



Why Art and Creativity Are Important for Children

Art and creativity teach problem-solving, which is a critical skill for success in children's life. By engaging in artistic activities, children develop confidence in their abilities, and they learn how to innovate. The importance is paramount. Arts and creativity nurture well-being and assist learners in creating the connections between objects.

Fine and Gross Motor Skills:

Toddlers who pick up a crayon or a marker and begin drawing have initiated the development of their motor skills. While it may seem that these random scribbles mean nothing, children connect their drawings with thought and narration, and their bodies begin developing motor skills. Eventually scribbles become fine lines or bold strokes, and words become stories that appear on the page.

Motor skills prepare children for each stage in their development as learners. By developing eye-hand coordination and fine motor skills, children begin to prepare for understanding complex ideas like relationships, shapes and numbers. This development is not possible without arts and creativity. The arts encourage risk-free exploration, and it is this freedom that builds confidence.

Your preschooler is having a blast finger-painting with a mix of colours. Trying to be encouraging, you ask your child, "What are you making?" and your child shrugs. Until you mentioned it, your child had not given it any thought. Children are masters of the moment, they love the way it feels when they smear paint on paper, how it looks when they sprinkle glitter, and even the soft sound a brush makes as it crosses the page. Unlike older children and adults, most toddlers and preschoolers are not self-conscious about what they are doing or focusing on creating a finished product. But letting go and allowing children to enjoy the process of creation can reap big rewards. Children will be better off in the long run if they are allowed just to be in the moment and express themselves.

Why Art?

By fostering creativity, you are also helping your child develop mentally, socially, and emotionally, creating art may boost young children's ability to analyze and problem solve. As children manipulate a paintbrush, their fine motor skills improve. By counting pieces and colours, they learn the basics of math. When children experiment with materials, they dabble in science. Most important perhaps, when children feel good while they are creating, art helps boost their self-confidence, and children who are able to experiment and make mistakes, feel free to invent new ways of thinking, which extends well beyond the craft room.

6 Ways to Inspire Creativity:

1. **Prepare for a mess.** Set up an art space where your child can be free to experiment and get messy, throw a drop cloth or newspaper on top of your kitchen table or in the garage. If weather permits, let your child paint outside.
2. **Avoid giving direction.** Do not tell your child what to make or how to make it. Instead of saying, "Paint a rainbow," encourage your child to "experiment with mixing colors using different types of brushes and paper."
3. **Speak specifically about art.** When talking to your child about the artwork, try to be precise in your comments. For instance, instead of giving a generic compliment, say, "I see you used a lot of purple. Why did you choose that color?"
4. **Explore your child's process.** Often the best way to encourage conversation about your child's art is simply to say, "Tell me about what you made," or ask, "Did you have fun making it?"
5. **Do not draw with your child.** When parents draw something representational while a younger child is sketching, it can frustrate the child, "It's better to be near and let your child know that you are interested and supportive of the art-making,"
6. **Let it be.** When a child finishes a piece, do not suggest additions or changes, It is important for your child to feel that what is created is enough, even if it is just a dot on the page.

The Ultimate Art-Supply List for your child:

- Modeling clay, chalk, washable paint, paintbrushes, cotton swabs, sponges, stamps and inkpads
- Washable markers, crayons, colored pencils, plain and colored paper, tissue paper, scissors, glue
- Craft foam, ice-pop sticks, pom-poms, feathers, felt, fabric, colored tape, buttons, cotton balls
- Sequins and glitter, ribbon, yarn, string, beads, drinking straws, egg cartons, cardboard tubes
- Cupcake liners, paper plates, clothespins, plastic cutlery, magazines, newspapers, catalogs
- Wallpaper samples, wax paper, aluminum foil etc.
- Stock up on crayons, markers, paint, and more art supplies as your supplies gets low.

Having the ultimate art-supplies for your child who is very much into exploring art and creativity can be very rewarding.