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## **Children Crafts Are Kids Play**

**By Candice Sabrina**

Rainy days and summer vacations always cause mothers and teachers a moment of dismay. How to entertain the children if they can't go outside and play? Better yet, what kinds of children crafts will help to break up a day filled with lesson plans, errands and other responsibilities?

Children crafts are as varied as the types of children they're meant to entertain. For younger kids, crayons, coloring books and plastic figurines will keep kids busy for hours, but many parents and teachers prefer a more 'hands-on' approach to crafts.

In the old days, our parents made us play clay out of flour, salt and water. That was great stuff, but today, Play Doh is more popular than ever and is a cheap craft that kids from 2 to 10 will enjoy playing with. Many of these types of dough, including sculpturing clay, will allow children to create animals, monsters and anything in between.

Children crafts can be created with simple ingredients like paper, glue, scissors and crayons or markers. Designing cards, masterpieces or just scribbling will keep various age groups entertained, and only imagination is the limit to what children can produce if given the opportunity.

Watercolors and paintbrushes are also a favorite with kids, and finger-painting is still as popular as it was thirty or forty years ago. If you don't want the mess of paints, crayons or markers, try beads, yarn and plastic needles to help your kids create construction paper animals or pockets for letters, chores or homework assignments.

Children crafts are an important part of your child's life and help to encourage creativity and ingenuity. There are no right or wrong crafts to choose for kids, other than making sure that they are age appropriate. Younger children may need supervision and help at times, but older children are fine in creating and designing things out of whatever craft supplies you have on hand.

A child, a box and a box of crayons can be turned into fun children crafts when making spaceships or forts, and encouraging children to use their imagination provides ample stimulation for their creativity. Lacing beads, yarns and glues and old socks can be turned into animals that will delight your children and give them a sense of pride and accomplishment when they see what they can create from a few

spare parts.

Children love to draw, and large pads of drawing paper placed on an easel will provide ample opportunities for your child to discover the joys of pencil, crayon, marker, watercolors and paints. Remember, even Michelangelo had to start somewhere!

No matter that type of children crafts you choose, make sure that floor space is protected to eliminate stress for already busy Mom's and Dad's, and that any craft supplies that you have gathered for your children are age appropriate. Offering praise, even if you don't know what you're looking at when your child shows you his or her masterpiece, is a great way to instill confidence and pride in accomplishment with children.

For more information on crafts, try visiting <http://www.craftguidance.com> - a website that specializes in providing craft related tips, advice and resources to include information on children's crafts.

## Arts and Crafts For Kids in Daycares & Schools

By Chris Peace

Although most parents are the ones who provide their children with the arts and crafts for kids, there are other places where these useful tools can also be found. For example, children may get some valuable time with these tools at the babysitter's house or in kindergarten. If you are running any type of facility for children whether you're watching them for parents or educating them or both, you should definitely consider adding more arts and crafts for kids. Below are several great reasons to make this change.

### Boredom Free

One thing you never want when you're working with children is for them to become bored. That's when the trouble starts. Of course, you also don't want them to be running around a playground or sitting in front of a television all day either. By giving them arts and crafts for kids you can provide both mental and physical stimulation in one package. You can have complete control of the arts and crafts for kids they receive so you can take precautions to keep your home or facility from being destroyed by paint or markers (colored pencils are a good alternative).

At the end of the day, the children can return to their parents with some nice artwork or finished craft projects which makes everyone happy.

### Learning Potential

While most people think arts and crafts for kids are all about fun, they can also be very useful for real learning. For example, if you give each child a handy sketchbook and some colored pencils you could end up with the tools for learning. Here's an example. If you want to work on the alphabet, draw a letter on a whiteboard where all of the kids can see it. Don't say the letter but ask all of the kids to draw a picture of a thing that starts with that letter. If you had an S on the board, for instance, the kids might draw a snake or a stereo.

Another idea for a learning activity using arts and crafts for kids is to ask the children to create a visual interpretation of a math problem. For example, if you want the kids to find the answer to "2 + 2" then have them draw a picture to help them. The child might draw two ice cream cones and two dogs then can count the pictures and know the answer is four.

### Alternative Activities

Having arts and crafts for kids is also a good idea if you want to make alternative activities for some kids. Not all children will want to do the same things at the same time. For example, some kids may want to watch a DVD before nap time, other children may want to play games, but some prefer quiet time alone. Having arts and crafts for kids is a good way to meet the needs of multiple kids at the same time.

### Meeting the Needs of Children

Having arts and crafts for kids at home, at care facilities, and at schools is an important way to

encourage creativity in children and to inspire good behavior.

Smalltime Child offers a great selection of arts and crafts for kids in addition to Toddler Toys.&nbsp; Check us out on the web at <http://www.smalltimechild.com>

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