

Inside Coral Springs

The key to your community



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May 2014

Festival of Arts Fun

Thousands Descend on The Walk to Celebrate Creativity

Kid Entrepreneur Flourishes

Jessica Nedry took a hobby that has become a craze across the country and used to help a family friend fighting cancer and then turned it into a business.



Jessica Nedry was on hand recently to receive a truckload of her Sunshine Loom Kit with about 10,000 units at Seagull Industries for the Disabled, an agency with which her company partnered with to serve as its fulfillment house.

Photo courtesy of Madeline Nedry

by Madeline Nedry
Community contributor

FriendlyBands was inspired by my daughter, Jessica. It all started when she was 8 years old (she's now 11) and began creating bracelets from rubber bands. Youth throughout South Florida have been making these colorful bracelets and they can be seen wearing them in the halls of Coral Springs Elementary, Parkside Elementary, Country Hills Elementary and many other area elementary schools. Jessica had a different idea, though.

It was June 2011 when her hobby turned into a business after a family friend was diagnosed with cancer. Jessica made 100 bracelets and sold every one of them to raise money and hope for this woman. I decided to embrace my daughter's vision and we came up with our company name, FriendlyBands.

She has been featured on several local news stations and in several local newspapers over the past three years. It was a unique idea and now we have created a

FriendlyBands Sunshine Loom Kit that launched in December. Never did we dream that this would become a craze.

We had a vision to create the perfect FriendlyBands making kit. We didn't realize that all these rectangular looms were coming to the market. However, her circular-designed Sunshine Loom (made from wood and nails) makes it easier to create bracelets and more.

Each peg has its own numbers and is able to make a complete bracelet, which

goes all around in half the time of other rectangular and square looms out there. You would need to purchase two or even three of the other looms to create what Sunshine Loom can do. It also uses latex-free rubber bands for its craft items.

The three-year journey has been a stressful joy for us as parents. We have watched Jessica work hard and maintain her eagerness and self-motivation to do the best that she can. She is a sixth grader and maintains an A average at Westminster Academy in Fort Lauderdale. Jessica plays on her school's soccer and volleyball teams and also plays for a traveling soccer team. She even has time to play the cello.

For us, it's not just that Jessica created an educational craft kit, which is how we looked at it from day one. The kit keeps kids off iPads, computers and TV. It's also an excellent opportunity for her to learn how to run a business. In addition, she has organized fundraising

programs for schools and kids in need through the business.

We have partnered with Seagull Services, an agency that provides employment and life skills training for teens and adults with intellectual and developmental challenges. Seagull Services is the fulfillment house located in Florida. In February, a truck pulled up to Seagull with a container that held 10,000 kits to fill orders.

Her hobby turned into a business after a family friend was diagnosed with cancer. Jessica made 100 bracelets and sold every one of them to raise money and hope.

She is a young entrepreneur with a popular product that's sold on its own site, friendlybands.com, Walmart.com, ToysRUS.com, Amazon.com, and Target.com for \$19.99.

Jessica's dad, Doug Nedry, is an American Airlines pilot who supports Jessica in everything she does. As her mom, how can I not embrace, help and teach her all that I can as a business person. She has been an incredible girl from the moment she was born, and is turning into an amazing young lady.

I couldn't be more proud. She does everything from the heart. Her compassion for others is why my husband and I believe so much in her product.



Jessica Nedry, 11, maintains an A average in school, plays soccer and volleyball and the cello while still working on her company.

Photo courtesy of Madeline Nedry

2011

More and more young entrepreneurs are making the leap to start their own businesses, which has led to a cottage industry to help them.

Even Warren Buffet in 2011 jumped into the game of helping children entrepreneurs. He lends his voice to an animated series and a contest, the Secret Millionaires Club Grow Your Own Business Challenge. Buffet offers his advice for educators, parents and volunteers to help children start businesses on the club's website. Buffet has said the project teaches children financial lessons that they'll carry with them for the rest of their lives. —**Luis F. Perez**

NATIONAL TREND COLORFUL BRACELETS

Jessica Nedry developed her FriendlyBands loom just as creating the multi-color, rubber band bracelets was becoming a craze among the elementary school set.

In December, the U.S. Toy Industry Association named the Rainbow Loom, a competitor to Nedry's loom, the 2014 Toy of the Year. Industry estimates put sales of the Rainbow Loom at 3.5 million units last year. More than 2 million of those went during the holidays. One of the reasons for the toy's popularity analysts say is that it is a low-tech, reasonably priced draw away from computer-based games. —**Luis F. Perez**

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Jessica Nedry created her own loom just as the craze of creating the colorful bracelets hit across the country.

Photo courtesy of Madeline Nedry