



Quality ChildCare

For Registered Home-Based Providers

LEARNING TO GROW ★ WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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10 Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

- ★ Build trusting relationships
- ★ Provide consistent care
- ★ Support children's health
- ★ Provide a safe environment
- ★ Provide positive guidance
- ★ Provide a language-rich environment
- ★ **Foster curiosity and development through play**
- ★ Individualize care and learning activities
- ★ Partner with parents
- ★ Pursue personal and professional growth

This Month's Hallmark of Quality Child Care

Foster Curiosity and Development through Play

Art Ideas for Your Program

Scribbles on a page, splashes of paint, and a blob of playdough may not look like much to you, but for young children, this is learning. For them, art is created for the experience, exploration, and experimentation. According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children, engaging in art has many benefits that include:

- **Encouraging creativity and imagination** – Art gives children the opportunity to explore different ideas, concepts, and perspectives as well as experiment with colors, shapes, and textures, and come up with unique creations. This process of creative thinking nurtures their imagination and helps them develop problem-solving skills that can be applied in other areas of life.
- **Building fine motor skills** – Art activities require children to manipulate various art materials, such as brushes, pencils, and clay, which helps improve their fine motor skills. As they learn to grip, control, and manipulate these tools, their hand-eye coordination, dexterity, and finger strength are developed. These skills are not only important for creating art but also for performing tasks, such as writing, tying shoelaces, and buttoning clothes.
- **Expressing their feelings** - Art can help children develop a sense of ownership and pride in their creations. It can also be therapeutic, helping children process difficult emotions and experiences.

Remember to give children time to explore the materials, allowing them to choose how they want to use them. Refrain from using coloring pages, telling them what to make, or creating a craft project for them to copy as these actions limit the children's creativity and learning. The best art for young children is begin with presenting the art materials and letting them explore in their own ways.

In this newsletter, we will share simple, age-appropriate and affordable art materials and activities that you can do with infants, toddlers, and preschoolers to make art accessible for all the children in your program.





Creating Art Experiences

You can create art experiences for children in your program using many things found in your home. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- Choose age-appropriate, non-toxic materials (e.g., look for the AP seal certifying material is non-toxic).
- Keep materials on shelves for older toddlers and preschoolers to use daily, but inaccessible to infants, such as in a box with a lid.
- Give guidance and model how to use the materials. For example, draw only on the paper or wear aprons when using paint.
- Use open-ended questions or prompts to talk with the children as they are creating. For example, “What can we make with these materials?”
- Display some of the children’s creations in the child care space at the children’s eye level to show that their work is valued.

The specific set-up of the art activities depends on the ages of the children in the group. Here are some things to consider:

- **Infants** - Art materials should be brought out when needed, put away when the activity is over, and stored out of the infants’ reach when not in use. Start by introducing simple art materials, such as water-based finger paints and dough. At



around age 1, you can have them start using a paintbrush with chubby handles or jumbo crayons. In addition, expose infants to different textures to feel the varied surfaces of objects. This helps infants get to know a variety of materials, which is a starting point for creating art experiences as they get older.

- **Toddlers** – Materials that are easy for them to grip should be available throughout the day and can include large crayons, washable markers, large paint brushes, finger paints, and soft, moldable clay or playdough. Some materials such as paint and glue or items that need more supervision, such as child-sized scissors, should be stored out of their reach and brought out only when needed.
- **Preschoolers** - Age-appropriate materials include paints (watercolor, finger, tempera), paint brushes, playdough, tissue paper, paper, child-safe scissors, glue, chalk, and markers. Additionally, you could offer recycled materials such as paper towel rolls, containers, boxes, newspaper, and wrapping paper.

Activity Ideas

Here are some art activities that you can do with children using items found in your home:

- **Texture Walk:** Find a variety of textured materials around your home, such as velvet fabric, bubble wrap, sandpaper/



bark, tile. Place the materials on the floor and encourage the children to touch the materials or crawl over them. Describe how the materials feel. For example, "This one is soft and fuzzy. This one is smooth and cold." This helps children get to know a variety of materials and can inspire them to use a variety of textures in their creations.

- **Toilet Paper Roll Art:** Use empty toilet paper rolls to inspire art creations. For example, use the rolls to make circle stamps by dipping them in paint and letting the children stamp onto a piece of paper. You can introduce the circle shape and they may create pictures or patterns, especially if there are a variety of paint colors to use. You can also create an art bin using toilet paper rolls and small collage pieces such as shredded paper, cotton balls, yarn pieces, tape, glue, and crayons. The children may be inspired to make puppets, flowers, or even binoculars. Supervise these activities closely, and avoid using small items such as beads or buttons that could be a choking hazard for young children.
- **Playdough:** Use a washable surface to place the playdough on and allow the



children to squish, knead, and roll it. You can also give them small props such as cookie cutters, plastic utensils, or nature items (leaves, sticks, pebbles) to help them be even more creative. Join in the fun and model different ways to use the dough or comment about what he is doing, such as "You are rolling the blue dough into a ball!"

- **Outdoor Art:** Art experiences can happen everywhere, including outdoors. Encourage outdoor art by painting with natural materials like flowers and leaves; exploring large-scale art like bubble wrap painting on boxes or large paper and chalk murals on the pavement; making temporary sculptures from mud and rocks; and using tools such as squeeze bottles or pipettes to paint with on large areas such as sheets or boxes. When painting outside, you could use water as the "paint" to have keiki still enjoy the process of art but without worrying about the clean-up.

Citations

Extension Alliance for Better Child Care. (2019). *The art center in child care*. <https://childcare.extension.org/the-art-center-in-child-care/>

NAEYC. (n.d.). *Art*. <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/art>

Training Opportunity

Art Center Makeover: Designing Organized Child-Centered Creative Spaces

Register for Early Childhood Investigations Webinars to view this recorded webinar and earn a 1.5-hour certificate of participation. This webinar gives strategies for creating an art area using household and repurposed materials.

<https://earlychildhoodwebinars.com/webinar/transform-your-preschool-art-center-to-expand-creativity-and-exploration-by-faigie-kobre>



Featured Activity

Homemade Finger Paint

Adapted from: BettyCrocker.com



What you need:

- 1 cup cornstarch
- ½ cup cold water
- 2 T dish soap
- ½ cup hot water
- Food coloring
- Cups (such as recycled yogurt cups)

What to Do:

1. In a medium bowl, stir together cornstarch, cold water, and dish soap.
2. Slowly add the hot water while mixing continuously. You can beat with an electric mixer on medium speed until the mixture is creamy.
3. Let the mixture cool.
4. Divide the mixture among containers/cups. Add a few drops of food coloring to each container and stir well to make a variety of colors.
5. You can use this paint with all ages, including infants. Use a washable surface, such as the table or an infant's high chair tray. Have one or two paint colors in cups. As the children paint, encourage them to make patterns with their hands and fingers. Talk about what is happening and describe the paint textures and colors. For example, "This red paint is really slippery. Look at the dots you made."
6. This paint is best used on the day it's made.

Suggested Books

Discover these books and more at the Hawai'i State Public Library www.librarieshawaii.org

See, Touch, Feel: A First Sensory Book

by Roger Priddy

This sturdy board book has a colorful picture activity that invites the baby to touch and explore. There are raised textures to feel, finger trails to follow, and a shiny mirror to look in.



Mouse Paint

by Ellen Stohl Walsh

What happens when mice discover three jars of paint? Follow along to see what happens when the mice mix red and blue and blue and yellow. This book celebrates the joy of creativity.



Mix It Up!

by Herve Tullet

This interactive book has children following the instructions and suddenly colors appear, mix, and splatter. It's a great book to learn about combining colors in a fun and imaginative way.



Chalk

by Bill Thomson

This wordless book encourages children to follow the story by looking at the pictures to discover what happens to three children who find a bag of magical chalk at the playground. It's a great story to encourage imagination!



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