. These workshops will introduce the concept of creativity, creative thinking skills, creative climate and intrinsic motivation. The workshops will provide parents with information, experiential learning opportunities, and practical suggestions for fostering creativity within themselves and in the home.

3. To gain experience designing and implementing a parent and child PACK activity. To achieve this goal, I will design and lead a parent and child retreat, excursion or activity once during this semester. This activity will be centered on creative exploration and engagement. Parents will be able to practice creative parenting within this activity. Children will be able to practice creative thinking skills. Some ideas for this activity include: a trip to the art gallery, science museum, nature preserve, or a creativity party or celebration. The age range for this activity will be determined within the project.
4. To have a detailed plan of action for implementing these PACK programs within the community. To achieve this goal, I will use the Creative Problem Solving (CPS) process, and creative thinking skills and tools to develop this plan of action.

5. To have a detailed plan of action for establishing PACK as a small business. I will work on the logistics of establishing PACK as a small business. I will research the steps needed to start a small business and form a detailed plan of action to accomplish this goal. I will use the CPS process to form this plan of action.

6. To synthesize my research on creativity, parenting, leadership, and child development, and write a number of blogs about creativity within the family. I will write a monthly blog about creative parenting, exploring various aspects of creativity and parental leadership. I will publish these blogs and create a discussion forum to gain feedback.

I will use many creativity and creative problem solving concepts, tools, and skills throughout the project. I will use these elements personally to develop and implement my project, as well as educating parents and children about creativity and creative problem solving.

Some of these concepts and skills include: intrinsic motivation, the 4 P’s of creativity (Rhodes, 1961), Creative Problem-Solving (originally developed by Alex Osborn, 1953), Leap Skills (Torrance & Schaffer, 1999) creative climate dimensions (Ekvall, 1996), the power of wondering and curiosity, idea systems, imagination, blocks and barriers to creativity, personal and family vision and mission statements, creative parental leadership, and creative parenting.

**Project Timeline:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Estimated Time Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Design and deliver 4 Kindergarten class lessons</td>
<td>Design: 10 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>November</td>
<td>December</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>- Find community center to host parent workshops</strong> 2 hours</td>
<td><strong>- Design and deliver 4 Kindergarten class lessons</strong> Design: 10 hours Deliver: 4 hours</td>
<td><strong>- Design and deliver 3 Kindergarten class lessons</strong> Design: 8 hours Delivery: 3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>- Find parents to participate in workshops</strong> 2 hours</td>
<td><strong>- Lead one parent workshop, get feedback, and refine workshop based on feedback</strong> 7 hours</td>
<td><strong>- Lead one parent workshop, get feedback, and refine workshop based on feedback</strong> 7 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>- Generate and select ideas for parent and child retreat, activity, or excursion</strong> 2 hours</td>
<td><strong>- Advertise for parent and child activity, retreat, or excursion for November</strong> 4 hours</td>
<td><strong>- Host a parent and child retreat, excursion, or activity. Get feedback and refine based on feedback.</strong> 14 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>- Develop form a detailed plan of action to implement parent and child retreat, activity, or excursion</strong> 2 hours</td>
<td><strong>- Generate and select ideas about how to present project work</strong> 3 hours</td>
<td><strong>- Work on project presentation</strong> 8 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>- Research the logistic of establishing a small business and identify steps to take throughout the semester.</strong> 5 hours</td>
<td><strong>-- Write at least one blog on creative parenting</strong> 5 hours</td>
<td><strong>- Design PACK logo, business cards, ect.</strong> 8 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>- Generate ideas of a PACK logo</strong> 2 hours</td>
<td><strong>- Evaluate and monitor project progress</strong> 2 hours</td>
<td><strong>- Write at least one blog on creative parenting</strong> 5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>- Write one blog on creative parenting</strong> 5 hours</td>
<td><strong>- Develop ideas for PACK logo</strong> 3 hours</td>
<td><strong>- Evaluate and monitor project progress</strong> 2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>- Evaluate and monitor project progress</strong> 2 hours</td>
<td><strong>- Develop ideas for PACK logo</strong> 3 hours</td>
<td><strong>- Identify next steps for PACK</strong> 4 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work on Paper</strong> 10 hours</td>
<td><strong>Work on paper</strong> 15 hours</td>
<td><strong>Work on paper</strong> 15 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Hours</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Write at least one blog on creative parenting</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate and monitor project progress</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work on paper</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total hours</strong></td>
<td><strong>203</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section Four**

**Tangible Products:**

The tangible products of this project will include the following:

- I will create a portfolio containing the mission and vision statements of PACK, creativity lesson plans and activities for children, creative parenting workshop plans, parent and child activities, creative parenting suggestions and ideas, and creative parenting blogs.
- I will create a detailed plan of action for establishing PACK as a small business. I will write and publish three blogs about creative parenting.
- I will develop and implement at least one parent and child creativity activity, retreat, or excursion.
- I will conduct a CPS session at the end of the semester to address ways to move PACK forward into the community.
- I will create a presentation highlighting the actions I have taken throughout the project.
- I will develop a holistic feedback system to receive insight and constructive feedback on the activities, workshops, and blogs that I create.

**Section Five**

**Personal Learning Goals:**

- To develop my voice as a writer.
To draw connections between creative leadership and creative parenting and apply those connections to PACK and my own parenting.

To develop my understanding and skills in leading workshops, activities, seminars, and groups.

To form a deeper understanding of my own creative process and beliefs about creativity.

To apply the knowledge I have gained through my years as a creative studies student to the creativity of families, parents, and children.

To learn more about nurturing creativity.

To strengthen my creative leadership skills.

To strengthen my clarifying, developing, and implementing skills.

To strengthen my project planning skills.

Criteria To Measure The Effectiveness Of Achievement:

This project will not stop with the completion of this semester. It will continue far into my future, branching off into exciting and unforeseen directions. I will know I have been successful with this stage of the project when:

I feel more comfortable in leading and facilitating groups of children and parents.

I have more confidence in my ability to contribute to society and the field of creativity.

I have a portfolio of activities for children centered on creativity, creative thinking skills, and CPS, workshops for parents on creative parenting, and blogs about creative parenting.
➢ I have a deeper awareness of holistic creative parenting.

➢ I have an awareness of the future directions of PACK.

➢ I have created a plan of action for bringing PACK into the community.

➢ I have formed an initial network of parents interested in creative parenting and PACK.

➢ I have a detailed plan of action for establishing PACK as a small business.

**Evaluation:**

I will develop a holistic evaluation system that will be used throughout my project to receive feedback, monitor my progress, perform periodic self-evaluations, and identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas of concern dealing with all aspects of this project. Within this system, I will design feedback questionnaires and self evaluation forms, perform debriefs of activities and workshops, use evaluative and intuitive thinking tools, engage in personal meditation practices, and initiate exploratory dialogs with parents, children, teachers, friends and colleagues about creativity and creative parenting. I will also enlist the help of my sounding board partners for evaluation throughout the project.

**References**


