The Northern Rockies Arts Council Presents:

The Artist Spotlight Series

Allyssa Eklund

of Pink Elephant Creations

In a 16-by-14-foot studio that doubles as a family space, Allyssa Eklund sits at her sewing machine while her children play nearby. A show hums in the background, her husband relaxes close by, and fabric moves steadily through her hands—easy, practiced, familiar.

"He sits there and watches TV or my kids do, and I sew… it's a big family space."

It's not a separate, quiet studio tucked away from life. It's part of it.

Here, clothing is made in the middle of everyday moments—between play, conversation, and the gentle rhythm of home. And that closeness shows up in the work itself: pieces designed not just to look good, but to feel good, move well, and actually keep up with the lives they're made for.

Artist Profile

Artist:

Allyssa Eklund

Business / Studio:

Pink Elephant Creations

Location:

Fort Nelson, BC, Canada

Medium / Craft:

Children's clothing

Signature Work:

Grow-with-me bamboo clothing and sensory friendly designs

Materials:

Bamboo

Artist Quote:

"Take every opportunity to learn, find the time to go to that class, and just start."

Where to Find:

Facebook & Instagram @Pink Elephant Creations

Beginnings

"I was really familiar with what kids need... and what's lacking sometimes."

Allyssa's path into sewing began early, sparked by watching quilts come together in a dayhome—receiving blankets turned into something lasting.

"The mom at my dayhome made her kids handmade rag quilts… and I thought that was the coolest thing I'd ever seen."

Years later, during a university Easter break, she had the chance to learn for herself. A friend's mother offered to teach her quilting, and Allyssa didn't hesitate.

"When she offered to show me, I jumped on it."

She spent three weekends learning, then continued quilting for years—eventually working in a quilt shop, where she deepened her understanding of materials and processes.

At the time, though, her life was moving in a different direction.

After a serious car accident at seventeen, Allyssa was drawn toward healthcare, enrolling in nursing with the hope of helping others the way she had been helped. But over time, she realized it wasn't quite the right fit.

"I enjoyed talking to patients… learning about their lives and their stories. But the actual nursing wasn't serving me."

She pivoted into social work, where she spent nearly eight years supporting children and families—especially those navigating sensory and behavioural challenges.

"I was really familiar with what kids need… and what's lacking sometimes."

Practice

Allyssa's creative practice grew out of everyday life.

"Sometimes it's seeing something at a store and being like, okay—how can I make this myself? How can I make it more sustainable, or more affordable?"

She began by sewing practical items—snack bags, bread bags—anything that helped reduce reliance on disposable materials. Over time, that curiosity expanded into clothing, especially after becoming a mom.

Using a secondhand sewing machine and knowledge gathered from online communities, she started experimenting.

"I like to try things out, figure out what I want to do… and kids' stuff is smaller, so it was fun to experiment."

Her designs are grounded in comfort and ease:

soft, tagless construction

no zippers or harsh fastenings

flexible fits that allow movement and growth

Many pieces are designed to grow with the child, spanning multiple sizes.

"A lot of what I focus on is grow-with-me clothing… it spans multiple sizes.

"Sometimes it's seeing something at a store and being like, okay—how can I make this myself? How can I make it more sustainable, or more affordable?"

We don't need something the kids outgrow in six months… this can last and be handed down."

Others include thoughtful features that come directly from lived experience—like back-access diaper designs.

"It's very nice and smooth… easy for the car seat and easy to change diapers."

Material choice is just as intentional. Allyssa often works with bamboo, particularly for its comfort and breathability.

"I just find if I'm wearing something polyester, my skin's not breathing… it's getting trapped. Bamboo lets it breathe."

She sources from Canadian suppliers when possible and incorporates deadstock materials—textiles that would otherwise go to waste.

"They're getting it from movie sets or store closings… things that would have probably gone to the landfill."

> "if I'm wearing something polyester, my skin's not breathing."

Meaning

At the heart of Allyssa's work is a deep understanding of children—not just as wearers of clothing, but as individuals experiencing the world through their bodies.

Her background in social work plays a key role in that.

"I've worked with a lot of kids with sensory challenges… finding something that works better for that kid."

Her clothing reflects that awareness—designed to support rather than restrict.

"I believe in play… and we don't always realize how much clothing can limit it."

There's also a strong sense of intention behind everything she creates. Allyssa describes herself as a minimalist, someone who prefers to make fewer, better things.

Her goal is to create pieces that last—not just in durability, but in usefulness—items that can move through families, from one child to the next.

Even the act of creating itself carries meaning.

"Time's a big one… but it's what makes me happy."

"I think it's so important to have something that makes you feel like you outside of just your kids."

Looking Ahead

"I like my creations to be unique... you won't see another kid on the playground wearing the same thing."

Right now, Allyssa shares her work mainly through local markets and social media, where her pieces remain largely one-of-a-kind.

"I like my creations to be unique… you won't see another kid on the playground wearing the same thing."

That individuality, paired with thoughtful design, continues to shape the growth of Pink Elephant Creations. She remains connected to a broader creative community as well—learning through sewing groups, sharing ideas, and adapting techniques.

"There's this huge network now through social media… it's the best to share and get feedback."

Her approach to growth stays grounded in curiosity and openness. "Take every opportunity to learn… find the time to go to that class, and just start."

Made for Real Life

In a world that often moves quickly and produces even faster, Allyssa's work feels refreshingly steady.

It's thoughtful without being complicated.

Practical without losing creativity.

And rooted in real life—messy, busy, and full.

In a shared studio where kids play and fabric shifts throughout the day, she continues to create pieces that meet children exactly where they are—comfortable, capable, and ready to move through the world on their own terms.

Video & Photography By: Ryan Dickie | Podcast By: Devin Bellerose | Article By: Esme Stephens | Northern Rockies Arts Council | northernrockiesartscouncil.ca

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