

# Messy Art and the Power of Paint

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## The Value of Messy Art

Messy Art is great fun for children and provides them with delight! Children love to get their hands into paints and other gooey materials that “tickle their senses.” Messy art lets children discover the emotional pleasures of sensory play. Not only does messy art engage a child’s senses in open-ended play, it also develops cognitive, social-emotional and multi-sensory skills. Self-directed learning with fluid, sensory, and tactile art materials is especially important in early childhood and continues to have benefits for older children as well.

Art teaches critical thinking, self-expression, problem solving, individuality, creativity, and self-esteem. Teachers sometimes express concern about sending children home with paint on their clothes. When teachers focus on the positive skills children learn through art, everyone can be glad that children exercise their imaginations!



## What is Messy Art?

Messy Art is a friendly description for art experiences involving paint and other fluid materials that change with ease as you manipulate them. These fluid “sensory art” experiences provide exciting physical contacts that motivate exploration. The fluid nature of paint provides for dynamic and rapidly changing explorations of color, shape, and textures on paper. Children often feel very powerful when painting, because the cause and effect of their actions becomes apparent very quickly. Painting allows children to make decisions rapidly, and to operate more independently than they are usually accustomed to doing. Paints continuously move and blend, creating new combinations and secondary colors. With just a few swift brushstrokes, an entire painting can change and transform into a new creation. Painting is indeed a powerful process!

## Messy Art & Foam Paint

All fluid art materials provide sensory and tactile benefits, but Colorations® Foam Paint offers especially keen stimulation of visual and tactile senses. Its bright colors stimulate a wide range of emotions and its unusual fluffy texture encourages children to feel it. Motivation is never a problem when using this paint with children of all ages, since the intensity of sensory stimulation is so engaging. Gross motor skills are exercised using large brushes and foam rollers in broad sweeping motions to create large paintings and murals. Fine motor skills are exercised with stampers, paper towels, and other art techniques presented in this book.

*Smart Art 2* includes 8 lesson plans that utilize Colorations® Foam Paint. From Foam Paint Baker’s Dough to Monet’s Garden Painting, you’ll find fun projects for children ages 3 to 12.



## Conclusion

Messy Art activities are one of the best ways to promote early childhood learning. Preschool and Kindergarten provide an especially important opportunity for hands-on, self-directed learning. Messy Art experiences, those that rely on fluid and tactile art materials, provide children with the greatest reward for their efforts. Not only do children often find it exciting to “get messy,” but child development theorists teach us that tactile and sensory experiences are one of the best ways children learn.