

Let's Discuss - Creativity

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What is creativity?

- The definition of “creative” is “inventive imaginative”
- Creativity is a way of thinking, a way of working and creating something out of nothing or making changes to an article or object that adds flare and makes it unique.
- As we grow into adulthood we in general lose the ability to question “what if”. We tend to conform and go along with the “norm”, and the curious side of our nature diminishes.
- As adults guiding children we need to try to recapture our creative side and encourage children to maintain their curiosity for as long as possible, so that creative thinking will remain with them into adulthood.

Why do children need to be creative?

Children benefit and learn so much through creative experiences:

- ◆ It helps them problem solve
- ◆ It encourages them to develop new skills
- ◆ It develops individuality and independence
- ◆ It allows children to think for themselves, and doesn't limit them to thinking like the group
- ◆ It encourages children's self esteem
- ◆ Children are open to new ideas and experiences and quick to try them out
- ◆ Their concentration is enhanced

These are just some of the benefits. There are so many more as you will see once you begin the creative process in your program



dance

Allow free movement and expression



dressing up

Include fancy dress items

Controls that restrict creativity

- ◆ **Time limits**—you cannot time creative experiences
- ◆ **No mixing of paints**—allow children to mix their own paints on a palette or old plate
- ◆ **Dancing only one way**—children should be encouraged to move freely and interpret the music their own way
- ◆ **Dress-ups are just old adult clothes**—include fancy dress, lengths of bright coloured fabric for the child to use as a cape, or fairy dress, scarf or shawl
- ◆ **Only scrap paper to draw or paint on**—give children different coloured sheets and different sizes and textures
- ◆ **Setting up the environment the same way every day can be boring**—with the children's help plan how you could change things around. Draw your plan on a piece of paper to ensure things will not create a hazard when moved, and remember back safety when moving furniture, and always ask for help and bend from your knees when lifting.
- ◆ **Outdoor play is always the same**—ask the children to draw up a plan for an obstacle course. It will not only encourage participation because they have developed it, but will also allow them to be creative.

When creativity is discussed most people automatically think:

- ◆ Art
- ◆ Drawing
- ◆ Painting

But there are other areas such as:

- ◆ Music
- ◆ Dancing
- ◆ Drama
- ◆ Dress-up
- ◆ Story telling
- ◆ Climbing
- ◆ Exploring
- ◆ Water-play
- ◆ Physical activities of all types

All of these can be a creative experience for the child if they are not restricted by rules

Young children naturally possess high levels of creativity:

- ◆ They explore
- ◆ They experiment
- ◆ They question
- ◆ They try out new things and learn what will happen
- ◆ They ask:
“What will happen if I mix the paints together?”
“What colour will I get?” or
“What happens if I pour water onto the sand?”
“Where will it go?”

Be creative when you plan your activities

- ◆ By varying the content of the program you will offer a wider choice for the children.
- ◆ Always remember it's the process that counts, not the product.
- ◆ Vary the equipment in a painting session so that it becomes a creative art activity



Paper or card board is:

- ◆ different sizes
- ◆ different shapes
- ◆ different colours
- ◆ different textures

Other drawing implements that can be used:

- ◆ chalks
- ◆ crayons
- ◆ pencils
- ◆ pen and ink
- ◆ pastels
- ◆ charcoal



Instead of using paint brushes

give the children a choice of

- ◆ pop sticks;
- ◆ satay sticks;
- ◆ feathers (ones that have been purchased);
- ◆ sponges;
- ◆ their own fingers;
- ◆ large hair comb;
- ◆ tooth brush;
- ◆ small foam rollers

Try adding some of the following to the paint:

- ◆ salt
- ◆ sand
- ◆ washing up detergent
- ◆ paste
- ◆ glitter



Allow the children to mix their own paint palette by using a plastic plate

Stories



- ◆ *Reading a story from a book can be more fun if the reader uses different voices for each character, or wears a different hat to depict each character*
- ◆ *Making up stories encourages fantasy and imagination*
- ◆ *Make up a story by starting the first 2 lines and then the children in small groups continue the story, each group adding another 2 lines (Remember set ground rules—no swearing and keep it clean!)*

Music

Set the scene at the service by playing calming music or music from different cultures

- ◆ *Don't just play the music we hear every day on the radio or ipod—be creative!*
- ◆ *Let children create their own music.*
- ◆ *Provide musical instruments and props for children to play and mime music*
- ◆ *Encourage the children to enjoy the experience—be enthusiastic!*
- ◆ *Use the services of a music teacher or student*
- ◆ *Put on a recital*

