Art and Craft Activities

ART ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN WITH MDVI AT HOME

Hands that express Using Colours
Many of us, when we were very young and even now, love doing various activities related to art and craft. The same applies to children with Multiple Disabilities and Vision Impairment (MDVI).

When we think of activities related to art and craft there are many activities we can consider—whether it is colouring or painting using a variety of materials.

Many children with MDVI love doing activities related to art and craft. Parents and caregivers can encourage children to participate in these activities at home, which is a way to meaningfully engage children in activities that are fun and a great way to learn as well.

Art and craft activities provide opportunities for children to be creative, to socialize with other children and adults and to communicate their emotions. They can also learn various concepts ranging from understanding different colours and textures and learn skills such as using hands to hold and manipulate objects. Most importantly they will have fun!

A variety of materials like crayons, water colours, flower petals, papers/colourful papers can be used for art and craft activities. For some children, gripping a crayon or a paintbrush may be challenging if the child finds it difficult to hold or manipulate small objects. In this case, familiar objects easily available at home can be used such as vegetables, fruits or a shaving brush which would be easier for the child to hold and manipulate.

Activities using crayons
Some children with MDVI like to colour using crayons. In this case, parents and caregivers can encourage the child to use crayons in a variety of colouring activities. Parents can
draw simple pictures with the child of objects or people familiar to them to begin with and gradually use different events/scenes (e.g. garden, beach, temple, home and others).

The child can select their favourite colour and at times match the colour of the real object to the picture being coloured. For example, in the picture we see a student with MDVI colouring an apple. To help the child associate the object to the picture you could initially show a real apple to the child and the child could match the colour of the apple to the colour he selects for colouring. In this way the child is also learning about the colour of the apple and also learning to match the colours as he finds the appropriate colour from 2-3 crayons of different colours.

Parents and caregivers can select any fruit or any object that the child likes. If it is something that the child likes, he will likely be very motivated to do the colouring activity.

**Please Remember:**

- The child can colour/scribble using crayons if the child has some vision.
- If the crayons are difficult for the child to hold/grip you could make it thick, by tying a thread/rubber band on the crayon. This may help the child to hold it. Thick markers may also be used if they are easily available.
- Drawing a border to highlight the outline of pictures can help the child have a better idea of the picture and help him know where to colour.
Activities using water colours

Parents and caregivers can also encourage the child to participate in colouring activities using water colours. The child can participate in several ways – through finger painting, thumb painting, painting using vegetables and any other way based on his preference and needs.

What other household materials can be used for colouring?

Some children may not like the sensation of having colour on their hands and some may not like to have their hands wet or sticky. In such cases, vegetables, which are easily available at home, can be used as a tool for painting.
For example, onion, potato, ladies finger (okra) and bitter gourd can be easily used for colouring activities. If colours are not available at home, you could also use turmeric (haldi) and vermillion (kumkum) as a substitute.

Parents and caregivers could make different shapes on the potato as shown in the picture and the child could use this to make different patterns as per his preference.

Please remember:

- The child may need support. Parents and caregivers can provide assistance as required which may be in the form of hand-under-hand or hand-over-hand assistance, support at the wrist, or verbal prompt to do the colouring activity.
- Give sufficient time and let it be a pleasurable, enjoyable activity for the child and other family members. The activity will be even more enjoyable for the child with MDVI when his/her sibling also does it along with the child.
• Make sure the child does not put colours in his mouth. If the child has a habit of putting his hands in his mouth, you can use materials such as turmeric or a thick paste of spinach and coriander leaves. These edible materials are harmless if the child accidentally puts his hand in his mouth when he does the activity and they produce beautiful colours.

• Always keep a clean cloth near the child while he does the colouring activity which can be used for wiping his/her hands.

• Encourage the child to wash hands after the colouring activity. (See Perkins India’s Handwashing Video for Ideas on How to Engage a Child with MDVI Meaningfully in This Activity).