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# RAK Mompreneur

## Laurie McFarlane Putting kids in motion

By **Brittney Walker**  
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Laurie McFarlane is a Scottsdale mother of three teenage boys, an occupational therapist and creator of the *Animation* children's exercise DVD.

### Where did you get the inspiration for the *Animation* program?

I was a gymnast. I started gymnastics when I was 12 years old and by the time I was 17 I was ranked sixth in the nation. I started teaching my sister and her friends gymnastics and that's where I developed my love of teaching.



When I was a gymnast I had several coaches. Some were strict and stern and some were a lot of fun. I found that I got a lot more enjoyment out of the sport when I had a fun coach so my motto became "play with a purpose."

Over the years I've used [these techniques] as a dynamic warm-up before teaching other skills: gymnastics, baseball, soccer. They get kids moving, get the blood flowing and help make that brain/body connection so they are ready to learn new skills. I work at a baseball facility, Player Choice Academy, and I use the movements as a dynamic warmup. Sometimes kids will be shy or uncertain when they come to classes or they will just say they can't do something. My goal is to turn that around into a can-do attitude.

One inspiration came from observing children at my kids' school who wouldn't come to school on field day because they were afraid that they couldn't do certain activities. That was so sad. We all have the same muscles; we just have to develop them. Everybody is at different skill levels; exercise is still beneficial, even if it's not done exactly correctly.

I've also felt that movement is a building block of life. Challenging your body with parts of a skill or portions of a movement leads to a more fully integrated nervous system so you are more ready to respond better to activity and physical demands as a whole, whether it's hiking, skiing, fishing, carrying groceries or any other activities you want to participate in. In kids who are doing these kinds of exercises you will see better balance, better agility, more confidence and they will be able to climb up the slide and slide down with better overall coordination and control.

I don't know why it works, it just does. And I saw that this information wasn't out there. I'd been using it for many years with great success, so I thought, this is something I need to share.

### When did the DVD come out?

About a year ago. I had been thinking about doing it for several years but things kept getting put off because of the kids and I do work for my husband; he's a chiropractor. I also work at [Scottsdale Fiesta Pediatric Therapy](#) as an occupational therapist.

Things eventually came together. I suddenly had several children willing to help and an advertising agency that believed in what I was doing helped write the script. The actual filming only took about six hours and then came the editing.

### How do you balance work time and family time?

I have pretty good time-management skills. I split up my time so I'll work on things for my husband's office for a while, do *Animation* stuff for a while and while my kids are in school I get errands done. That way we can spend time together as a family at night.

### What have you learned during this process that you could pass on to an aspiring mompreneur?

I would say to go with your passion. This is something I never anticipated doing. I thought I would just be teaching gymnastics for the rest of my life but it is information that I really wanted to pass on. Everyone has a gift and the more you share with the world the better we all will be. Just grab a few minutes here and there when you can and keep working toward your goal.

For more information on the *Animation* DVD or to contact Laurie visit [AnimationToday.com](http://AnimationToday.com).

*Author's note: My kids put Laurie's DVD to the test and loved every minute of it! They enjoy making the animal movements and always throw in the related sounds. I love seeing my kids doing some of the same movements I do in my fitness classes and having fun together (as only boys can) at the same time!*

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