

# family activities



**E**mpower your child or young adult with the excitement and understanding of art during the Shoreline ArtsTrail Open Studios Weekend. We encourage visitors of all ages! Many of our artists teach classes to young children and adults, and they would love to hear what you think and answer questions. Be sure to have children check out our website, [shorelineartstrail.com](http://shorelineartstrail.com), and click on the artists they like to see their work beforehand.

## LOOKING TOGETHER

(ideas from [www.moma.org](http://www.moma.org))

1. **Ask your kids questions** while looking at works of art, such as: What do you see? What do you see in the art that makes you say that?
2. **Look closely!** Ask your kids to name the colors, describe the texture, or list the materials that the artist used.
3. **Explore the architecture.** What do you see from the [car] windows? How many bridges do you cross?
4. **Play "I Spy"** to identify shapes, colors, and objects in works of art.
5. **Bring paper and a pencil** to sketch. Write a story or poem. Create a conversation between the characters in a work of art.
6. **Design your visit around a topic or theme**, such as people, places, or things.
7. **Use your imaginations!** Ask your kids what they would see, smell, or hear if they were inside a work of art.
8. **Look at wall labels and read the titles.** Does the title match what you think the work is about? What would you name it? Why?
9. **View a work of art from different distances.** Does it look different up close than it did from far away?
10. **Be creative!** Invent your own game.

## PROJECTS

- Bring a pencil and paper and draw! Our artists would be flattered to have children interpret the artwork.
- Bring a notebook! Older children might like to journal about their experience.
- Bring a camera! Document the day in photos to talk about later. Please ask artists for permission before taking photos of any artwork.



Remember: some artwork is for looking and other artwork is okay to touch but always ask the artist to make sure.



Papercut art by Martha Link Walsh.  
Painting by Joan Hickey.

# BENEFIT OF ARTS TO KIDS

(from [www.raisesmartkid.com](http://www.raisesmartkid.com))

Children naturally love art – painting, drawing, making music, the theater. Unfortunately, when schools cut back on budgets, the arts are usually the first to go. It seems that schools do not appreciate the importance of art in building a kid's brain.

Physiologically, the human brain consists of 2 parts, the left and the right hemisphere. The left brain is used in logical thinking and analytical processes. This is typically what is trained in school work that consists of math, reading and science. The right brain is used in emotional perception, intuition and creativity. It is the right brain that is mainly used when a person is involved in creative endeavors such as making art. It is this part of the brain that typical school environment neglects to train.

It is shown that when gifted kids solve problems in their areas of giftedness, there is increased electrical activity in both hemispheres. It appears that for the brain to be efficient, the two hemispheres of the brains must work together. By stimulating and exercising the right hemisphere of the brain, the arts strengthen the connection between the hemispheres. Kids should be exposed to the arts as their cognitive skills mature so that their right brain will be as developed as the left, and both hemispheres work in tandem, thus achieving the full potential of the mind.

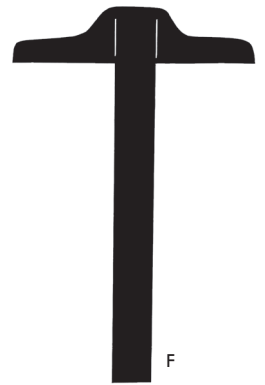
Aside from the physiological effects, the New York Center for Arts Education also lists other benefits of exposing children to art:

- Your kid learns to think creatively, with an open mind
- Your kid learns to observe and describe, analyze and interpret
- Your kid learns to express feelings, with or without words.
- Your kid practices problem-solving skills, critical-thinking skills, dance, music, theater and art-making skills, language and vocabulary of the arts

- Your kid discovers that there is more than one right answer, multiple points of view
- School can be fun – playing can be learning
- Your kid learns to collaborate with other children and with adults
- Arts introduce children to cultures from around the world
- Your kid can blossom and excel in the arts. Even with physical, emotional or learning challenges, can experience success in the arts.
- Arts build confidence. Because there is not just one right way to make art, every child can feel pride in his or her original artistic creations.
- Arts build community. Schools with a variety of differences can celebrate the arts as one community.

The following are tips to make the arts a part of your kid's development:

- Always make arts and crafts supply available and accessible to your kid - paper, pencil, crayons, etc.
- Celebrate your child's artwork – hang their drawings on the wall or save it in a folder. That way, your child feels that her creation is important.
- Read books – Ask the librarian at your school or public library to suggest books about artists and the arts.
- Notice the arts all around you – take your family to museums, concerts, or theater. Notice the art even in the parks, subways, and open spaces. Start a conversation about what you see.
- Enjoy the arts at home – share your artistic skills and interests with your kid. Find out what your kids love about the art.
- If your kid shows great interest, enroll her in arts class.
- If possible, remind your kid's school authorities about the importance of art in her education.



## ART TOOLS

- shuttle
- palette with brushes
- potter's trimmer
- triangle
- jeweler's hammer
- square
- scissors
- shaper