

Q & A

WAYS TO INSPIRE AND NURTURE YOUR CHILD'S ARTISTIC EXPRESSION.



For Parents



How do I get my child interested in art and develop an appreciation for it?

When a child is asked to draw, for example, his day in the park, he will recall his first-hand experience, decide on what to draw on paper, and imagine things associated with the environment.

This simple art-making activity on a regular basis inspires children to be more observant about their environment. It focuses on the experimentation and discovery processes rather than the outcome. Art-making also helps build children's ability to articulate and express their thoughts and viewpoints.

Here are some tips to get started:

- ▶ **Choose basic materials.** Instead of colouring books that restrict children's creativity into a pre-set template, opt for a sketchbook and an assortment of colouring materials to encourage self-expression.
- ▶ **Ask descriptive questions.** Instead of asking "Is that a bird?", you can ask open-ended questions that allow the child to describe her art: "What is that?", "Can you tell me more?", or "Why did you choose this colour or texture?"

Know the difference between arts and crafts. While craft-making is about following instructions, learning a skill and making a product, art-making is about letting the children experiment with their own ideas and materials without a known outcome.



What should EC educators take note of when planning and implementing a music curriculum for young children?

It starts with the simple things. Teachers can sing or recite a nursery rhyme while moving from one setting to another, or transitioning between activities. Encourage children to come up with their own lyrics to familiar rhymes or songs and let them suggest different ways of moving. It is a sure fun way to pick up new vocabulary while developing rhythm.

Be intentional when you talk to children. Encourage them to think instead of telling them what to do. When children create, they feel good and it gives the flexibility to share ideas with one another. When peers validate these ideas, it further builds their self-esteem and confidence.

Make music part of your daily routine. Start with these simple steps:

- ▶ **Immerse yourself in music.** Where appropriate, have music playing in the classroom. Soothing instrumental music calms active children. Try playing it during mealtimes.
- ▶ **Actively listen to music.** Chat with the children about the music. Let them share how the music makes them feel. Talk about the beat or speed of the music and they can suggest the types of movements to accompany the rhythm.
- ▶ **Dance with children.** The ability to find the beat and move is fundamental to developing young children's musical abilities. Dancing and moving are excellent and fun ways to enhance children's appreciation and love for music.
- ▶ **Create music together.** Allow children to take the lead. Let them suggest a change in the lyrics or a new movement or two. It gives them a sense of empowerment.



For EC Educators



ASK THE EXPERTS



▶ **LUANNE POH** is the Director of The Artground – A Curious Place to be. This non-profit free play space, located at Goodman Arts Centre, is developed in collaboration with the National Arts Council. The play space encourages children's curiosity and discovery through a gamut of arts experiences which include music, dance, visual arts and gardening-inspired workshops.

▶ **DIANNE SEET-SWEE** is the Principal of Ascension Kindergarten, with more than 15 years of experience in the early childhood sector. She is passionate about developing children's thinking and character through the creative arts. Dianne is also one of the ECDA Fellows appointed to train and mentor other early childhood professionals, and develop sector-wide resources.