



# AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES



## Nurture your child's interests **in the arts** *By Denise Yearian*

**V**isual and performing arts are a way for children to creatively express themselves and can help kids develop an appreciation for the world around them. Even if you don't have formal training or special talent, you can still nurture the arts in your child. Here's how.

### Visual arts

- **Go environmental** – Look for art all around you. When you are outside, point out trees and the effects of the sun on nature. Comment on the colors of the sunset and design of the clouds. Visit park statues and city murals. Ask your child if she wants to draw what she sees.
- **Hit the books** – Point out illustrations in children's books. Talk about colors, shapes and mediums used. Who is the illustrator? What do you know about his life? Are other works of his similar? Find books or other resources that give the history of famous artists. Learning about their lives, the period they lived in and their culture more than likely affected their subject and style. Encourage your child to tell stories with pictures rather than words.



- **Tis the season** – Take advantage of special times during the year to incorporate art into your child's life — create Valentines, dye Easter eggs, carve pumpkins and decorate birthday cakes.
- **Tap into interests** – Use your child's other interests as springboards for art projects. If he likes photography, give him a digital camera and have him take pictures, make a collage or try to draw a depiction of the image he sees.

### The Art Connection

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