

Kim Gressley, Extension Agent,
4-H Youth Development,
University of Arizona Cooperative Extension,
Pinal County

If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a scrapbook filled with photographs, mementos and trinkets is priceless. Scrapbooking is a creative outlet for young and old alike. It links us to our past, connects to our present and creates memories that last far into the future.

Scrapbooks can be created on limitless themes. Family history is always a wonderful topic for scrapbooking. A recent family vacation, school sports teams, arts and culture, community events, clubs, school years, friends or a recent birthday party are all themes that may be of interest to children. Most of all, young people need to find a topic in which they have a keen interest or have some sentimental value to put together this type of craft. Youth have a chance, through scrapbooking, to unfold a crinkled photograph, trace a lucky coin, paste a newspaper article or insert a small envelope to hold sports tickets or a concert performance program. A scrapbook, after all, provides an opportunity to bring labels, sketches, cards—all the little items that bring back memories of the past—out of the shoe box and into an album of precious memories.

In preparation to creating a scrapbook, gather the basic necessary equipment and supplies, such as: acid-free double-sided tape, scrapbooking glue, photo corners, decorative scissors, hole punches, a bone folder, pencil, a ruler, acid-free background paper, ribbon, glue dots, and labels. Building a basic tool kit for scrapbooking will save hours of frustration. Consider gathering the following items:

- **Rub-on letters and numbers:** they come in a wide variety of fonts, colors and sizes
- **Store bought scraps:** including items like old postcards, seed packets, maps, paper bags, etc.
- **Tags:** creating or adding tags helps to present a place for hand writing memories
- **Vintage to Colorful Papers:** these are background papers used as either full sheets or as oddly shaped pieces for different effects

Scrapbooking a Lifetime of Memories with Children

- **Rubber Stamps:** these are purchased in craft stores and handy to add decorative appeal
- **Grommets, Setter and Hammer:** these add flair to securing tags, picture frames and pockets
- **Brads and Jump Rings:** these fun fasteners are usually bright and colorful and come in different shapes and sizes mostly used to secure or dangle items on a page for some fun effects
- **Acid-free Double-sided Tape and Photo Corners:** used to frame in favorite pictures

Each photo album for scrapbooking projects is different. It should reflect the project and its theme. Albums can be purchased in craft stores. They can be 3-ring binders' ranging from 12" x 12" page inserts to 4" x 6" mini-scrapbooks. Select the album, and the page size, before beginning the project.

Building a theme page starts with a photo and an idea. What happens next is usually imagination at work. Begin by finding the subject and planning a theme. Think about what the lay-out might look like. The page usually comes together by deciding on the dominant item (photograph or memento), and experimenting with the placement of the surrounding materials and items until a pleasing design has been achieved. When you have all the supplies and have read the latest scrapbooking magazines it is time to put together your first page. You can follow these easy step-by-step instructions:

- **Select photographs:** best to have 3-4 photos for one page—cropping the photograph to a desired size and shape can add character to your page

- **Select color scheme:** look for common colors in the photographs that will compliment your page
- **Select page decorations:** embellishments such as stickers, die-cuts, brads, stamps, letters, numbers, tags add flair and fun to any page
- **Include journaling:** this is often the most important part of a scrapbook as journaling gives details about the events, people and places—quotes, lyrics and slogans are great additions
- **Arrange the layout:** place all items before permanently attaching the items and overlapping is great as it adds personal line and design
- **Gluing and taping:** utilizing glue, tape, spray adhesive, photo corners and glue dots

Allow children to let their creative ideas flow. Sometimes it's hard for parents to hand over control but scrapbooking is a perfect activity for this. Allow young people to create without watching over their shoulder too much. Be available to make sure that all safety issues have been satisfied. Depending upon the age of the child, you may need to be present to assist in the use of scissors, hole punches, grommets, brads and jump rings. A team effort is the best way to go to create scrapbook memories while creating more memories that will last a lifetime.

Digital scrapbooking is a wonderful option for young people to explore their creativity and unique style while utilizing their knowledge of computers. By using image editing or photo software, people are able to import their precious memories, create graphic designs and print their completed pages on stock paper or decorative scrapbook paper from their home printer. Digital software not only allows importation of photos, embellishments and graphics, but also presents ideas and additional page layout ideas for young hobbyists.

Adobe Photoshop or FotoFusion are two examples of easy to use digital software. Utilizing a digital camera with high resolution will add quality and color for beautiful pictures. Digital scrapbooking allows opportunities to create scrapbooking pages which can be created, saved and shared electronically with family and friends. Another advantage of digital scrapbooking is cost. Utilizing software is less expensive than purchasing all of the equipment and supplies mentioned above. There are definitely advantages of each style of scrapbooking and personal taste and design will dictate which style is best for each person.

As the child is scrapbooking he/she might need additional ideas. Suggest writing in the dates of the events and milestones, weather and news headlines, thoughts and feelings about the day, comments from friends and family members, facial expressions, poetry captions or quotes that summarize the event, meals or special foods eaten, sights seen, funny

situations that happened on a vacation or perhaps details of being together as a family or group of friends.

Creating a scrapbook is truly a work of art. Many crafters take their scrapbooking very seriously and spend hours upon hours making sure they include everything that made that moment in time so special. When scrapbooking with children, remember that they are interested because they have their own story to tell. Allow them to have access to colorful papers and accessories to embellish their projects. It is important to have fun, be creative, and reminisce about the wonderful times they have experienced. Happy scrapbooking!

Resources:

Bradley, H. (2007) *Scrapbooking: A Book and CD with Templates and Clip Art to Make your own Memories*. Sellers Publishing, Inc.

www.KodakGallery.com/SmartFit-Books/

www.Smilebox.com

www.SpottedCanary.com

<http://www.creativescrapbookmemories.com/images/baby-scrapbook-clipart-41.gif>

