
Supporting Children Who Have Experienced Trauma Through Fine Motor Art Experiences

INSTRUCTIONS

This handout was designed for use with the article, “Art Activities Encourage Social and Emotional Development,” from the Virginia Infant & Toddler Specialist Network. The questions and activities in this handout could be used in a work session (e.g., professional learning community, professional development session), for individual coaching, or for self-reflection.

Goals

- ◆ Identify the ways that children who have experienced trauma can benefit from participation in the arts.
- ◆ Determine the developmental benefits of incorporating the performing arts into your learning environment.
- ◆ Develop a plan to integrate a variety of arts experiences to support the development of fine motor skills for children who have experienced trauma.

Activity

- ◆ Read the article.
- ◆ After reading, use the questions below to guide your reflection and action plan to support children who have experienced trauma through participation in the arts.
- ◆ Implement your plan and adjust as needed to support fine motor skills.

Art-related activities are fun for young children and are a good way to encourage creativity and assist with the development of fine motor skills.

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REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- ◆ What caught your attention from the article? What made that fact, excerpt, or example meaningful to you?

- ◆ Children who have experienced trauma may display challenges in the areas of social-emotional and self-regulation skills. This article discusses the benefits of visual and performing arts on children's fine motor skills and their social and emotional development. How do the creative arts support children's development of these skills?

- ◆ This article highlights the benefits of children's participation in the performing arts, specifically activities like music, song, dance, and theater.
 - How can these activities support children's development of fine motor skills? Consider the movements they make and the props or instruments they may use.
 - In what ways can these activities support children who have experienced trauma?

- ◆ Consider the opportunities for creative arts that you provide in your learning environment. What kinds of experiences do you offer (i.e., music-based, performing arts, visual arts)?

- ◆ Create a plan to incorporate a variety of art experiences to support the development of fine motor skills for the children in your care who have experienced trauma.
 - Consider the preferences and needs of the children in your care. Do they enjoy visual art activities or engaging in music-based activities, for example? Do some children need modifications to participate (e.g., slow down during fingerplays, add grips to drawing utensils, etc.)?
 - What Parts of the Day do children have access to these activities? Can you increase the availability for children's participation in the arts?
 - Check in regularly to determine if the supports or needs of children have changed.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Learn more about supporting children's fine motor development through the arts:

- ◆ **Source:** EFYS Department of Education (UK)
 - ◆ **Video:** Expressive Arts and Design: Communication Through Arts
 - ◆ **Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ri1hEERw46s>
 - ◆ **Description:** This video describes the ways in which children use arts as a means of self-expression and communicating what they see and experience.
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- ◆ **Source:** Super Duper Inc.
 - ◆ **Handout:** Benefits of Coloring
 - ◆ **Link:** https://www.handyhandouts.com/pdf/554_Benefits-of-Coloring.pdf
 - ◆ **Description:** This handout provides information for educators and families about the many advantages of coloring, including its social-emotional and fine motor benefits.