

The Wheel, the Alphabet, and the Computer; Creativity at Work

“Let’s pretend that underneath this table is a palace and the pail of shells is our treasure.” We all know that young children are full of creative ideas, from creating imaginary spaces for play to making wonderful “machines” using cereal boxes and tape. Research suggests that young children are creative and open to new ways of looking at things but that this amazing and important talent is often repressed as we age. Too often we learn to think, “I’m not creative because I can’t draw a picture.” or “You have to be a genius to be creative.”

The truth is that the ability to create is an outstanding quality we all have and it lies in the way we think about problems. Problems like; arranging the camping gear in the trunk, getting all the toothpaste out of the tube or inventing a new, non-polluting power source. When we combine creative thinking with what we already know, new ideas are born. And sometimes, these new ideas change the world.

To help keep young children’s (and adult’s) innate creativity alive, try these four things.

Wonderment

Help your children maintain a spirit of discovery and curiosity about the world, and to question understandings that others consider obvious.

Motivation

Help your children follow their sparks of interest, even the little ones.

Intellectual Courage

Help your children think beyond “the way it has always been done.”

Relaxation

Help your child learn to relax. Let your child have time to daydream and ponder. This is when great ideas surface.

Ref: **Unleashing Creativity** U. Kraft in *Scientific American MIND* Spring 2005