

Art Therapy : a picture is worth a thousand words



Art therapy allows children a means to express themselves when they are unable to articulate their feelings. Art not only serves as a mode of communication, but the process of creating art is healing. Today's guest blogger is Sarah Kutchta. She holds a masters in art therapy from Albertus Magnus and a bachelors in fine arts from the University of Connecticut and will soon be a LPC (Licensed Professional Counselor) as well. Sarah specializes in working with students with learning, mood, and autistic disorders. Ms. Kutchta gives us ways parents can communicate with their children through art:

- Give children the space and permission to get messy. Put down painting plastic if cleanliness is an issue. Having the freedom to create whatever is needed can be very helpful for kids.
- When discussing artwork with kids and adolescents, it is better to say "Tell me about your artwork," than to ask "What is that?" Asking what something may imply that the child's drawing is unclear or not good.
- If a child or adolescent is having difficulty expressing emotions or has difficulty regulating emotions, it is better to have the child work with an art therapist than trying to work out the issue with the parents and art. The process of art creation can be very powerful emotionally and it is best to work with a professional who can provide a safe and supportive therapeutic environment.
- Art therapists can be found by contacting the American Art Therapy Association, arttherapy.org/, or Pennsylvania's Art

Therapy Association, dvata.org/ (Delaware's is now based in Penn). Many are both LPCs and Art Therapists and accept insurance.

Sarah Kuchta, BFA, MAAT

Art Therapist

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