



happy green days

Pregnancy can do funny things to people – like wanting to turn kids green! It happened to mum of two Kerri Sellens and she hasn't looked back since...

While expecting her second child busy mum Kerri Sellens conceived an idea to help turn kids green!

It heralded the beginnings of a new business venture, currently helping to capture young hearts and minds.

Creative Charlie is Kerri's infant business born out of a desire to find fun and absorbing activities for her own child.

"It was when I was pregnant with my second child 18 months ago that I came up with the idea for the company. I was looking for ways to entertain my active pre-school son at home, and used my workshop experience to design projects that families could enjoy together at home.

"Everything needed to complete a variety of fun art and craft activities with children, all packaged together in one box," she explains.

The aim is to introduce environmental issues to young children through art and craft projects using eco-friendly materials. Designed for three to six-year-olds, the projects provide opportunity for adults and children to engage together in creative and green play.

It is her first business venture and to design the projects she has been able to draw on her experience running freelance art workshops for over 10 years in schools, galleries and museums – including the renowned Tate and Whitechapel Galleries.

Son Charlie was the inspiration behind the company name and logo.

"It's one of the first 'people' he drew (he can draw arms, hands and lots of fingers now too!). My son is called Charlie, so I named the company after him," says Kerri.

"I'm always amazed at how much packaging there is on some toys, and wanted to design a product that kept waste to a minimum. The

more I looked into sourcing the materials needed for my ideas – hours spent on the internet when the kids were in bed - the more I became aware of possible green alternatives. I realised that Creative Charlie could introduce environmental awareness to young children in a fun way, through using materials that are recycled or reusable.

"The aprons I include are made from old juice packs, and the pencils are made from old CD cases. All of the paper and card is recycled, and packaging is kept to a minimum," she adds.

Now one year old, the business has found its legs and is really starting to take off.

"The response has been extremely positive so far: I have built up a long list of customers through my website, and also currently have several stockists in the UK and Europe. I'm showing at Pulse with the aim of attracting more stockists and building up my wholesale database over the course of this year.

"Along with trade shows, I exhibit at public shows including the East London Design Show, Kids Modern and the Eco Design Show, where I really enjoy meeting customers face to face and getting feedback. I also run art and craft workshops for children at events, which is great fun."

Currently the Creative Charlie range includes; Paint-Your-Own-T-Shirt, Make Hats, Make Jewellery, Travel Pack and a Rainy Day Box packed full of fun activities.

Future plans include developing new products, including a 'Make Masks' box - which she hopes to launch in the next couple of months and re-designing the website shop. ©

Further information

To find out more visit the Creative Charlie website at www.creativecharlie.com.



Son Charlie and 16-month old daughter Stella

