



PARENTING

Special pullout section

KASE Art Studio provides hands-on learning experience

KASE Art Studio has been operating for 11 years now; it is hard to believe that so many of Halton Hills' children have gone through our program! But we know it is true when students come back to visit us, or to help out over the holidays when they are home from college and University, and to think we first met them when they were in elementary school—so young!

KASE has made a concentrated effort to provide hands-on arts learning experiences for children and their families in our studio, in schools and preschools, and in public venues. KASE has also helped prepare educators in one of the Regional Child Centers to teach art and integrate arts learning across academic subject areas. We have had in the past, and currently do have a Home School Group who come into the studio during the day and we are working with their children, giving them the fundamentals of art to start a lifelong journey of creative enjoyment. As well, we advocate for the arts as an essential part of a strong, vital and diverse community by participating in local community and charity events.

The students at KASE are offered a variety of mediums throughout our calendar year in order to afford them the opportunity to try drawing, painting, sculpting, carving, design, pen and ink, print making . . . It is only through the experience of a multitude of different art projects that students' are able to decide what they enjoy the most. Some students are very tactile and love working in three dimensional arts, others want to draw, draw, draw, and there are just not enough hours in the day to learn everything there is to know and to have time to simply be in art studio and let their creative juices flow.

With art it is also crucially important at a young age to foster their imagina-

tion and innovative thinking. Artistic endeavours aid young people in developing new way of seeing and thinking, art is connecting to that ingenuity which every child posses. The KASE Program helps our students recognize new approaches, grasp abstractive thinking and visualize new possibilities

The Kids Art Studio Experience (KASE) program provides a safe environment for all students; a venue free of judgment, full of encouragement, a welcoming studio where they can experiment and explore with both their own ideas and new techniques and apparatus. It is such a relief for many of them to know there is no right or wrong, no grading, just an Art Studio that teaches them that there are multiple approaches encouraging flexible thinking and risk-taking. Each time a child puts a line on a page, deciding on the colour, the width, length of it . . . they are learning to think independently and come up with strategies for developing their own work.

Art helps children express a range of ideas and emotions. Putting words to feelings can be difficult, even for adults. Art provides children an outlet to convey thoughts and emotions that they may not be able to articulate any other way. Color, shape, structure, texture and style are powerful communicative tools. A child who is frustrated by their development (or lack of it) and certain academic situations, and who is hyper and lacking focus, will often come into the KASE Studio and exhibit none of these characteristics, because art is providing a calm sensory means for the child to 'speak' in their own 'words' without contradiction or correction or fear of being judged. Art enables children to express themselves in so many valuable ways.

*Submitted by Jeanette Gray,
owner of KASE Art Studio*



Fourteen-month-old Sydney Aitken, granddaughter of KASE Art Studio owner Jeanette Gray, might be young, but she's right at home with paint brushes when it comes to working on a paper-mâché bird at KASE, (Kids Art School Experience).

Photo by Ted Brown



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