



The Art of Creativity

Art is a natural activity to support and help develop your child's creativity. Art supports a child's natural desire to explore and touch. Infants learn about their world through touch. When a child has the freedom to use materials in unique and unstructured ways, it promotes your child's creativity. As a child is experimenting with art, the child is learning fine motor, cognitive, math, language, and problem-solving skills. Also, art exploration enhances self-confidence. During art exploration, so long as the child is safe, one of the most important things parents can do is to let go of their ideas of how art should work. As adults, we need to allow the child to explore and create, even if the child spends the entire time putting marker lids on and off. When we give children this freedom, they discover, create, and experiment in new and innovative ways.

Here are some ways you can support your child's creativity:

- *Imitate your child*—Draw what your child is drawing instead of drawing your picture. Allowing the child to take the lead, supports the growth of your child's creativity.
- *Provide choices*—Provide different materials such as colored pencils, crayons, markers, chalk, white paper, colored paper, watercolors, non-toxic water-based paint, cardboard, or cloth. There are so many different materials to use, be creative.
- *Keep it open-ended*—Instead of sitting down with a specific plan of how the project should be, let your child explore.
- *Focus on the process, not the product*—Focus on your child's experimentation and exploration as it helps to keep your child motivated and builds your child's confidence and self-esteem. It teaches your child that your child's thoughts are valuable. Praise the creativity, effort, and hard work.
- *Let it go*—So long as your child is safe, let your child explore. Your child may spend time putting the crayons in and out of the box. As difficult as it may be, let it go. Your child is discovering and experimenting in new and creative ways.
- *Have fun*—Laugh, smile, and enjoy the moment. The same moment will never come again.



References: Rymanowicz, Kylie. (2015, January 22). *The art of creating: Why art is important for early childhood development.* , Michigan State University Extension. https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/the_art_of_creating_why_art_is_important_for_early_childhood_development