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## **Using Arts and Crafts For Kids to Encourage Creativity**

**By Chris Peace**

Children can benefit greatly from their own creativity. While some people mistakenly classify creativity as the possession of specific types of skills related to artistic expression, that's only part of what the term comprises. Creative people typically are better problem solvers because they are able to seek out unique approaches and solutions that others may not recognize. This can be a useful skill for any career, for their education, and for their future. To help children reap these rewards, parents can use arts and crafts for kids and other efforts to encourage creativity.

### **Encourage Free Creative Exploration**

Handing over arts and crafts for kids is just part of the process. If you're standing over your children and passing judgment on their results, they are not going to feel comfortable with their creativity. Children will eventually develop the ability to evaluate their own work and others' work but now is the time for them to feel relaxed and free to use arts and crafts for kids as they see fit.

When children are given an environment that makes them feel free to be creative, they are going to open up their imagination and produce their best results.

### **Adapt to the Child's Ideas**

In many classrooms, kids are being reprimanded when their creative vision does not match the vision of the teacher. When you're giving arts and crafts for kids to your children, you should make sure not to stifle their ideas or to force those ideas to conform to your own. For example, if the child draws a picture of the park and uses unusual colors for the trees don't criticize the child's color choice. Instead, begin talking about the choice and give the child freedom to express their creative ideas verbally as well as with arts and crafts for kids.

### **Encourage Children to Use Creative Problem Solving**

Providing arts and crafts for kids is only one part of the process. You should also encourage your children to apply that creativity in other ways. For example, you could present your child with a problem and asked him or her to come up with a creative solution. Remember this requires thinking outside of traditional thought patterns. Not only can this be fun but it's a great extension to what your child is

learning from the arts and crafts for kids. It's also a good way to work on creativity together and to express your encouragement for creative thinking.

#### Look for Schools that Share Your Appreciation for Creativity

If you have a chance to choose your child's pre-school, kindergarten, or even primary school, make sure to look for schools that provide high quality arts and crafts for kids but that also have other methods of using creativity in the daily activities. You also want to work with teachers who share your vision about the importance of creativity and the appreciation for the role arts and crafts for kids can play in your child's future.

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>

## Top Types of Arts and Crafts For Kids

By Chris Peace

Children do best when their imaginations and creativity are being stimulated. That's why having plenty of arts and crafts for kids is important when you're raising a family, babysitting little ones, or running a school program. However, you may not know just how many types of arts and crafts for kids are available. Here are a few of the best ones to consider.

### Colored Pencils

Of all the arts and crafts for kids that are available, some of the best are colored pencils. These tools can open up whole worlds of creative possibilities for a young mind and small hands. They can pull out some coloring books and create their own masterpiece or they can draw their own unique picture using any type of paper you have around the house, even old paper grocery sacks!

The best part about these specific arts and crafts for kids, however, is they can be useful learning tools as well. Drawing is a good way of refining basic motor skills. The colors can be used to teach kids about their colors. They can even be used for teaching counting, following instructions (color by number sets are great for this), and more.

### Lacing Cards

While everyone has probably heard of colored pencils and crayons, not everyone is familiar with lacing cards which are quickly becoming another type of popular arts and crafts for kids. You can buy sets which include these cards that contain a picture surrounded by small holes. Along with the cards, your child receives colorful laces which are then "sewn" onto the card to finish off the picture.

These cards are popular because they allow kids to work on their fine motor skills and their eye hand coordination – both very important abilities for future activities, including everything from writing to sports to driving.

### Sketchbooks

Another fun arts and crafts for kids idea is to use sketchbooks. Basically, these are a compilation of blank art pages which children can use for creating their own creative vision of the world. From the stick figure version of the family to a sketch of the backyard or the neighbor's dog, these books are a great and easy way to encourage children to make the most of a blank canvas and to let their imaginations run loose. That's the main idea behind arts and crafts for kids: to encourage creativity and imagination.

### Enjoying the Fun

Of course, no matter what arts and crafts for kids your child enjoys the most there's no reason you should feel excluded. If you become active in these pastimes with your child then they will become even more memorable for both of you. Plus, you'll be improving your own creativity and imagination: something too many adults tend to give up once they hit puberty.

Just remember that having arts and crafts for kids isn't just a way to keep them entertained it's a way to help them have a more wonderful life and to appreciate the beauty of the world around them.

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