

# Art: Process vs. Product



## Parenting Tip #2 - - -

At Rock Spring Preschool, we believe in “Process vs. Product” ...that your child’s artwork is more than something that looks pretty on your refrigerator, *although we do understand that you cherish those special tiny handprint projects as mementos of the preschool years!* The process of creating art supports healthy development in our students. And you can do it at home, too!

### What’s the difference between process and product art?

Product art asks children to copy or replicate an example and has a specific outcome in mind. Product art can be used to practice fine motor skills, eye/hand coordination, learning how to use various artistic media, and following directions, but it isn’t truly “art” and does not have the same developmental benefits as process-focused artwork.

Process art is open-ended, allowing children to be creative and express themselves authentically and is important in developing the brain. It’s focused on the materials, the exploration of techniques, unique and original, entirely the child’s own work, and there is no “right” or “wrong” way to do it.

Product focused art can be stressful for children, while Process focused art is FUN!

### Ways to support process art:

- Provide supplies like paints, crayons, easels, beads, string and paper. Let your child decide what to make, do not provide examples of projects for them to copy or make suggestions about what they should make
- Recycled materials can also make great art supplies (old magazines for cutting, newspaper, egg cartons, boxes, anything that can be cut or glued or painted on is great!)
- Encourage your child by saying “tell me more about your artwork” so that you don’t experience that awkward moment of saying, “Oh, I love the horse you drew,” when it’s really a cat. These moments may seem minor, but can make a huge difference in your child’s perception of his or her abilities!

### How Process Art Supports Development:

- Children relax, focus and feel successful (Social and Emotional)
- Children may choose to discuss their art (Language and Literacy)
- Children compare, predict, plan and problem solve (Cognitive)
- Children use small motor skills to paint, write, glue, use clay and string beads (Physical)

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