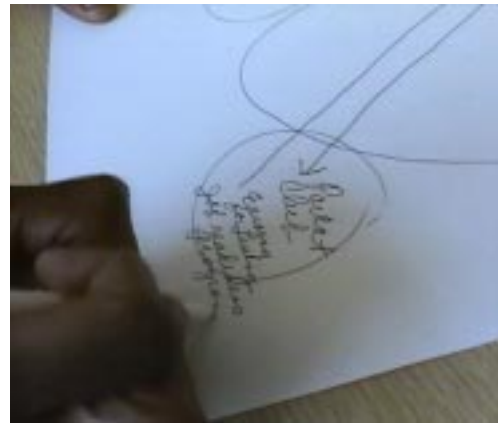
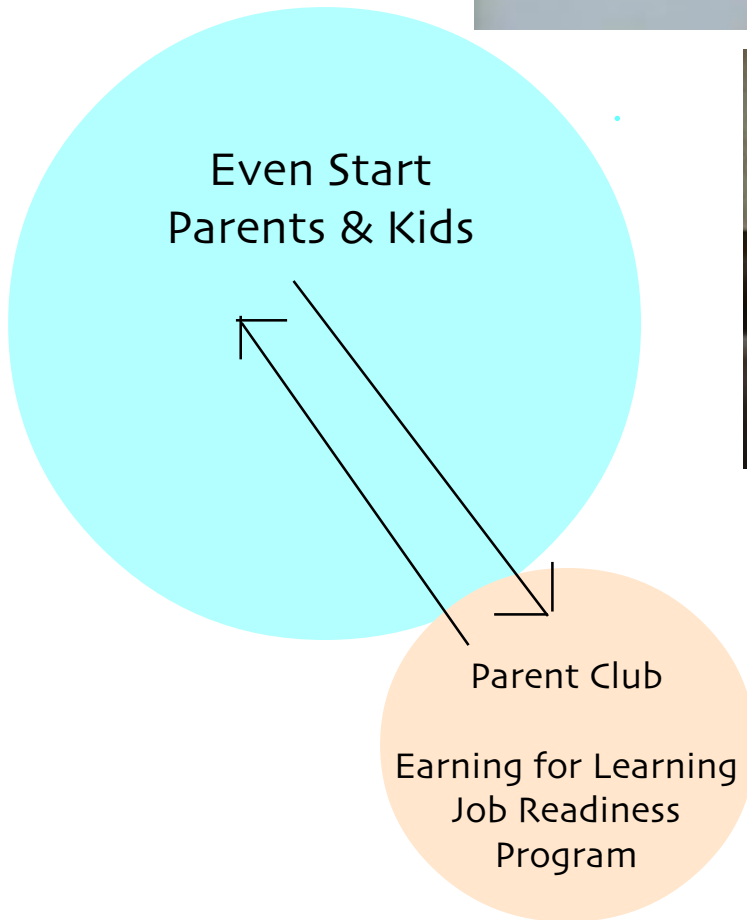


Interview with Lynn Gamble, Parent Assistant

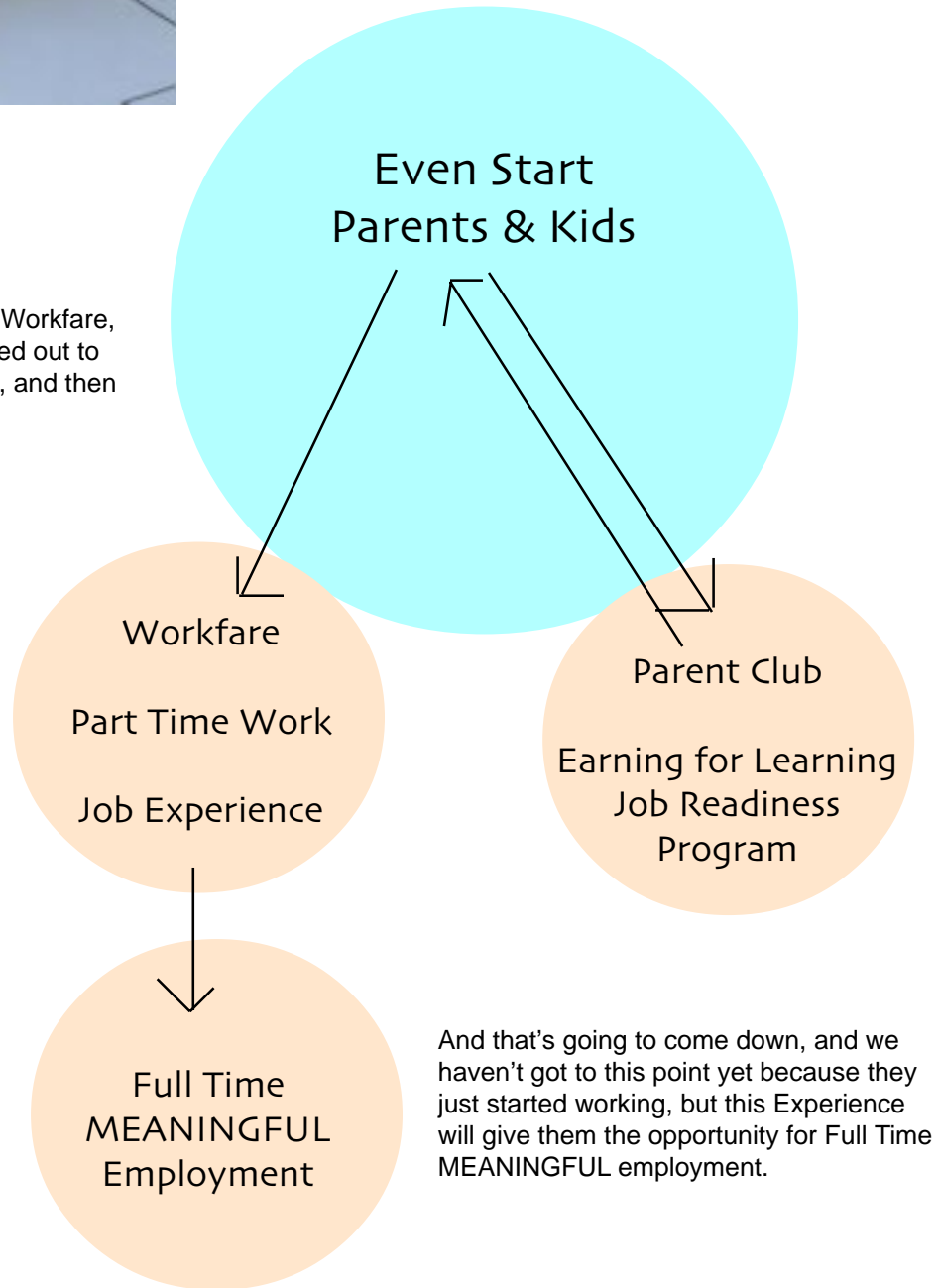
Now this big circle is Even Start. And we have Parents and Kids,



Parents branched off to the Parent Club.
And they also branched off to Earning for Living --
Job Readiness Program



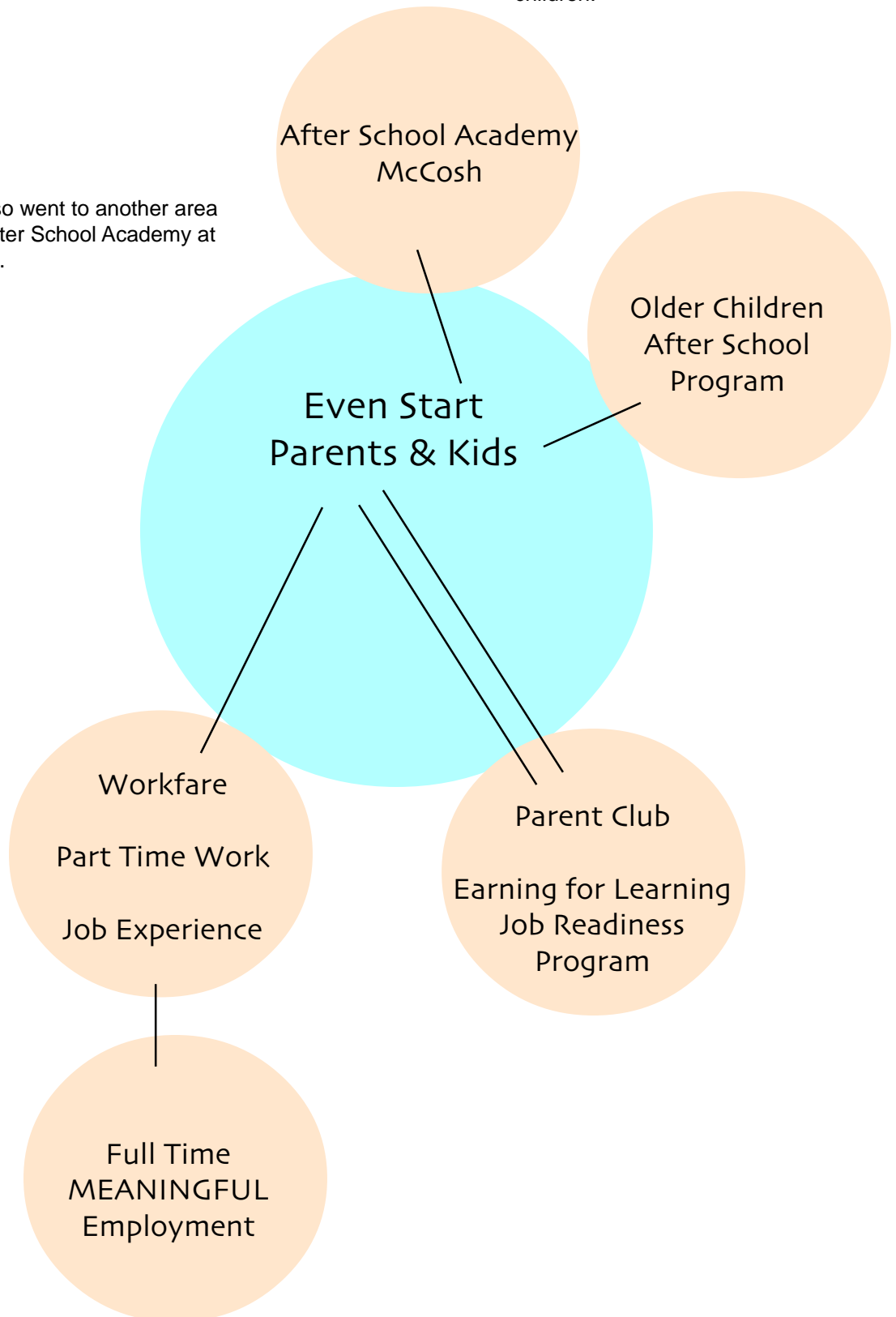
Parents also went to Workfare, and then that branched out to Part Time Work, jobs, and then that branched out to Experience.



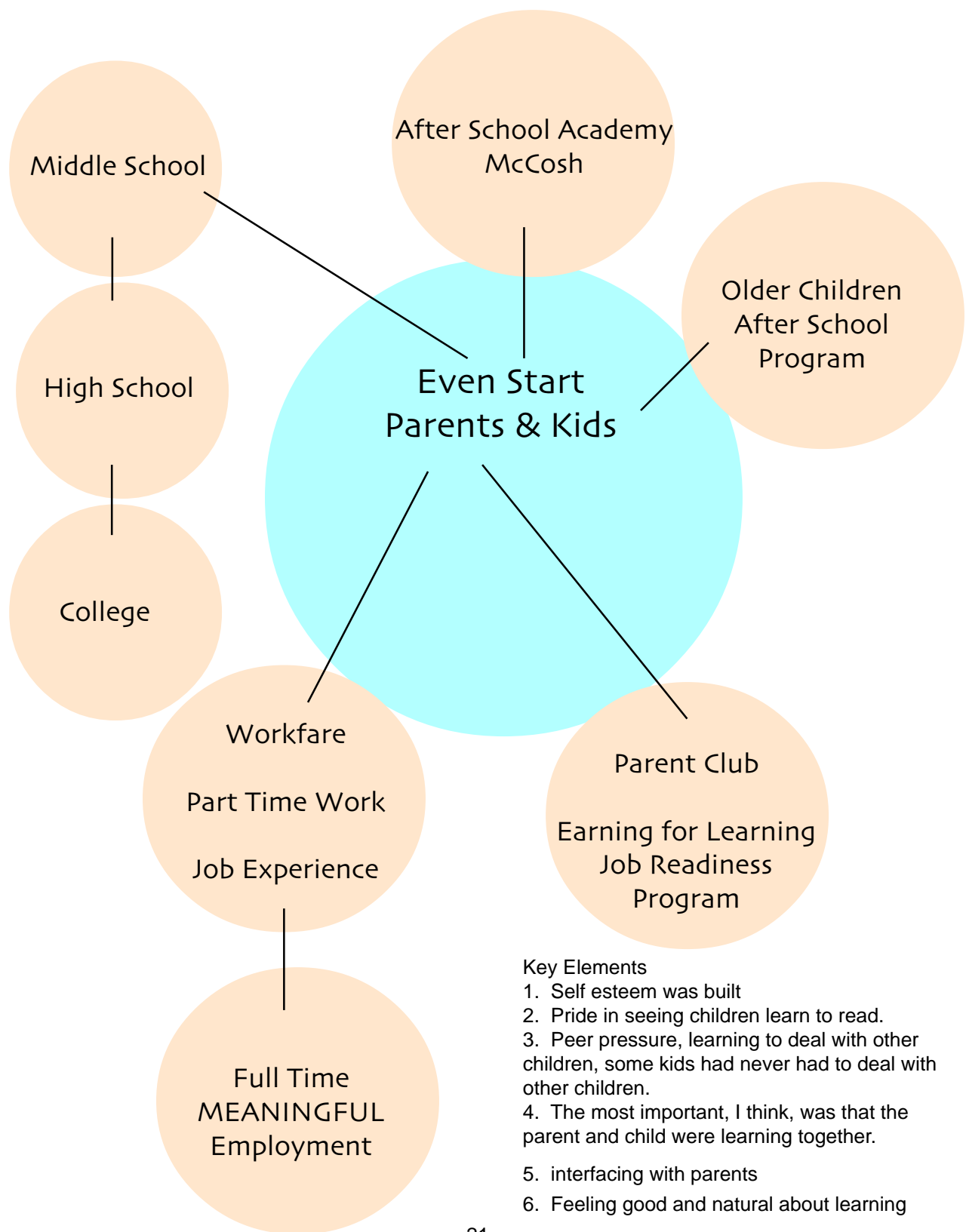
“Being trained means nothing if you can't get a job. Its a waste of your time.”

Now the kids went from here to other After School Programs because of age. Older children.

They also went to another area of the After School Academy at McCosh.



Now these kids hooked up from pre-school to kindergartern. And they moved on to primary and then to middle school. And hopefully the original goal would be college, I am almost going to eliminate high school because we want high school to be mandatory and college to be our goal. College goals, and that's basically how it all branched down.



This is my personal opinion now. I don't think children learn very well when they are forced to learn. I think if you provide an atmosphere of freedom and natural ability to learn, children learn much better. And Even Start accomplishes that if it does not accomplish anything else. We never have to tell a kid to go on a computer. And we never have to tell a kid to go ahead and read now. That's automatic, they just run in there and do it.

Children learn routine, which is hard to teach a kid. They also learn to follow instructions. To respect property. And most important to respect each other. Very seldom do we have anybody arguing over the computers or seats or anything like that. They have learned to settle those differences without any problems. And they have found out that a teacher is just another grown up. And that's what the children talk to me about. That they really like the teachers when they are up here because it is like it's their special teacher. Its not like a class with 30 kids, they have got her all to themselves. And the children enjoy that and it makes them feel special.

Once a kid feels comfortable with an adult, you have accomplished something. You have not accomplished anything with a child if they are doing something because you ordered them to do so, or you had demanded them to do so , or because you have used some superficial authority on them. Children should come to adults naturally. And adults need to come to children naturally.

What I would like to recommend if a parent got a job and the kid is in the program, we could still allow that kids to come (to Even Start.)

The path that each group of parents seems to follow through Even Start is that they start out with field trips which are fun, and coming to the after school program where they are reading and working with their children. They then begin to focus more on their own career goals, and become involved with the parent club, work with computers, go on job related field trips. As they become more confident, they ended up going out and getting jobs. Once parents have "graduated" they continue to return to Even Start for outings and activities, such as Saturday field trips.

We are hoping to add next year an intership program where parents who are not quite ready for jobs, could get job training working in Even Start as interns.

Dr. Elizabeth Landerholm, Project Director