

ideas for parents

Easy Ways to Build Assets for and with Your Child

FAST FACTS

ASSET #17: Creative Activities

Youth are more likely to grow up healthy when they spend three or more hours per week in music, theater, or other arts.

20%

*of youth surveyed by Search Institute have this asset in their lives.**

What Are Assets?

Assets are 40 values, experiences, and qualities that help kids succeed. "Creative activities" is one of four constructive-use-of-time assets.

* Based on Search Institute surveys of 217,277 6th- to 12th-grade youth throughout the United States during the 1999-2000 school year.

Adding the Arts to Your Family Time

Mention painting, many people think of Picasso. Mention music, and Mozart, Erykah Badu, Selena, or the Rolling Stones come to mind.

Rarely do we think of ourselves—or our children—as painters or musicians.

Yet, all of us are artists in some way. We think of creative ways to surprise someone on her or his birthday. We hum a few notes along with the radio. We dance around when we're in a good mood.

These small bursts of artistic expression are important ways we communicate our uniqueness. By bringing more art and music into our homes, we can help to develop another side of our children's personalities, talents, and skills.

Some easy ways to do this:

- Become clothing critics. During a shopping trip, critique the colors, designs, and patterns you see on clothes.
- Play magnet art. Visit a museum together and walk toward the first painting that really catches your eye (draws you to it like a magnet). Let each family member explain what they like about the painting they chose.

talk together

Questions to discuss with your child:

- Which do you enjoy most: music, art, theater, or dance? Why?
- What activities would you like to try that you have never tried before?
- How can we incorporate the arts more into our lives?



- Incorporate the discipline of art. Have your child take music or art lessons. Have the family gather around the piano or guitar once a week and sing. Or make time daily to sing, rap, dance, do an art project, or do a humorous creative skit.
- Welcome the "noise" your child makes when practicing an instrument—treasure the moments when you can hear her or him being creative.

time together

Three ways to enhance music, art, or theatrical training with your child:

1. Set aside an arts area in your home. Keep construction paper, paint, glue, string, scissors, and other creative supplies on hand.
2. Show your child art that you've done and show her or him your interests. Doing so may inspire your child.
3. Explore the art and music of a culture that is different from yours.

