



Raising an Action Verb: Allowing our Child to Be

by Rebecca Hoyt

Winter often means books for my family, books for reading, books for listening to, books with lots of lush visuals to pour over, books to transport us to as many past and future and warm and sunny places as we can possibly travel on a gray Seattle day. One such book we delved into recently is *Cartwheeling in Thunderstorms* by Katherine Rundell. In this story, we journey to Zimbabwe where we ride horseback across the African plains, climb mango trees, and, after a plunge, dry ourselves off in the hot African sun with a vivacious girl named Wilhemina, or Will.

Will leads a life chock full of happy adventures with her best friend, Simon, and pet monkey, Kezia. Her father knows his “Wildcat” well enough to simply give her a tight hug and some provisions when he senses a plan is afoot. When her father dies of Malaria, grown-ups who think they know best find Will to be lacking in what they consider to be the more civilized ways of the world. To more closely fit into their ideals, Will is plucked from everything and everyone she holds dear and is sent to boarding school in London.

At school, our heroine, who is most comfortable in mud boots and sunshine -filled fields, is stuffed into a stiff and scratchy uniform and taught by sullen teachers. Her new schoolmates disdain Will’s differences from them and pick at everything that make her unique, starting with her name. When they call her Wilhelmina, she explains that she never goes that name, but rather Will.

“Will, like the boys name?” They ask.

“Yes, Will. Like the verb, ja?” Will responds.

Will. Like the verb.

And this, this is where my heart and mind as a parent lit up. Who among us isn’t raising a Will? Who isn’t privileged and challenged to be sharing their home with a sheer force of Will, a living breathing action verb? And how often do we try to stuff our Will’s into the stuffy uniform of being a Won’t or a May I or something other than who they truly are. I’ll tell you about a time I tried to recently.

My boys were raucously wrestling on the couch, a tangle of arms and legs as they played a game they called “Mad Bull.” And they were being loud. So darn loud. And

Open Registration & Raffle

Open registration for new families kicks off Saturday, March 3 at 10am in the NSC cafeteria. Know anyone interested in joining co-op? Make sure to tell them about this event!

The annual raffle is held at Open Registration as well. It is our biggest fundraiser of the year. Tickets are available for purchase from your PAC rep and at the Open Registration.

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Calendar

January

27 Wallingford Open House 10 a.m.

February

3 NW Seattle Preschool Fair

3 Meadowbrook Open House 10 a.m.

3 Victory Heights Open House 11 a.m.

7 Priority Registration Deadline

7 Sandhurst Open House 7 p.m.

8 More Love, Less Rage seminar

10 Broadview Open House 10 a.m.

12 PAC Meeting

12 Kids and Race: Changing the Narrative lecture

14 Transfer Registration Deadline

March

3 Open Registration

12 PAC Meeting



big. So much movement. It was driving me crazy. I asked them to be quiet and they were. For 30 seconds. I told them to go outside but they promised to be quiet if they could stay inside. I had another 30 seconds before they revved up. Just as I was about to give them one more command, I caught myself. Wait. Who was having the problem here? They were ruddy with laughter, they were being inventive, they were playing together, all things I encourage them to do! They were being Wildcats (Or Mad Bulls) and I was trying to throw a wet blanket on the whole thing because it hurt my ears. I reminded them of our house rules around wrestling and I took my delicate ears upstairs. We were all much happier when I didn't get in the way of who they needed to be in that particular moment.

The more I've thought about my children being action verbs, the more I've realized how many things I do to get in the way of their expression. Some are seemingly small like telling my combustion engine of a child he needs to wear pants when he's more comfortable in shorts, and others are more regrettable like discouraging my child with learning differences from counting on his fingers only later to read an article proving me wrong. I need to stop pushing them to "grow out" of things that are hard for me and foster my boys as they "grow into" themselves. Because you know what? Our heroine, Will, didn't effortly ease into new itchy blazer. She ran away. To the zoo. And she spent the night with the baboons, the only creatures she could find who let her be who she truly knows herself to be. She is her irrepressible self, as are all of our children.

I don't want my boys running off to be with other Mad Bulls because they only feel understood by them. I want them to feel secure enough in themselves and our relationship to show themselves to me as Mad Bulls when that is who they need to be. I also want them to be a vulnerable 10 year old who's feeling confused by changing social dynamics at school or a proud 6 year old who scored a soccer goal after much hesitation to join in the action. When I am present for each part of who they are, I get to delight in all of who they are.

This is not easy, especially when aspects of our children's temperament are different from our own. Or when they have unique needs that challenge our preconceptions of who we thought they would be. Or when their interests are somewhat repellent to us (slugs.) Or when their tenacity demands that we dig deeper into ourselves than we have ever dug before.

In order to meet our children exactly where they are, we must also be willing to meet ourselves in the same place. We must embrace our honest selves. We must also accept the difference between who we really are and who we think we should be. When we allow for our own shortcomings, we are better able to accept them in our children. It is in this space that we achieve radical acceptance - I can accept myself and my children exactly as we are today AND I can strive for change.

When I am true to myself, I am the gentle leader who accepts them as Mad Bulls with the necessary change of acknowledging my sensitivities to noise. I can also be the gentle leader who helps them to see that there is a time and a place to be Mad Bulls and encourage change in them when the library is not one of them.

As Carl Rogers said, "The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change." I am learning that the paradox is also true for my family. When I accept my children just as they are, they can then feel safe to change as well.

North Seattle Cooperative Preschools 2018 Open Houses



February 3rd from 10am - noon

1933 NE 125th St, Seattle, WA 98125

Stop by and meet our amazing teachers, check out our space, and learn more about co-op!



January 27, 10am—11:30am

5019 Keystone Pl N,

Seattle, Washington 98103

Come meet the Wallingford Cooperative Preschool's teachers, and see our wonderful classroom.



February 7th, 7-9pm

4710 NE 70th St
Seattle, WA 98115



February 10th , 10am—noon

11051 Phinney Ave N
Seattle, WA 98133



We Grow Here!

February 3rd, 11am—1pm

1747 NE 106th Street
Seattle, WA 98125



NW Seattle Preschool Fair

Saturday, February 3 at 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Ballard Church

1460 NW 73rd St, Seattle, Washington 98117

At this first annual preschool fair hosted by PNW Parent Education Series, meet representatives from several of NW Seattle neighborhood preschools and childcare options. This is a great opportunity to ask questions and find programs that meet your child's needs.

The participating schools included are primarily from the following neighborhoods: Ballard, Crown Hill, Queen Anne, Magnolia, Fremont, Wallingford, Phinney, Greenwood, and Greenlake neighborhoods. We also have a few specialist preschools in the greater Seattle area that may also be present.

Children are welcome; an unsupervised play area will be available for little ones.

Attendance is FREE!

🌈 North Seattle Cooperative Preschools
will have a booth at the NW Seattle Preschool Fair



Parent Education Lecture hosted by NSC Cooperative Preschools

Jasen Frelot

Kids and Race: Changing the Narrative



Jasen Frelot is the Executive Director of Kids and Race, a program which empowers adults and children to take responsibility for dismantling racism through honest conversations and loving action. He is also the founding director of Columbia City Preschool of Arts and Culture, an early learning program that seeks to normalize and integrate conversations about race and inclusion into an open, affirming learning environment.

Monday, February 12, 7-8:30pm

Faith Lutheran Church / downstairs / 8208 18th Ave NE / Seattle

This event is free and open to the public! Bake sale proceeds support scholarships for the NSC Cooperative Preschools.

→coops.northseattle.edu →facebook.com/coops.northseattle



More Love, Less Rage: 3 Tools For Self-Regulation

Thursday, February 8, 2018

7:00 PM

@ Phinney Neighborhood Association - 6532 Phinney Avenue North, Blue Building Room 7
Seattle WA 98103

This event is FREE, but registration is required through Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/o/pnw-parent-education-16004787731>

Join us for an evening of laughs and community as we come together to learn more effective ways of navigating the sometimes choppy waters of parenting. Participants will leave with tools to put into immediate practice that will make a BIG impact on influencing the climate of the home. Do your family a favor, make time for this class!! For more information about the facilitator, Casey O’Roarty, go to www.joyfulcourage.com. For more information about the foundation of the class, go to www.positivediscipline.org.

PNW Parent Education is on a mission to host completely free, high quality, parent education events that are social and provide some food for thought to our community. Leave your kids at home (babies in arms are welcome) and grab a friend or 10 and join us to sip, socialize and spend some time together focused on how to navigate thought provoking parenting challenges in the great Pacific Northwest. Doors will be open 30 minutes before and after the event. Adult beverages will be available!

For more information about PNW please see our Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/> contact us at



Parent Education Series,
pnwparenteducation/ - or
pnwparented@gmail.com