

# LIFESTYLE

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## PEOPLE



WWU dance major Sarah Schermer, left, and Karee Wardrop of Bellingham rehearse the "Parent Project," a dance-theater performance. Janet Peterson accompanies on cello.

PHILIP A. DWYER THE BELLINGHAM HERALD



# The 'P' word

## Multimedia performance offers several views of parenting

**MICHELLE NOLAN**  
FOR THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

Even if you think you know all there is to know about parenting, Pam Kuntz says her latest project will provide fresh insights.

Kuntz, a lecturer in the dance program at Western Washington University, has created "The Parent Project," a multimedia show featuring music, dancing, videos and photography to accompany six stories from Whatcom County parents.

The show will open Friday night at Fairhaven's Firehouse Performing Arts Center.

Kuntz and her husband, Mark Kuntz, an assistant professor in Western's theater arts program and former department chair, are the parents of sons, Jack, 3, and Morrison, 2.

**Question:** Pam, since you and Mark met at Western, you seem to have merged your talents since your marriage.

**Answer:** We have! I created two previous community-based works, "The Mom Project" when I was first pregnant followed by "That One Curve" about women, the media and body images.

Mark's ability to tell stories inspires me. We feed off each other. I found myself being envi-

ous of that, and being the mother of two young sons led me to seek out local parents with compelling stories. This is a sharing, collaborative, inviting, teaching project.

**Q:** What's your artistic purpose?

**A:** I'd like to open people's eyes and minds, to create a higher level of understanding and tolerance for different situations involving parents, especially when told through music and

movement. Being a dance teacher and a choreographer, I love movement. I'm also in the Bellingham Repertory Dance Company, and we'll be beginning our second season soon.

**Q:** What makes these parents intriguing?

**A:** It's wonderful how these members of our community have agreed to perform and share their stories. Gretchen and Chris  
See **PARENT PROJECT**, C3

### IF YOU GO

**What:** "The Parent Project," a multimedia show featuring six parenting stories told through music, dance, video and photography.

**When:** 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday; Oct. 5-6 and Oct. 12-13.

**Where:** Firehouse Performing Arts Center, 1314 Harris Ave., Fairhaven.

**Admission:** \$12 general, \$10 for students and seniors.

**Tickets:** Community Food Co-op, Village Books and at the door.  
**Information:** kuntzpam@yahoo.com.

**Wednesday**  
September 26, 2007



# Performance examines parenting

**PARENT PROJECT** from C1



PHILIP A. DWYER THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

**WWU dance instructor Pam Kuntz during a recent rehearsal of "The Parent Project."**

Howard will talk about their 2-year-old boy with Down syndrome. Bess and Bob Christman will talk about adopting four children and being married for 53 years. Doris Kent will talk about losing a son in Iraq. Jessica and Karl Kruger have a 7-week-old girl; Dagny, and they let me document the pregnancy and birth. We'll also have a female couple, Janet Peterson and Karee Wardrop, with children, and Kimberly Taylor, a single mom.

**Q:** All those stories in one evening, plus music and dancing?

**A:** We feel it will make for a fascinating show. What's especially intrigued me is how well our four dancers from my classes at Western have integrated themselves and learned so much for the project. I asked the dancers — Lena Traenkenshuh, Sarah Schermer, Paige Fredlund and Ben Estes — to perform, and they are all wonderful. William Coogan, who is also a Western student, has composed an original sound score.

They aren't getting class credit, just doing what they love: dancing and performing. It's all volunteer performances. It's especially wonderful to see our parents, people who don't normally perform dances, get out there and dance!

"We feel it will make for a fascinating show. What's especially intrigued me is how well our four dancers from my classes at Western have integrated themselves and learned so much for the project."

Pam Kuntz, creator of "The Parenting Project."