

A HOME ART CENTER

The most priceless gift we can offer young children is the freedom to explore—to learn by doing. A home art center is a wonderful area for exploration. It's an opportunity for children to enjoy textures and sensations, to experiment with color, to be inventive and show their uniqueness.

IT'S THE PROCESS NOT THE PRODUCT THAT'S IMPORTANT!

Setting up your art center—

- *Choose a space where materials are easy to get to, there's a roomy work surface, and messes are tolerated.
- *Use a drop cloth (old plastic tablecloth, visqueen, old shower curtain).
- *An adult front-button shirt worn backwards makes an instant smock.

Stocking your art center—

- *water colors or tempera paint
 - *paint brushes, or Q-Tips, or sponge pieces
 - *scissors
 - *glue
 - *crayons, marking pens, chalk, pencils
 - *playdough and utensils
 - *paper (newsprint roll-ends, print shop scraps usually free)
 - *throw-aways...greeting cards, nature objects, yarn, etc.
- (Keep these materials separate, offering several choices at a time.)
- *NICE ADDITIONS: construction and tissue paper, tape, stapler, hole punch, stamps and stamp pad

Creative recipes for your art center—

Kitchen Finger Paints

Mix 1/2 cup cornstarch with 3/4 cup cold water in a saucepan.

Add 2 cups boiling water to cornstarch mixture. Stir and cook over medium heat until mixture boils and is clear.

Dissolve 1 envelope of unflavored gelatin in 1/4 cup water. Remove cornstarch mixture from Heat and stir in gelatin..

Add tempera paint to food coloring. Store in Tightly covered jars.



Fingerpaints

For those beyond the "Taste Test!"

Mix 1 tsp. powdered tempera with 1/2—1 cup "VANO" liquid starch.

**The bathtub is a great place to enjoy fingerpaints, Especially just before bath time.

Moon Mud

Mix together: 1 box (4c.) cornstarch and 2 cups Water. As mixture dries out add water.

Face Paints

1 part cornstarch
1/2 part vegetable shortening

Mix cornstarch and water until smooth. Stir in shortening. Add food coloring.

**Washes off with soap and water.

Cooked Playdough I

1 cup flour
1/2 cup salt
1 cup water
1 T. vegetable oil
2 tsp. Cream of tartar
food coloring

Mix all ingredients. A wooden spoon works well for stirring. Cook over low heat in a small pan. Stir until a ball is no longer shiny. Knead until cool and smooth.

Cooked Playdough II

Boil until dissolved:
2 cups water
1/2 cup salt
food coloring
Add to the cooked mixture:
2 T. oil
2 T powdered alum
2 cups flour
Mix while hot and knead 5 minutes.

Both recipes keep well in a tightly covered container for 3-4 months.



Bubble Mixture

(From Seattle Children's Museum recipe)
Mix 2/3 cup "Joy" liquid detergent with 1 gallon water.
Rings for bubble blowers.

Easel Paint

Mix together:

1/4 cup "Vano" liquid starch
1 tsp. liquid detergent
1 T. liquid or powdered tempera

Homemade Gak

3/4 cup water
1 cup Elmer's glue
Food coloring
Mix together
2T Borax
2/3 cup water

Dissolve borax and water by nuking & stirring. Pour Borax mixture into glue/water mixture. Let stand one minute, undisturbed (very important that you do NOT disturb). Then pull and knead until all the water has been absorbed.