KIDIMAKE Project (KDMK)
Ino Maria SIMITSEK

To visit Kidimake. https://about.me/inomariasimitsek

About the author: Ino Maria SIMITSEK

Born in Geneva, Ino Maria SIMITSEK did her school level education in Paris and Athens. Back in Geneva, she obtained a Master of Science in mathematics and computer sciences from the University of Geneva. Then, she worked for more than ten years in the field of software development, occupying various positions from software developer to project manager. Wanting to apply her acquired experience in the field of education, she returned to university and obtained a Master of Science in Learning and Teaching Technologies. Since then, she works as an appointed high school teacher of mathematics and technologies. At the same time, she actively participates in various projects relative to ICT in education under the aegis of the DIP (Swiss Public Instruction state department) and the SATW (Swiss Academy of Engineering Sciences). These projects range from topics relative to hybrid education, online-community of practices, train-the-trainer seminars, web 2.0 community management, ICT and society, transversals capacities to e-inclusion Living-Labs. Ino likes teaching as well as imagining and implementing new techno-pedagogical environments.

KIDIMAKE Project (KDMK)

Kidimake was born in January 2014, in Carouge in Geneva, from a passion that has developed around digital technologies, the culture of doing, of doing together, of doing today. For children from 6 years old but also their parents, Kidimake designs and offers workshops with the aim of developing their capacities as creative thinkers. Kidimake's activities took the form of **"Goûters Numériques"** (digital Snacks) and one-off events on a larger scale.

Today, we have to our credit 23 "Goûters Numériques" on various themes such as: coding, 3D printing, robotics and electronics.

"Hydraulic Creations", "Straw Inventions", "Lego that Moves", "Art and Technology" are some of the titles of scenarios we have imagined and implemented. The "après-midi de bidouille en famille" (afternoon of tinkering in family) is a great event that we created with the "Maison de Quartier de Carouge" and the **Centre Universitaire d'Informatique** (CUI Geneva). More than 250 people participated. Kidimake also proposed workshops at **LIFT 2016** and took part, as an organizer, in international events like the "European maker week" or the "European Code Week".

We have been hosted in various places like the Labo-Cité and recently the **Flux Laboratory Geneva**. In total, **more than 950 children and parents** have participated in Kidimake events. A video realized by Aurélie COULON, for the newspaper "Le Temps", gives an overview of our work[1].

Our added value is not to propose a simple technological content but to create real educational scenarios in order to inculcate a state of mind. We cultivate creativity, the ability to cooperate, and empathy to offer the opportunity to take an active posture of researchers and inventor. Also, we take great care to offer activities that appeal to girls for whom we hope to function as a "Role Model".

The success of our events has exceeded all our expectations!

[1]To see the video: https://www.letemps.ch/images/video/enfants-sinitient-programmation-informatique-robotique

WHY KIDIMAKE?

BECAUSE CHILDREN ARE NATURALLY CREATIVE: to be creative is to combine, explore and transform. Curious, children ask why and imagine possibilities. As they play, they wonder *if*, and *how* the ordinary can become extraordinary, fantasy and fiction.

BECAUSE ADULTS HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE: children's natural creativity can only bloom if the adults around them are receptive to their needs and interests. Children's creativity must be nurtured and supported.

BECAUSE YOU DON'T CREATE ALONE: creating is imagining new possibilities, creating something from an idea and experimenting. Creating is also about sharing with others. Sharing transforms the creative moment into an iterative dynamic of creativity.

BECAUSE SYSTEMS ARE ESSENTIAL TO CREATIVITY: the child also needs constraints to create. They need a system that guides creativity while allowing enough freedom to explore and experiment. They also need a system where it is possible to make mistakes.

BECAUSE DIGITALITY INCREASE CREATIVITY: the digital age is the era of the share culture, the DIY (do-it-yourself) culture, the maker culture, the hands-on culture and the hacking culture. It is also the era of the redesign of our industrial ecosystem with new places like FABLABs, open prototyping spaces and new making objects spaces. They come in the form of open objects, to be finished or hijacked. New tools are used such as digitally controlled machines or amateur 3D printing. New methods are created: open design, citizen data, etc. New practices are emerging such as the gift and recycling economy, do-ocracy with new actors such as pro-amateurs.

BECAUSE TECHNOLOGY HAS BECOME ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE: we benefit today from the considerable efforts undertaken to popularize science and also to make technology accessible to everyone, including children.

BECAUSE GIRLS SUFFER FROM A MISPERCEPTION: girls are interested in computers and science, but few choose this path. They are still too often the victims of a misperception of their place and their abilities in these fields.

BECAUSE IT IS OUR JOB TO PREPARE YOUNG PEOPLE FOR THE CHALLENGES OF THE FUTURE...: tomorrow, digital technology will be everywhere. Algorithms will become omnipresent in our lives. We will find them in computers, objects and even bodies. Robots will complement today's machines. The young people of the new generation will be engaged first in problem solving and become co-creators. Mastering the technological world around them will become a matter of freedom. It is therefore important to maintain the link with children's innate creativity and cultivate their abilities, imagine possibilities, build, and participate. It is essential to help children master their technological environment so that they can act on it and become actors rather than passive consumers.

This is what KIDIMAKE is: a **socio-technical environment that creates habits and offers the necessary tools to lead the creative child to the adult capable of actively participating and shaping his/her technological environment.**

PARENTS SPEAK: RESPONSES TO A SURVEY

- Many thanks again for the workshop on Saturday! It was wonderful! Thank you so much. - 11.2017.

- Our son likes everything about your workshops. Our only wish: that Kidimake would hold weekly classes and/or vacation workshops in addition to the Saturday workshops! - 03.2017.

- I confess that I only came once with my daughter. But for us, it was a great experience, must do again! What we liked was the atmosphere in general, very nice, and the workshops very rewarding. We would like to do it more often. My daughter is "shared" on weekends. So, every other weekend when she is with me, there is not always a Kidimake workshop. Preferably when the weather is not good (autumn = perfect). Because when the weather is nice, we prefer outdoor activities. An idea to develop would be the organization of "birthday party", with an activity part followed by the snack (at the neighborhood house of Carouge at the Tambourine) - 03.2017.

- Sincerely everything was GREAT! - 03.2017.

- We really enjoyed the family day (about 2-3 years ago?). The younger kids had activities (crafts) for their age group, while the older kids had all sorts of workshops such as Lego building, making a little drawing robot, creating boxes for cell phone and 3D printers. It was a great day of discovery where everyone was able to participate in the workshop of their choice or try them all! - 03.2017.

- Very good workshops given by a dynamic and passionate team. Do not change anything! It is often no longer possible to register because it is full, but it is normal to limit registrations. An idea would be to create games/musical instruments, explore sounds, etc. with recycled objects, for example - 03.2017.

- Thank you for all your hard work and enthusiasm! On our side, our son is 12 years old and 1m68, so he doesn't necessarily belong in "kidimake" anymore, but I can only encourage you to continue! - 03.2017.

- It's nice to keep the concept of 2 workshops in parallel: one for the older kids, and one for the younger ones (my kids are 8 and 10). Do you plan to introduce programming activities on media such as Lego Mindstorm or 3D printing? No doubt, the investments needed for that are disproportionate, but I allow myself to ask the question - 03.2017.

- What do we like about Kidimake? The fact that you already exist! The encounter, shamefully neglected by the public school that you propose with the new technologies and the possibility to tame them. What should be improved during the workshops? ...I think...no, nothing in sight!

- Another idea? Workshops for more older children? - 03.2017.

- I think the Kidimake workshops are perfect. My only suggestion would be to do more of them so that the kids can be creatively challenged more frequently - 03.2017.

KIDIMAKE, TODAY

Since 2020, Kidimake's activities are diversifying, we propose "books and digital" workshops specially designed for libraries, a nomadic course of "digital challenges" as well as playful workshops for the vacations. Here again, the success is there.

The details of our activities are on the web

- Website: www.kidimake.ch
- Kidimake, the blog: https://kdmk.social-in3.coop/blog-2/
- Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/kidimake
- Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/kidimake