

Melissa has worked at Keyspot for 10 years and claimed the Assistant Director position after transitioning from a teacher to Head Teacher. She received a bachelor's degree in Family and Consumer Science with an emphasis in Child Development from San Francisco State, and has additional experience as a preschool teacher and as a nanny. However, she is especially grateful for the "in-house learning experience" of motherhood.

"Being able to watch two separate humans go through the process of development changes your perception of how you see kids that are in the program," she says. "It's made me more patient."

Melissa resides with husband Jamie and sons Luca, 9, and Remy, 6. She enjoys outdoor activities such as camping, hiking, going to the mountains, and spending time on the beach. Around Keyspot, especially, she is known as an artist in addition to her teacher and assistant director duties. She likes working with mixed media and photography. Fellow staff appreciate her dry sense of humor.

A fan of cool colors, cereal, and all the Keyspot pets, the Paso Robles native enjoys leading junk art and creating a mud pit for children.

"Everyone needs to get dirty," she remarks. "(That) is sorely lacking in life in general for kids and adults."

Before Keyspot, she worked in several retail jobs, which taught her patience. She's passionate about her pet rat, Hermine, who has become in effect a Keyspot pet. And she's passionate about her job.

"Keyspot has the kind of environment that creates community," she notes. "It helped me grow up without too much pressure. I want kids to know there's always other chances and ways they can develop, to know that moment to moment stuff changes and sometimes things that seem like a big deal aren't."