

## Position Statement on Early Childhood Art Education

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### PLATFORM: LEARNERS

The visual arts are essential to early learning. Young children are innately curious and eager to make sense seek to construct personal knowledge and understanding of the world. They learn best in Children construct knowledge in meaningful social contexts with peers and adults, through experiences that are Children experience their environment in holistic, ways that are best served by an interdisciplinary, and that balance instruction with approach that includes both guided and spontaneous emergent exploration learning experiences. Through the arts, children construct knowledge in meaningful ways that support their growth as whole learners. The visual arts support multiple ways of knowing and learning that are inherent in the unique nature of each child. The visual arts empower children to communicate, represent, and express their thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. The visual arts offer opportunities to develop creativity, imagination, and flexible thinking. The arts provide opportunities to enrich a young child's understanding of diverse cultures. Early childhood art programs should be developmentally appropriate and comprehensive in scope, including:

The visual arts support early learning by:

- Encouraging creativity, imagination, and flexible thinking.
- Enriching children's understanding of diverse cultures and perspectives.

Developmentally appropriate and comprehensive programs should provide:

- A variety of studio experiences.
  - Interactions with artists.
  - Real and virtual visits to museums, galleries, and cultural institutions.
  - Opportunities to respond to art through conversation and storytelling, play and dramatics, movement and music, and artmaking.
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- a variety of studio experiences, interactions with artists, real and virtual visits to museums and art galleries, and
  - opportunities to respond to art through conversation, storytelling, play, dramatics, movement, music, and art making.

For the purposes of this document early childhood is considered from birth to 8 years of age.

Resource Document: For additional information, please refer to the Position Paper on the Early Childhood Issues Group section of the NAEA website.

[http://www.arteducators.org/community/committees-issues-groups/ECAE\\_Position\\_Statement.pdf](http://www.arteducators.org/community/committees-issues-groups/ECAE_Position_Statement.pdf)

[https://www.arteducators.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/ART-ESSENTIAL-FOR-EARLY-LEARNING\\_ECAE-Interest-Group.pdf](https://www.arteducators.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/ART-ESSENTIAL-FOR-EARLY-LEARNING_ECAE-Interest-Group.pdf)

Iyengar, S. (2025, February 11). Educating ourselves about childhood arts experiences—and why they matter. *National Endowment for the Arts Blog*.

<https://www.arts.gov/stories/blog/2025/educating-ourselves-about-childhood-arts-experiences-and-why-they-matter>