



Develop Your Skills:

Using Art to Foster Healthy Child Development

Introduction

Through art nannies can support children in exploring, discovering and creating and learning in an environment that is free. Art is a natural language for children. Children gravitate towards the process of creating. Through art nannies can help children learn through their senses in an environment that isn't teaching them something is right or wrong, and the act of making it can be very soothing and a wonderful act of self-expression.

By facilitating the art process nannies can also foster healthy child development. Through making art, young children are able to work on their fine motor skills and build the muscles that will be a crucial part of their development in the future. It can also be a tool through which they better understand other subjects.

While art is an important tool that provides developmental benefits at the motor, socio-emotional and cognitive level, it is fundamentally an expressive exercise. Learning about art and its impact on development will be a fundamental advantage for nannies, as most adults, while meaning well, are misinformed about the best ways to encourage creativity and artistic expression in children. Art is about expressing what we feel inside, how we view the world and taking an idea from our imagination into the concrete.

This toolkit explains some of the benefits of art for young children, and ends with some sample art lesson plans for children of different ages.

The Benefits of Art for Young Children

Children benefit from art in many ways, including:

- Physical benefits: Through art, children develop fine and gross motor skills (movement, coordination).
- Socio-emotional benefits: Art builds confidence, gives children a personal voice, helps them learn how to communicate feelings without using words, helps them learn to collaborate, creates higher levels of social tolerance, and fosters greater empathy.
- Cognitive benefits: Art develops visual learning, decision making, inventiveness, cultural awareness, language development, creative problem solving. Through art, children learn to observe, describe, analyze, interpret and reflect.



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The Developmental Stages of Art

The ways a child draws or paints reflects the child's developmental stage.

0-2 Year Olds	The Scribble Stage: • The child manipulates drawing tools and random mark making, for example, dots, lines, etc. • The child enjoys large movements and the chance to move around freely • The child has no concern for drawing symbols as objects and doesn't try to portray anything in the physical world • For children of this age, art is purely kinesthetic and imaginative. Kinesthetic learners especially need body movement and hands-on work. • Children use lots of circular movement
3-5 Year Olds	The Pre-Schematic Stage: • The child produces representative symbols for objects, for example circles, squares, lines • The child exhibits 'floating' organization and objects drawn while turning paper • Fine motor skills begin to improve: the child starts to learn to cut, draw shapes Stage of Symbols: • The child starts to make the connection between shapes and objects in their environment, for example a circle used for head or bicycle wheels • 4-5 year olds begin to tell stories with their drawings and work out 'problems' in their art
5-7 Year Olds	The Schematic Stage: • This stage is characterized by repetition of familiar objects. The child has developed a set of symbols, for example lollipop trees, houses that look the same • The child organizes drawing with multiple base lines, for example transparent houses mixed with top view and side views or creates a horizon line • Art work is carefully composed and may start to include writing



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Lesson Plan: Paper Making



Supplies:	Scrap paper, blender, screen/flat strainer- can staple a screen to a wood frame, glitter, seeds, sponge, rectangular container, flowers, soft felt sheets
Process:	1. Start by tearing the scraps of paper into tiny pieces. 2. Place scraps of paper in the blender. Cover the paper with water. Blend the paper until it turns into a pulp. 3. Place screen on the container and pour the pulp onto the screen. 4. Shape paper pulp into desired shape. 5. Add glitter flowers, and seeds. 6. Press the pulp down using the sponge. *You want to push as much water through the screen as possible. 7. Flip the pulp onto a piece of felt and press it gently with sponge. 8. Let it dry overnight on the felt.
Discussion Questions:	Before: • What are fibers? • How is paper made? • What does recycling mean? • What makes paper recyclable? After: • How long do you think it'll take for the paper to dry? • What are some other things we could've added to our handmade paper? • What are you going to use the paper for? • Is our paper recyclable?



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Lesson Plan: Make Your Own Paintbrushes



Supplies:	• Clothespins, scissors, tempera paint, multimedia paper, palettes • Brush ideas: scouring pad, muffin liner, burlap, cosmetic wedge, pom poms, cupcake liners, sponges, bubble wrap, leaves, flowers, foam, yarn, plastic grids, feathers, cotton balls, loofah sponges
Process:	1. Cut brush materials into small pieces so the clothespins can be clipped on. 2. Set up the paint table and squeeze paints onto the palette. 3. Have students clip the clothespin onto the material and dip them in paint. 4. Experiment with different brush materials and different ranges of brush strokes. 5. Set paintings aside to dry.
Discussion Questions:	Before: • What are some tools we use to paint? • Can you think of any materials we can use to paint? • Will the brushstrokes look the same as regular bristle paint brushes? After: • Have children share their paintings and explain what material they used to make different marks. • What did you notice when you used ____ material? • Were you surprised about some of the marks you made? • What are other materials we could've used?



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Lesson Plan: Food Printed Handkerchief



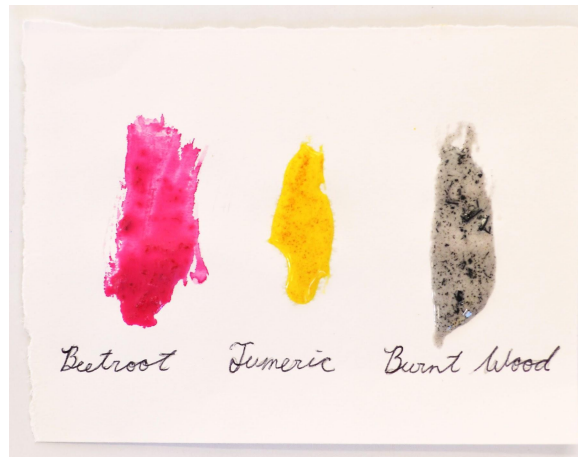
Supplies:	Fabric paints, paint brushes, multimedia paper, assorted vegetables and fruit, ex. apples, okra, peppers, star fruit, celery, knife, white fabric, palettes, glitter, sequins, white glue
Process:	Adult prep: 1. Cut fabric into 10" x 10" squares. 2. Squeeze fabric paint on fabric. 3. Cut vegetables and fruits into small pieces. Keep in mind as you cut them, that the shape of the vegetable or fruit will be the what is printed on the fabric. You want to create an interesting shape while maintaining the vegetable or fruit's natural shape. Project: 1. Have children feel the vegetables or fruits and smell them. 2. Brush fabric paint on cut vegetable or fruit of their choice. 3. Stamp the vegetable or fruit onto the fabric to create a print. 4. Experiment with all the vegetables and fruits available, compare shapes, scents, etc. 5. Use white glue to attach glitter and sequins to their handkerchief.
Discussion Questions:	Before: • What vegetable/fruit it this? • What does it feel/smell like? • What does it look like before it was cut? • What do you think it'll look like when we stamp it? • Does the shape remind you of anything? After: • What shapes did you create? • Did you stamp the vegetables/ fruits in a specific pattern? • Have children share their handkerchief and explain which vegetable/fruit they used to create their pattern. • What colors did you use?



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Lesson Plan: Make Your Own Paints



Supplies:	Cornstarch, tray, water, multimedia paper, cups, spoons, grater- optional, mortar and pestle- optional, ingredients to experiment with ex. turmeric, burnt wood, charcoal, beetroot, berries, spinach, pomegranate, flowers and leaves, etc.
Process:	1. Set ingredients and tools out for children. 2. Have them grate, cut, rip, crush, etc the ingredients and experiment with ways they can extract pigments from it 3. Mix pigments with cornstarch and a bit of water. 4. Have students test out their paint and label what ingredients they used to create it 5. Talk about the results with your charge.
Discussion Questions:	Before: • How did people create art in prehistoric times, before there was paint? • Did they make their own art supplies? • What do you think they used? After: • What ingredients gave you a brighter color? • Did you mix multiple ingredients together? What were the results? • What were some of the methods you used to extract pigments from the ingredients?



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Talking to Parents about Art

How do you talk with parents about art sessions?

- It's super important to explain the activities their child participated in, materials they used, knowledge they gathered because this might not be evident from the product the parent sees. Emphasize the process!
- Taking photographs of the process.
- Face to face explanation of the artwork at the end of the day.

Join Us and Find out More!

This tip sheet was developed by the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA), an alliance of nannies, care workers and housecleaners working together for rights and dignity. We invite you to join us! NDWA members get special benefits and access to trainings on topics like this one. Visit www.domesticworkers.org to find out more.

This tip sheet was put together by domestic workers and advocates and is not to be understood as direct medical or legal advice. For legal or medical assistance, please consult a healthcare or legal professional.