



Art Activities: Tips and Tricks

1. Entice children to participate

- "It's your turn!"
- "Let's paint a picture for Daddy."
- "I bet it will be fun if we..."
- "I know, we could..."



2. Keep it optional

- Make sure other activities (at least two) are open so those children not **actively** participating can have something interesting to do
- Consider doing art activities with small groups (2-3) of interested children while the other children participate in freeplay activities
- You cannot force creativity so don't force young children to participate in art activities

3. Process vs. Product

- For children 12-30+ months, art is about the process, not the final product
- If the children are told to copy a teacher's example, then it is not art (because the focus is on the product, not the process).
- Pay attention to the senses (how it feels, sounds, smells...) when talking with young children about their art experiences
- Keep it simple - too many steps or materials makes it difficult for the teacher and child to be positive and successful

4. Materials

- Crayons, markers, chalk, paper of various textures, cardboard, tissue paper, coffee filters, tape, things to glue down, lids/bottle caps (large), foams, stickers, glue sticks, contact paper, watercolor paints, tempera blocks, easel painting, natural objects (leaves, twigs...), stamps (toilet paper tubes, potato masher, cookie cutters...), fabric scraps, ribbon, playdough/clay and tools...
- Avoid food materials - gives a mixed message (it's okay to put pudding in my mouth, but is this paint or pudding? Should I put it in my mouth or smear it on the paper?)
- Glitter and glitter paint is considered a safety concern (young children can rub sharp particles into their eyes)
- Make sure materials are set up/available before you invite the children to participate. The children should not be expected to passively wait for you to get ready. If you need to get more materials give the children something to do before you leave - listen to a book, sing a song, play, go with you

5. Express joy and delight at children's discoveries