



## Nurturing Creativity in Young Children

Creativity is a word that often comes up in our conversation. We often talk about a person being creative or a painting being creative. No other concept in psychological literature has been so difficult to define as creativity. When we study creativity we must consider both; the process of creative thinking and its product. Each one of us is creative and creativity needs to be nurtured. Creative experiences need time to flower and grow; any kind of disapproval, criticism and domination can easily destroy it. Unfortunately, the social system and the education system which are examination-driven do not give much opportunity for creativity to flourish.



Most theories of child development view young children as highly creative with a natural tendency to fantasize, experiment and explore their physical and conceptual environment. Researchers have argued that creativity and intelligence are independent of each other. When we talk about creativity with regard to children the emphasis is on self expression and not the end product. The goal is not the finished product; rather it is the process of expressing themselves that reflects the creative urge. They may express their creativity through their dramatic play, in problem solving or through art and music.

Painting Music & Movement Dramatization Story Telling Fantasy Play Dancing Painting



### INSIDE THE REDBRICKS CLASSROOM

At Redbricks, we have adopted an approach of creating an environment which promotes children's creative expression. A simple attitude of "let's try it" and "why not" gives the message to the children that we are ready to experiment, we are open to children's suggestions about doing things differently. In our daily creative art sessions when children are given the freedom to choose their activity be it clay, paint or colours; the activity not only becomes enjoyable but also it stimulates creative expression. It is very important how we organize the activities, for a predictable setting is more comfortable and relaxing for the child. Most of the activities whether painting, dancing, working with clay, making a collage, music and movement, story telling or dramatization can be creative depending on how we organize it. More the freedom, more the opportunity for the child to be creative; and less the amount of control and instruction by the teacher, more the potential for creative expression. Giving children the choice of colours, tools and surface gives them an opportunity to be innovative. For instance, asking them to paint a particular theme or topic helps them to understand variation.

During fantasy play their imagination is captured in their dialogues, their role play and the pleasure derived out of the process of enacting is so much more worthwhile than playing their role to perfection. No wonder all the persons and things around become the characters in their self made stories. The random scribbling and art work are not meant to capture the real world but are the reflection of their imagination. When children describe their creations we get the opportunity to peep in what goes on their little minds- the responses at times take adults by surprise!

What children need is the opportunity to experiment, the motivation, encouragement and support, the freedom to express themselves and little of interference. This process of nurturing creativity goes a long way in the child's early development.

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