

Title of Entry: "Art Therapy"

Sub-Category: Essay

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ART THERAPY

I open a box of crayons and savor the bright colors. Art is a powerful way for children to express themselves. Creating something gives you a sense of accomplishment and an outlet for inner feelings.

When I taught the fourth grade, my students looked forward to art. As I walked about the classroom instructing the children, I observed the joy they expressed by losing themselves in the project. Everything melted away. Expressing their creativity gave the youngsters a safe place to explore their thoughts and feelings without judgement.

Art therapy uses art to improve the physical and cognitive health of kids. You may use drawing, painting, sculpture, photography, or other visual forms to release stress. According to an article published in *Mad Art*, expressing creativity gives children a feeling of mindfulness and productivity.

When I taught in the public school, administrators often cut funding in the arts. Some people considered the arts as frivolous, unnecessary in education. But as an educator, I found that my students performed better in academics after an experience with art, music, drama, and creative writing.

The Kentucky Counseling Center uses art therapy as a way for children to improve sensorimotor function, manage emotional resilience, improve social skills, and to foster self-esteem. A kid's voice can be heard and appreciated. Children who are having trouble through verbal communication use art to display feelings and emotions in a safe environment.

As the students explore different art mediums in a lesson, it enhances their creativity. Additionally, it increases their attention span and ability to follow instructions. Other benefits include the improvement of focus, verbal skills, eye contact, and on-task behaviors.

You may also use art as a means of healing. During the pandemic, art has helped kids cope with isolation. Artistic skills help children adapt to changing conditions and to build resilience to survive downfalls.