

Inside play - art

Chilly weather means more time spent inside. For children, this can be especially frustrating. With lots of energy to expend and limited outlets to do so, both children and parents can easily become distressed.

Don't fret! There is an elusive, yet obvious solution. Art. Art is not only exciting, it's also very engaging. Depending on the activity, little ones can recruit multiple senses (or even all of them) to accomplish their vision. This supports creativity and encourages learning. Art can promote motor skills through detailed drawing, careful cutting and precise painting. All of which require tactful coordination. Art can give children something to be proud of, something that they brought to life.

Art can be found around every corner in the world's largest children's museum. Kids bend over backward when they come close to the colossal 43-foot glass tower made of multiple primary colors. The famous Dale Chihuly *Fireworks of Glass* installation is definitely a conversation starter! Ask the kiddos how they think the piece was made or what it represents. The answers will not disappoint.

Discover how art changed the lives of 18 Black-Indiana based artists with *Stories from Our Community: The Art of Protest*. The display highlights how art evokes emotion and action within the Black Lives Matter Movement, while giving a glimpse into the artists' lives. This explains to children how art can be more than just recreation but a form of self-expression and a medium of communication.

For a more hands-on experience, kids can attend an art workshop held right in the museum. Visiting Artist Deonna Craig leads [workshops](#) focused on the natural world as a source of artistic inspiration. Children will have a blast learning about various minerals as they create their own gemstone artwork to take home. The smiles will be overflowing as the kids have fun learning that art rocks. Not a fan of rocks? Visiting Artist Koda Witsken leads an art [workshop](#) that focuses on animal color-based defense systems. Amazement is guaranteed as kids learn how animals use color to ward off predators in the wild.

The art fun doesn't have to stop once the museum visit is over. Make beautiful paper leaves at home. All you need are paper, scissors, coloring utensils and some imagination. Simply draw an outline of any kind of leaf on the paper. Then, carefully cut along the lines to free the leaf. Lastly, color and have fun with it. Voila, a beautiful, fridge worthy leaf!

Please see Dinosphere Paleo Art Lab for more (opening March 2022).