

Introduction

At rehabilitation centers, selected art activities are used to stimulate and rehabilitate children with disabilities. These activities focus on providing complete relaxation and play, emphasizing the process rather than the final product. As each child's syndrome presents different challenges, the art activities are tailored to their specific needs.

By utilizing art activities, therapists aim to stimulate and rehabilitate children with disabilities, providing them with a therapeutic outlet for self-expression and promoting their overall development.

Symptoms of Disabilities in Children

1) Lack of eye contact, difficulty expressing emotions through facial expressions:

Autistic children, who have developmental impairments in various areas, including social interaction, language, communication, and emotional behaviour, often struggle with making eye contact and using facial expressions to convey their emotions.

2) Delayed speech, limited communication, and challenges understanding language:

Children with autism typically exhibit slower speech development compared to their peers. They may have difficulty communicating effectively and may speak softly or have limited language skills. Understanding language and engaging in effective communication can be challenging for them.

3) Repetitive behaviours and lack of self-control:

One common feature of autism is engaging in repetitive behaviours such as hand or finger play and waving hands. Additionally, children with autism often face challenges with self-control, which can manifest as difficulties in regulating their own behaviour.

4) Inappropriate expression of emotions and impaired imagination:

Children with autism may display emotions that are not typical for their age, and they often struggle with controlling their emotions appropriately. Furthermore, their imaginative abilities can be impaired, making it challenging for them to engage in imaginative play and creative thinking.

Additionally, children with autism may exhibit symptoms similar to those with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). ADHD is characterized by attention deficits and difficulties with self-control. The impaired brain functioning in children with autism and ADHD can result in overlapping symptoms, including lack of concentration and difficulties with self-control.

1) Laying the foundation for art:

The first step in using art activities for children with special needs is to establish a solid foundation. This involves practicing skills like observing shapes, colors, and textures, as well as exploring different surfaces through touch.

2) Drawing and painting:

The next step involves engaging in drawing and painting exercises. Children can practice writing lines, using colors, and holding colored sticks to enhance their fine motor skills and creativity.

3) Color experiments:

Children can explore various types of colors and engage in color mixing experiments. This helps them understand color concepts and encourages their artistic expression.

4) Printmaking:

Printmaking is another artistic activity where children can press different materials onto surfaces to create imprints. This activity allows them to explore textures and create unique artworks.

5) Molding clay:

Children can mold clay into simple shapes, encouraging their imagination and tactile exploration. This activity provides a hands-on experience and promotes creativity.

6) Folding, tearing, and patching paper:

By engaging in activities such as folding, tearing, and patching paper scraps, children can assemble them to create simple pictures. This activity enhances their fine motor skills and allows for creative expression.

7) Invention:

Children are encouraged to use leftover materials to assemble imaginative works. This activity fosters problem-solving skills and encourages resourcefulness.

3) Development of fine motor strength and balance:

Art activities involve various fine motor movements, including holding brushes, drawing lines, and manipulating materials like clay. Regular participation in these activities helps children develop and strengthen their fine motor skills, which involve precise control of the small muscles in their hands and fingers. Additionally, these activities contribute to improving balance and coordination.

In summary

Stimulating emotional development through artistic activities offers several benefits. These include the opportunity to practice concentration and maintain a stable mood, enhance learning, observation, and memory skills, as well as develop fine motor strength and balance. By engaging in art, children can foster their emotional growth and overall development in a creative and enjoyable way.

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For example, during drawing and painting, where children may struggle to stay still for long periods, the emphasis is placed on the initial process, such as choosing one color at a time, drawing, and applying the color. To make the activities more accessible, the rehabilitation center has modified some processes. For instance, instead of using water and acrylic sheets, colored paper is attached with glue to match the colors on the board.

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You can notice that using the coloring method in art practice can be challenging for kids to control their hand movements. It often leads to hasty behaviour, even when they try to reproduce many images. However, as they follow the colors on the paper, they gradually gain better control over their hands and become less hasty. Initially, their artwork may have many patches of colors piled together. But with repeated practice, they start spending more time on the activity, resulting in neater and more polished pieces of work.



1) Improved concentration and stable mood:

Engaging in artistic activities as a means of stimulating emotional development offers the advantage of practicing concentration while working on the creative process. By immersing themselves in art, children can learn to focus their attention and maintain a stable mood throughout the activity.

2) Enhanced learning, observation, and memory skills:

Participating in artistic activities provides an opportunity for children to practice important cognitive skills, such as learning, observing, and remembering. By actively engaging with their surroundings and expressing themselves artistically, children can sharpen their ability to absorb information, pay attention to details, and enhance their memory skills.