



California Council of Parent
Participation Nursery
Schools, Inc.

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Message from the President By Jane Walker

It has been two years since I received that fateful phone call from our previous President, Joyce Woodruff, asking if I was ready to take on the Presidency when her term was up.

Ready?

Are we ever ready for anything? Isn't that what we teach the parents at our school? Stop trying to get them ready, enjoy them where they are right now. How could I say no when I preach this to the parents at our school? Are we ever ready for anything? Or do we just accept the opportunities that come our way, and ask for help and accept what comes? Well, I decided to take a leap of faith. With many hands and hearts to help guide me, the past two years have taught me much about myself, our organization and the people that make it great.

I cannot thank each and every one of you enough for your bucket loads of patience, help and guidance. However nervous I may have been those many months ago, I now feel blessed to have been given the opportunity to serve as CCPPNS President. I look forward to taking on the position of Vice President in the South, and continue to work with you all.

First and foremost, I would like to personally thank Stacey Sterne Shortt for her dedication to this year's Convention. With a lot of determination, hard work and smart decision making skills, she and her team have provided our members and guests with a truly amazing Convention. As the Council President of the Los Angeles Council, Stacey has shown great leadership in bringing her council back into the fold, and then turned right around to lead her team through this amazing event. Thank you, Stacey!

I am also very grateful for our dedicated Nominating Committee. Mindy Kajikami, Joyce Woodruff, Heidi Steiner, Susie Stone and Patricia Brohard all worked very diligently in order to come up with an amazing slate of officers for the coming year. We are very thankful that Chris Cajski of the Diablo Area Council has taken the leap and agreed to serve as our President. We have worked closely with Chris over the last year, and we are certain that he will bring many gifts to California Council.

To those of you who may be moving on, I thank you. I thank you for your many hours and months of service to your schools, your councils and to California Council. Thank you for having said "Yes!"

"Yes, I will step up and help." "Yes, I will look into ways to make things run more smoothly." "Yes, I will lead and guide our council forward." "Yes, I will learn what it takes to get the job done."

Our schools, councils and communities could not function without the people, people like you, who answer those calls with your resounding "Yes's!" I could not have done my job without your support.

And now, the question remains, Am I ready? Am I ready to let it go? It has been a terrific two years, and I am definitely eager to see what comes next. I am eager to help Chris navigate and lead in his calm, assuring and nurturing way. We are all so very lucky to have him take the helm, and I look forward to help him in any way he needs.

To a wonderful group of hard working and committed individuals, I thank you for sharing this journey with me!

Cheers to you all!

Co-operatively,
Jane Walker

Jane Walker is a teacher at Sierra Madre Community Nursery School

Nurturing of the Young Mind by Lori Petro

The moment our children arrive in the world they open up our hearts to a flood of intense, raw emotions. Every cry motivates us to soothe and lessen their confusion about this strange new place. We love to watch them play, laugh and learn while we cherish the moments in which our guidance leads them to learn the ways of the world.

So, why do most parents find it easy to teach the art of a fast-ball or a proper three-point-turn, but, when it comes to teaching children about their emotions, they'd rather gloss over the intimate stuff and instead make it a priority to change their child's behavior? Fear, tradition and ignorance are but a few reasons. Brain development and learning about the emotions has largely been ignored by traditional parenting which favors establishing "parental control" through punishment, praise, rules, rewards and love-withdrawing discipline strategies such as time-out. This fear-based parenting model has unwittingly led to the erosion of the parent-child bond. Emotional learning is the most significant kind of learning that happens in the first five years of life. The ability to name emotions, feel them fully, without evaluative statements from adults, and then process those feelings will build the foundation upon which all future learning will rely.

Research by Dr. John Gottman (The Gottman Institute) and psychologist Daniel Goleman (Emotional Intelligence, Bantam Books 1995) has shown that emotional literacy is the most beneficial education you can give a young child. Children who have the support of an emotionally available parent do better in school, have an easier time forming and keeping friendships, have fewer behavioral problems and generally lead happier, healthier and less stressful lives.

Conscious parenting fosters the development of emotional intelligence by creating strong relationships, embracing compassionate listening and recognizing the importance of validating feelings and acknowledging needs.

The TEACH tool is a 5-step process for conflict resolution that builds cooperation while cultivating an

environment ripe for learning. Follow these steps when things get heated and stay connected to your child.

The **TEACH**-tool

1. **T**ake a minute to BREATHE & OBSERVE. Practice self-empathy to regulate your own feelings. State the situation without judgment or an evaluation.
2. **E**ngage and Empathize. Get down to your child's level. (Don't bark commands from across the room.) Make eye contact and notice body language and tone. Approach the situation with curiosity and openness.
3. **A**cknowledge Feelings and Needs. What is my child feeling? (Frustration, disconnection, fear) What does my child need? (Attention, affection, acceptance, autonomy) Use loving, connected speech to validate needs and feelings.
4. **C**onnect and Problem-Solve. Connect with your child using your words, body language or physical contact. (Validation, space, a hug, a cuddle) Investigate the feelings and needs of others and problem solve together.
5. **H**elp your child put solutions into action. Guide your child toward finding creative solutions that respect the feelings of everyone involved.

Children depend on a loving caregiver to nurture and protect their minds and bodies. It is through attuned, empathetic responses that they can flourish into emotionally competent adults who are able to cope with every-day stressors, successfully interact with the world around them and find meaning and purpose in their lives.

SHORT BIO: Lori Petro, BSEd., is a Writer/Child Advocate and founder of www.teach-through-love.com, a website promoting conscious parenting for progressive parents through nonviolent communication and non-punitive discipline.

Children's Cottage Coop Goes Green! By Mindy Kajikami

The families from Children's Cottage Coop in Larkspur are happy to announce that they have qualified as a green business with the county of Marin. According to an article in the Marin Independent Journal, Children's Cottage Coop won certification for conservation, recycling, efficiency and other green related activities.

Congratulations Children's Cottage Coop! For full article go to: www.marinij.com.

If your school is interested in becoming a "green business" contact the Green Business Program Coordinator in your county.

Building a Better Future - Convention 2010 By Mindy Kajikami

The Los Angeles County Council of the California Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools (CCPPNS) hosted their 61st Annual Convention, **Building a Better Future**, at the Four Points Sheraton LAX, during the weekend of March 12-13, 2010.

Parents, children and teachers enjoyed two inspiring days of workshops, roundtable discussions, and exhibits geared towards early childhood parenting and education. There were 25 professional speakers covering a wide variety of topics important to early childhood parents and educators, including:

- Brain Development
- Early Childhood Literacy
- Emotional Intelligence
- Grant-Writing
- Trauma & Stress
- Cooperation & Communication
- Power Struggles
- Sensory Integration & Sensory Processing Disorders
- Messy Art

Friday's keynote speech, **Raising Self-Reliant, Non-Defiant, Appreciative Children in a Nervous World**, was

given by Dr. Wendy Mogel, a nationally recognized clinical psychologist and best-selling author of the book entitled, **The Blessing of a Skinned Knee**.

On Saturday, Dr. Peter Levine presented his keynote titled, **Trauma-Proofing Your Kid**. Dr. Levine is the originator and developer of Somatic Experiencing®, founder of the Foundation for Human Enrichment, and best-selling author of several books including **Waking the Tiger: Healing Trauma, Trauma Through A Child's Eyes and Trauma Proofing Your Kids: A Parent's Guide For Instilling Confidence, Joy and Resiliency**

Convention has been a long-standing tradition for CCPPNS since 1961 when CCPPNS first became incorporated. Originally, members gathered for business and the election of officers. Eventually, the CCPPNS convention evolved into a Friday/Saturday parent/teacher educational event, which included keynote speakers, workshops, silent auction, exhibitors, the Progressive Dinner, and the Awards Luncheon. On Sunday, CCPPNS board members and council reps finish the weekend of Convention with a Joint Board Meeting.

Convention 2010 Awards By Mindy Kajikami

The 61st Annual CCPPNS Awards Presentation was held during the CCPPNS Convention Awards Luncheon on Saturday, March 13, 2010 at the Four Points Sheraton LAX in Los Angeles, Ca. The Awards were presented by Heidi Steiner, CCPPNS Awards Chair and Advisor South.

Congratulations to the award winners!

Teacher/Director Life Achievement Awards:

This is a special award designed to honor a teacher/director who has devoted a significant portion of his/her lifetime in service of the parent participation nursery school movement. Recipients of this award shall be given life-time membership in CCPPNS, certificate, and a pin or pendant.

- Linda Bille
- Terry Gretsky
- Ruth Hollensteiner
- Rima Soudah

Teacher/Director Award:

This award is given to teachers and directors currently employed by member schools who have given

outstanding service to their schools and the parent participation movement. Recipients of this award shall receive a certificate and a memory book.

- Shaya Akobian
- Emily Duggins
- Sue Gwin
- Dee Dee Lemming
- Tammy Thraikill

Award of Merit:

This award is given to an individual who has provided an outstanding service to preschool, to regional council or to CCPPNS. Recipients of this award receive a certificate.

- Debbie Johnson
- Stacey Sterne Shortt

- Mindy Kajikami
- CCPPNS In-House North

Shaming and Labeling Won't Change Behavior By Marni Parsons

Are you shaming or labeling your child in an attempt to change his/her behavior? Do you hear yourself saying such things as, "That's naughty", or "That wasn't nice", or "That's mean"? Maybe you are even using labels that you believe are reinforcing the "good" behaviors your child exhibits, such as, "What a nice girl", or "That's such a good boy". If so, you may be damaging the self-esteem and confidence of your child.

Children are not capable of separating the labels placed on their behavior from who they are as an individual. Therefore, when a child's behavior is labeled the child internalizes the label and sees him/herself as just that, naughty, selfish, etc. Another way to look at it is, "If I was, then I am!" The same is true with labels typically seen as positive such as good or nice. Children are not all good or all bad. Human beings embody a full range of emotions, all of which serve us well in varying situations.

What else is there, parents often ask, if I can't label my child's behavior in an effort to change it? Let's start by being very clear with the child about the behavior you do expect to see. For example your child likes to run away from you in public places. Before going into a public place you can share with your child exactly what it is you expect. It might look something like this, "I am remembering the last time we went to Target and you ran away from me, and it was very difficult to find you. I want to remind you that you need to stay with mommy in the store. Would you like to ride in the shopping cart, or can you hold my hand?"

Children do not want to misbehave, nor do they want anyone upset with them for their behavior. It is to be expected that children make mistakes as they are still learning to control their impulses, self-regulate and master an understanding of acceptable behavior. An example might be that throwing balls outside is acceptable, so how is it that by telling a two year old that they are "a bad boy" because they threw a ball in the house going to teach them that throwing balls inside is not an acceptable behavior? However, when we eliminate the judgment or label from the behavior and simply explain or teach the proper behavior, "We throw balls outside", and gently guide the child and ball outside they learn a new and acceptable way of being in their world.

Too often I have seen the use of shame and labeling create a self-fulfilling prophecy for children. When a child is called naughty or bad day after day they somehow find a way to prove that's exactly who they are! I have also observed that children who are guided and taught about acceptable behaviors, and whose adults have shared with them appropriate and clear expectations have greater confidence, greater self-

esteem, and a more positive way of being in the world. They are simply better adjusted children

Another positive that comes out of guiding your child towards acceptable and appropriate behaviors is that you spend more of your precious parenting time using affirmative and positive language. This can have a great effect on how we see ourselves as parents. When we are speaking in a positive and affirming manner with our children our parenting becomes more positive and we feel better about the job we are doing. Let's face it; constantly telling our children what they are doing wrong is not much fun for us either!

So the next time you see your child behave in a way that is unacceptable, tell them what it is you want to see and guide them to that choice without judgment or labeling what they did. When you see them doing something you appreciate or want to see again, tell them what it is they are doing that you like and why.

Marni Parsons CPC, is a PCI Certified Parent Coach®, Family Consultant, Teacher and Co-Director at La Playa Cooperative Nursery School, mother of two teenage girls, and the wife to one big boy. She is passionately committed to guiding, supporting, educating and comforting parents of preschoolers so that they can experience greater confidence, less stress, more joy, and develop a tool box of unique parenting skills. She wants parents to go to bed every night proud of the parent they are, and confident that they are doing what's best for their child/ren and family. Her humor and passion for families is contagious! You can check out her website at www.acoach4parents.com



Name That Tone: It's Not What You Say, But How You Say It By Gila Brown

It's been said that as much as 90 percent of the meaning transmitted between two people in face-to-face communication is nonverbal. Intuitively, we all know that; having spent our entire lives attempting to effectively convey our thoughts and accurately understand those of others. However, when it comes to our kids, the tone of our voice often plays a particularly prominent role in the message we are trying to communicate. With that in mind, let's try a little exercise.

Using the innocuous word 'SNAILS', try repeating it out loud using the following tones of voice:

Snails. (Pride)
 Snails. (Disgust)
 Snails. (Anger)
 Snails. (Unconditional Love)
 Snails. (Disappointment)
 Snails. (Judgment)
 Snails. (Disinterest)

This simple exercise highlights the strong impact our tone has on our words. What we say is almost less important than how we say it. Consider some of the typical comments we make to our kids.

"Why did you do that?"

"Put those away."
 "Did you clean your room?"
 "Don't play with your food."

Just reading these comments, it is easy to hear the underlying tone. Now, by only changing your tone, try repeating these comments with the intention of changing their meanings.

Garnering respect and cooperation from our kids begins with modeling those qualities. This week, challenge yourself to pay attention to the tone of your voice when you are talking with your kids. How do they respond to your requests? Consider what the impact might be if you were to change it up a bit. When kids feel respected, they will respond with respect and you will find that their level of cooperation increases significantly.

Gila Brown, M.A. is a Child Development Expert and Parent Coach, with over 10 years of teaching experience. She specializes in parenting school-age children with grace, using principles of attachment parenting, positive discipline and effective communication. Visit www.GilaBrown.com to sign up for a free newsletter.

What Can Parents Learn From Andre Agassi By Kathy Seal

Andre Agassi hated tennis? That's the surprise in his new autobiography *Open*, but the surprise evaporates when you read why: Agassi didn't choose to play tennis. He felt forced to play. His immigrant dad wanted his son to live the American dream, to have the life choices he'd not had himself, but ironically thought he had to remove his own son's choices as a youngster. It wasn't until Andre dropped in the rankings, and chose to keep playing that he began to appreciate the game.

That should slam the lid on any parent's nagging question about pushing a kid harder in sports "for his own good." Indeed, Agassi's story illustrates what psychological research has found: that you enjoy an activity only when you're pursuing it autonomously — because you want to not because you have to. And it provides a rich lesson on how adults with the very best intentions can get hooked into the competition their children face, producing fractured relationships rather than the joy they envision.

Wanting the best for his son, Agassi's father tyrannized him not only by making him hit thousands of tennis balls daily, but also by acting coolly when his son had a bad practice day or lost a match. That night, as Agassi said on the *Today* show, the atmosphere would be icy at the dinner table. And when Agassi got a trophy for sportsmanship rather than for winning, his father smashed it to pieces. Nothing shows better the harm of controlling a child through conditional love — bestowing or withdrawing warmth based on a child's performance. That produces the exact opposite of the parent's goal, as it did in the Agassi family. Andre confesses that he hoped he'd get injured, so he could quit tennis.

The focus on competition tortured the father as well, as he agonized watching his son compete and when scouting younger players coming up who might threaten his son's standing. And, Agassi says, his father hated how much tennis alienated him and his son from each other.

Continued on Page 8

What is Child's Art By Anna Reyner

Children love art because it's fun and provides them with authentic self-expression, but how important is art to a child's healthy development? Children's art is many things to many people. To a parent, art is a display of a child's imagination. To an educator, it's a teaching tool. To a psychologist, art is a way to understand a child's mind. To a grandparent, it's a way to feel connected. To a librarian, it's a way to enhance book knowledge. To a child, art is a way to have fun, make decisions, and express choices. Picasso wrote, "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up." Is children's art an act of genius? Are children more creative than adults? Perhaps Picasso was simply impressed by the spontaneity of children's art. Child art, like most child behavior, is direct and uncensored. A young child doesn't critique his work. He paints freely and with pleasure, enjoying the fine and gross motor experience of moving paint over paper and watching lines, shapes, and colors come to life. Art puts a child in the "driver's seat" and provides freedom: the freedom of choice, thought, and feeling.

Art is a Language

Do you remember seeing a photograph that communicated a whole world of feeling? Perhaps it was a famous photograph or simply a family snapshot that captured the richness of a special moment. A picture is often worth a thousand words. Visual images communicate emotions and complexities in a way that words cannot. The ability to communicate non-verbally is particularly important for children. Art is a powerful tool that gives children the ability to express their thoughts and emotions long before they can fully express themselves with words. Once you acknowledge that art is a language, the importance of respecting a child's artwork becomes obvious. Yet too often adults praise art before really looking at it, offering routine comments like, "What a pretty picture!" Comments like these can actually be damaging to a child's self-esteem, causing him to feel misunderstood. Pictures sometimes communicate sad or angry feelings that are not "pretty" at all. It's far better to view a child's art slowly and with quiet interest before making any comments. Over time, with authentic and respectful support from adults, children will use art as way to express real feelings.

What Art is Not

Art is not coloring books or mimeo sheets. Art is not copying or coloring between the lines. Art is not restrictive. To be art, a work has to demonstrate individuality. I like to distinguish between "fine art and applied art"—another way of saying "arts and crafts."

Both fine and applied arts can demonstrate individuality. If a child's painting or Treasure Box looks like everyone else's, then there's no creativity or imagination involved. What's the quickest way to tell if it's art? If a child can't recognize which project is his at the end of the day, it's not art!

Parent Involvement

Research shows that parent involvement in their child's education is positively related to learning and achievement. How can parents nurture children's creativity at home? Art can be a wonderful family activity. Parents who understand the value of art are more likely to keep art supplies at home, designate a household area for "messy art," and become involved in art themselves. Parents and teachers working together to nurture creativity—imagine the possibilities!

Encouraging Creativity

- Take time with a child's art.
- Show respect for the art and the artist's process.
- Comment on lines, shapes and colors: "I see you used three colors."
- Show curiosity: "How did you get this effect here?"
- Comment on changes: "Your drawings look bigger these days."
- Ask open-ended questions: "Will you tell me about your picture?"
- Provide fuel for creativity: "What other materials do you need?"
- Collect recycled boxes, tubes, and lumber scraps. Make 3-D creations.
- Provide a variety of drawing, painting, and clay materials.
- Avoid coloring books.

Anna Reyner is a nationally recognized arts advocate who is dedicated to helping people get in touch with their own creativity. Anna has conducted over 500 national and international hands-on art workshops and is a registered art therapist and licensed marriage and family therapist. She received her Masters Degree in Expressive Art Therapy from the University of Louisville and her Bachelors Degree in Art and Psychology from Ohio Wesleyan University. Anna maintains an active art studio in her Los Angeles home where she lives with her husband and two children. Anna also led a workshop at the CCPNS 2010 Convention.

For more information go to her websites:
www.artandcreativity.blogspot.com
www.discountschoolsupply.com

Messy Art and the Power of Paint By Anna Reyner

Art Activities with BioColor® Foam Paint

The Value of Messy Art

"MESSY ART" is great fun for children and provides them with delight! Children love to get their hands into paints and other gooey materials that "tickle their senses." Messy art lets children discover the emotional pleasures of sensory and tactile play. Not only does messy art engage a child's senses in open-ended play, it also develops cognitive, social-emotional and multisensory skills. Self directed learning with fluid, sensory and tactile art materials is especially important in early childhood and continues to have benefits for older children as well.

Just What is Messy Art?

Messy Art is a friendly description for art experiences that involve paint and other fluid materials that change with ease as you manipulate them. These fluid "sensory art" experiences provide children with exciting physical contacts that motivate exploration. The fluid nature of paint provides for dynamic and rapidly changing explorations of color, shape and textures on paper. Children often feel very powerful when painting, because the cause and effect of their actions becomes apparent very quickly. Painting allows children to make decisions rapidly, and to operate more independently than they are usually accustomed to. Paints continuously move and blend, creating new combinations and secondary colors. With just a few swift brushstrokes, an entire painting can change and transform into a new creation. Painting is indeed, a powerful process!



BIOFOAM® BAKERS DOUGH ~ Make Ornaments

1. Mix 1 cup flour, 1 cup BioColor® Foam Paint, 1/4 cup salt and approximately 1/3 cup water.
2. Mix ingredients together and knead to make a smooth texture.
3. Make 3 or more colors to work with.
4. Create dough ornaments, combining colors.

5. Bake at 200 degrees for 1-2 hours to allow ornaments to set.

Other Art Ideas using BioFoam Bakers Dough

- a) Sculptures - create relief sculptures on mat board.
- b) Picture Frames - create textures on cardboard picture frames.



PRINTMAKING ~ Monoprints & Marbleizing

1. Spread a little foam paint onto a non-porous surface like Plexiglas.
2. Use one hand to spread an even coat of paint until it is the size of your paper.
3. With your finger, draw a shape in the Plexiglas.
4. Place a white paper on top and rub gently.

Other Art Ideas for Printmaking

- a) Butterflies: Fold a 12 x 18" piece of tag board in half. Cut to create two large butterfly wings. Squirt a dab of several colors inside the fold and press together.
- b) Marbleizing on paper—place several colors of paint on a plate or tray. Swirl with a fork to mix colors into a pattern. Lay white paper on top, lift off paper and scrape off foam with paint scraper. Your marbled paper will be dry right away.

CONCLUSION

Messy Art activities are one of the best ways to promote early childhood learning. Preschool and Kindergarten provide an especially important opportunity for hands-on, self-directed learning. As children grow and advance through elementary school, art continues to provide opportunities for mastery and learning. Art teaches critical thinking, self-expression, problem solving, individuality, creativity and self-esteem. Messy Art experiences, those that rely on fluid and tactile art materials, provide children with the greatest reward for their efforts. Not only do children often find it exciting to "get messy" when they can't always, but child development theorists teach us time and time again that tactile and sensory experiences are one of the ways children learn best.

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An electronic version of The Preschooler is available

Parent Participation Nursery Schools: Where Parents and Children Grow Together...



We're on the Web!
See us at:
www.ccppns.org

What Parents Can Learn... (Continued) By Kathy Seal

The most successful and happiest athletes aren't pushed by adults, but push themselves because of their passion for the sport. Here's how Olympic gold medalist swimmer Summer Sanders puts it: she wants ambitious parents to understand that the only thing that will take a young athlete "to the furthest edge of her potential is the sheer pleasure she takes in exercising her God-given ability."

That's not to say that parents and coaches can't have a tremendously positive effect on young athletes. In fact their support is crucial: studies have shown that the more parents encourage and support their children, the longer they keep playing a

sport.

The critical caveat is to follow children's lead, guiding them without pushing or controlling. That means, notably, adopting their goals, which surveys have found are usually having fun, being with their friends, and building their skills. Winning is not high on most kids' list, despite adults' tendency to focus on it. But kids who have a passion for a sport along with their parents' support are those who both excel and are happy.

Today Agassi's great passion is a charter school he began for kids from a poor neighborhood in Las Vegas. Its educational philosophy recognizes the import of adults

supporting kids while letting them choose their own aims. Andre Agassi College Preparatory School provides kids an "array of choices and opportunities" while giving them the resources and support they need to reach their own goals. As Agassi puts it, "These children are going on to lives of their choosing."

*Kathy Seal is author of the books, **Pressured Parents, Stressed-out Kids: Dealing With Competition While Raising a Successful Child and Motivated Minds: Raising Children to Love Learning**. She also led a workshop at the CCPPNS 2010 Convention in Los Angeles. If you would like her to speak at your school or parent event, contact her at: WEBSITES: www.kathyseal.net EMAIL: kathyseal@gmail.com.*

Editorial By Mindy Kajikami

Recently, when picking up my 7 year-old at a birthday party, I found the hosts and the parents, who were also intending to take their kids home, sitting on a blanket on the front lawn of the birthday boy's house. The party was over, but the kids continued to play and we parents chatted and enjoyed the warm sun. No one wanted to leave the blanket and go back to the everyday tasks. We just wanted to watch our kids laughing and playing on a

beautiful day. With this thought, I encourage you sit on a blanket outside with a tall iced drink while you leisurely peruse The Preschooler.

Congratulate Jane Walker on successful term as CCPPNS President!

Learn how to resolve conflict in Lori Petro's article.

Celebrate as Children's Cottage Coop in Marin becomes a „green business.“

Enjoy the highlights of Convention 2010.

Create self-esteem and confidence in your child with Marni Parsons

Discover the impact of the tone your voice on your children with Lori Petro.

Learn about Andre Agassi's passion with Kathy Seal.

And finally, dive into Messy Art with Ann Reyner.

Enjoy the fun and sun!