

KIDBIZ NEWSLETTER
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A Newsletter For Early Childhood & Child Care Professionals

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There are a lot of things we often wish for in our lives, sometimes we find what we're looking for, sometimes not. During those times we can't seem to find what we want, instead of giving up in frustration, we need to get creative. Put on some show tunes, a purple feathered hat, a silver cape, and lay upside down in a window seat (okay, that's what I do, you can do whatever gets your creative juices flowing!) Look at the world with fresh eyes, and maybe you'll see answers you couldn't see before. Maybe you're just looking in the wrong places. That's what this month's article is about – thinking outside the box to get what you want. Don't give up, when you really look hard for something, you find it.

*Hug a kid for me!
Patricia*

JUST WHAT I WANTED!

Last week my eight year old daughter, Amanda, announced I could no longer use her CD player and headset when I go jogging. I had been using it after she left for school and she decided she wanted to bring it to school to use on the bus now. I tried some negotiation first: I could use it one day, she could take it the next. This lasted only through one day of my turn, then she wanted to end the deal. "Get your own Mom!" I was told as she stuffed it in her pink Princess backpack, flipped her thick blonde hair and skipped out the door to the bus. She had drawn the line, and now I was left with no choice but to comply.

This may sound like no big deal to you, just go get my own, right? The problem was that since we had recently bought Amanda her CD player, I knew from the search that the new ones only came with those headphones that look like little hearing aids and stick in your ears. I hate those things. They hurt! Maybe my ears are too small, maybe I'm just old, but I was not looking forward to getting a pair of marbles to stick in my ear while I run. Granted, Amanda had the irritating marble things too, but I just didn't want MINE to be like that, for some reason it was okay for Amanda (she liked them), but if I was going to have one of my own, I wanted something I actually liked!

So, I headed for the electronic section at Walmart, praying I'd find a nice, soft, cushy pair of headphones with the CD players. No luck. Marbles again. Then I searched for the headphones you can buy alone, I managed to find a pair of very cheap looking plastic ones, with ear muffs the size of my Siberian Husky. Yeah, that'll be cool. And they were eight bucks. The CD player was \$25. The math made me queezy, why couldn't she just share! I didn't want to spend that kind of money on something I didn't even like. I refused to accept the facts – there had to be another solution. Then I remembered a commercial for a toddler CD player that was indestructible – and headed for the toy section. After some searching, I found it – a Disney Princess CD player, heart shaped with a purse strap and “jewels” for buttons... and a pink headset with soft, but small, pads on the ear pieces. Perfect! I checked the price - \$24. It was cheaper to buy this one than to get the CD player and headset separately in the electronic department, and I'd get what I needed. Perfect! I put it proudly in the cart and headed for the checkout.

That afternoon, when Amanda got home from school, I showed her my new CD player. Her mouth fell open in disbelief – “Mom! That's a Princess CD Player, you can't use that - it's for kids!”

But I saw the green in her eyes and made my pitch: “I'll make you a deal, I'll trade you if you let me keep these headphones and you keep yours.”

She more than happily complied, but still giggled when I put my pink headphones on with the cursive “P” very visible on each ear piece. “Mom, you can't wear those, they say Princess on them!” she teased.

I calmly replied, “It's P for Pat.” More giggles, a roll of the eyes and a mumbled, “You are so crazy,” as she walked away.

Today I took my first run proudly wearing my custom headset monogrammed with P for Pat. As I was running, I thought about the experience and realized that it was similar to working with parents. Often, we find ourselves in a position where we don't feel we are getting what we want. We try to negotiate, and sometimes that fails. And when it does, it's time to get creative. Start thinking of different ways to get what you want, you might discover it in surprising places. Don't worry about what others will think of it, as long as it meets your needs, that's what counts. And always try to do it so that, in the end, everyone is happy.

One thing I know that we often feel we are not getting from parents is appreciation. We think we have to sit back and wait for it, or do without. The direct route seems to be to ask for it, but we don't want to do that. This is when

we need to get creative and look for it in other places. Stop waiting for the “thank you” to come from their mouths, and look for it to come in different ways.

The biggest one is when they walk through your door. No parent walks through a door to a place they do not feel their child should be and leaves them. The simple act of opening your door and placing their child in your care is a sign of appreciation. So every time you hear the creak of the door – listen closely – because there is a “thank you” in that sound as well. Or when they fill out paperwork to register their child’s new sibling – look, it’s there, a “thank you” in between all the words they wrote on the form. Or when they hand you their check – where they sign their name is another hidden “thank you.” Or when they bring in cookies for the school holiday party, there’s another “thank you” hidden in the icing. Or even when they take off their muddy shoes at the door after you wrote in a newsletter that it would be nice if they do so the babies don’t crawl on a dirty floor – there’s a “I respect you” under that mud. And when a new client calls to ask about openings and mentions that a current parent recommended you – hold the phone far away from your ears because there is a “THANK YOU, I APPRECIATE YOU, YOU ARE SO AMAZING!” screaming out of that phone!

We can always find what we’re looking for, the trick is in knowing where to look. The people driving by me on my jog may get a laugh out of my pink headphones, but underneath them all I hear is: “I got what I wanted!”

TIPS AND TRICKS

Here’s some tips on having Great Fieldtrips:

-Pack a Fieldtrip bag with every essential you may need, including a change of clothes for a child, diapering supplies, medical supplies, extra socks, small puzzles/games for “waiting” times, paper and pencils for children to draw on, a tape recorder to tape sounds and make a sound bingo back at school, a sheet to use as a tablecloth or ground cover for sitting (or a cape!), an egg timer (to play hide and seek with).

-Buy a “bottle caddy” in the infant department and use to store water bottles in.

-Make a magic wand: when you get in/out of car and need children to stay close, pretend to spray “glue” on their hands and stick them to the car. They are now stuck until you say the magic words with your magic wand!

-Teach the children Red Light/Green Light. When you arrive, let them know if they can run or walk. Then, when you say Green Light they can either run/walk, and when you say Red Light they should: STOP, TURN, AND LOOK AT YOU. Much cooler and professional than screaming STOP! at a group of children!

-Plan ahead: know where the bathrooms are, if you can use a stroller, how long the wait will be, what they can/cannot touch, how far the walk is, if you need to bring food or money.

-When using adult helpers: assign specific children to them, don't let them just hang out together and watch the general group. Give them names of the children they need to keep tabs on, it's much more reliable in tracking children than for them to count children.

For more great fieldtrip tips, ideas and lesson activities check out: From Babysitter to Business Owner, "Fabulous Fieldtrips" chapter. Visit www.patriciadischler.com.

KIDBIZ BLOG

The KIDBIZ Blog is a place where I can share all the great articles and information I have access to and think you should have access to as well! If you've found a great article or website that you think should be shared with others in our field, send it to me so I can post it and pass it on!

This week's post is a review of a great book I've found – *Don't Cheat the Children: Connecting Generations Through Grand Friendships* by Helen Block Fields. I met Helene in Chicago at the Chicago Metro AEYC conference, and she is one amazing person. She shares her work in creating intergenerational programs at early childhood programs and schools over the years in this book, providing research, stories, and guidance to the reader. Check out the review, then visit her website to see how you can bring a great asset like this to your program!

Visit: <http://kidbiz.blogspot.com>

IN THE NEWS

Have you made plans for the NAFCC Annual Conference yet? If not – do it today! I just received confirmation that I will be presenting my new training there on Wednesday's pre-conference day – "From Babysitter to Business Owner Train the Trainer Course." Those of you who present trainings to providers, R&R staff and other mentors, will receive training on how to present a three hour training based on my book, (and how to break it down to three, one-hour workshops) along with a free copies of lecture outlines, handouts, and my new power point CD to use when you present the training yourself! This training kit will be sold for \$250 and you get it FREE! I can't be everywhere, but this information is something I believe every provider needs to learn, so I'm ready to teach others how to help me spread the word on professionalism! Visit www.nafcc.org today to register! I'll also be presenting four workshops throughout the conference, be

sure to stop by the Presenters Marketplace booth on Thursday evening in the exhibit hall to say "Hi!"

THIS MONTH'S SALE ITEMS

April Sale Item: Because I Loved You: A Birthmother's View of Open Adoption – 25% Off!

This is my annual sale in preparation for Birthmothers Day in May so you can get the book in time to give a gift to the Birthmother in your life on this special day. It shares both research and advice along with my personal story of placing my son for adoption in 1985. The story covers the building of a relationship between his adoptive parents and myself, from his birth through his high school graduation. Fantastic for everyone whose life has been touched by adoption and a "good cry" for anyone who loves a great story with happy endings! Regular Price: \$16.95.
Sale Price: \$12.71.

May Sale Item: 101 Tips & Tricks - \$2 Off!

101 of my best tips to make your job easier, save you money and save you time in your child care business! All those little things that can make a big difference that you learn the hard way over the years, or learn from other seasoned professionals gathered in one easy guide to make your job easier overnight!
Regular Price: \$8.00. **Sale Price: \$6.00**

Order yours today at: www.patriciadischler.com!

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 25, 2009
Early Childhood Conference
Oshkosh, Wisconsin
Keynote: *Crazy For Kids!*
For more information call 920-426-8920

May 8 – 9, 2009
Wisconsin Family Child Care Association Annual State Conference
Chula Vista Resort & Waterpark
Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin
Friday Keynote: *Crazy For Kids!*
Workshop: *Your Space/Their Space: Creating Inspirational Child Care Environments*
Saturday Workshops: *The Parents Can't Hear Me!*
From Braggers to Biters

Fabulous Fieldtrips

For more information visit: www.wisconsinfamilychildcare.org

May 12, 2009

Writers Round-up

Camp Whitcomb

Author-in-Residence

Book reading and “The Publishing Process” presentation.

Merton Intermediate School Camp for children writers.

If you are a member of a group planning a training event and would like to book one of my keynotes or workshops, visit the Lecture page on my website and contact me for availability. Visit www.patriciadischler.com/lecture.php.

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Author, *From Babysitter to Business Owner, Because I Loved You, Tips and Tricks* and *The Patty Cake Kids & The Lost Imagination Cap*.

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