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The Many Benefits of the Arts and Your Child With Disabilities

Participation in the arts benefits students, of all ages and abilities, in many ways. For children with disabilities, participation in the creative arts [leads to enhanced motor skills](#), improved concentration, better problem-solving skills, strengthened connections with peers, and increased engagement with life. There are several ways that you, the parent, can encourage greater involvement.

Explore Space and Movement Through Dance

Even before a baby is born, little lives respond to music, and from there, there's a natural progression to moving with the rhythm. Provide an environment rich in movement such as bouncing, spinning, jumping, and marching. Model clapping along with a beat and play wiggle games with your child. [Dance offers your child many benefits:](#)

- Physical activity enhances balance, coordination, and physical strength.
- Movement is an effective form of emotional communication.
- Dancing with a group promotes social interactions and cooperation.

Children experiencing motor difficulties can particularly benefit in areas such as spatial awareness, coordinated movement, and focused repetition. If your child shows an interest in dance, get in touch with [Dance Dynamics](#) so they can see — and possibly experience — just how amazing dancing can be.

Increase Expression and Communication Through Music

Simply listening to music in a [variety of forms and styles](#) is beneficial to the developing brain and learning to sing and play an instrument further enhances those benefits, especially for children with cognitive disabilities. Some of the best instruments for beginners are the guitar, piano, violin, harmonica, and drums. When [choosing an instrument](#), consider the child's size and ability, the cost of the instrument, and access to lessons. The use of an instrument engages the child in many ways:

- Auditory skills are enhanced when exposed to nuances in music.
- Visual skills develop when reading notations, recognizing patterns, and focusing on details.
- Motor skills strengthen through muscle memory and the use of fine motor muscles.
- Tactile and sensory awareness increases as fine and repeated movements result in changes in pitch and dynamics.

Even through sound vibrations, children's bodies (and adult bodies) experience benefits in their respiratory and digestive systems, the heart, and blood pressure.

Create and Communicate Through Drawing, Painting, and Crafts

Drawing and painting work [both sides of the brain](#), improving creative expression on the right side of the brain and increasing analytical thinking through the exploration of shape, line, and contrast. The act of creating something offers a high level of satisfaction and fosters independence. Other benefits of creating art include:

- Stronger memory recall
- [Increased ability to communicate](#)
- Strengthened problem-solving skills
- Decreased stress
- Expression of difficult emotions

Children with learning disabilities are often underestimated. As a parent, you may enjoy watching your child achieve excellence in arts and crafts activities.

Search Out and Access Resources

At first, you can set up a room or corner in your home where messes and movement are appropriate. Provide easy access to musical instruments, art supplies, and music. From there, seek out music, dance, and art groups where your child can interact and perform with other groups. If there isn't a group available or appropriate for your little one, consider establishing your own LLC and provide lessons based on your own area of passion. An LLC, or limited liability company, keeps your liability within control, requires less paperwork, has several tax advantages, and provides versatility. Be sure to research [how to start an LLC in Illinois](#) so you'll know exactly which documents you'll need to file with the state.

One expert article released in the Journal of Civil Society states that "[the arts enhance civil society](#)" with evidence showing benefits such as higher levels of civil engagement, social tolerance, and "outcomes that contribute to the health of civil society." With this in mind, it's exciting to recognize that several of children's natural languages are expressed through the arts. Recognizing this aptitude, parents should provide opportunities for children to expand their involvement in arts experiences.