

OUTDOOR



Outdoor art requires absolutely no clean-up! Your children can draw, paint, splash, splatter and drip with total abandon and the rain will eventually come and wash it all away. Dressing your child appropriately—or undressing your child totally—is highly recommended. Outdoor art activities can be done in a spacious backyard, a tiny terrace, the local playground, the beach or on city streets.

Pretty As A Picture

Fill two deep bowls with water and squeeze a few drops of yellow food coloring in one and blue food coloring in the other. Give your child squares of absorbent paper towels to dip in the dye. As the colors blend and mix, your child will "magically" create the color green. Hang the pictures on a clothesline or fence to dry and don't worry about the drips—they will be the same color as the grass! On subsequent days, experiment with red and blue to create purple, and red and yellow to make orange.

Make-up

Both boys and girls adore experimenting with make-up and body painting. It can wreak havoc in your living room, but it stimulates true creativity and self-expression outdoors. Give your child an unbreakable mirror to admire him or herself in as face painting progresses. Don't impose your own idea of what is "pretty" on your child. Make-up can express your child's mood and personality. There are days when "angry" or "ugly" may be more appropriate!

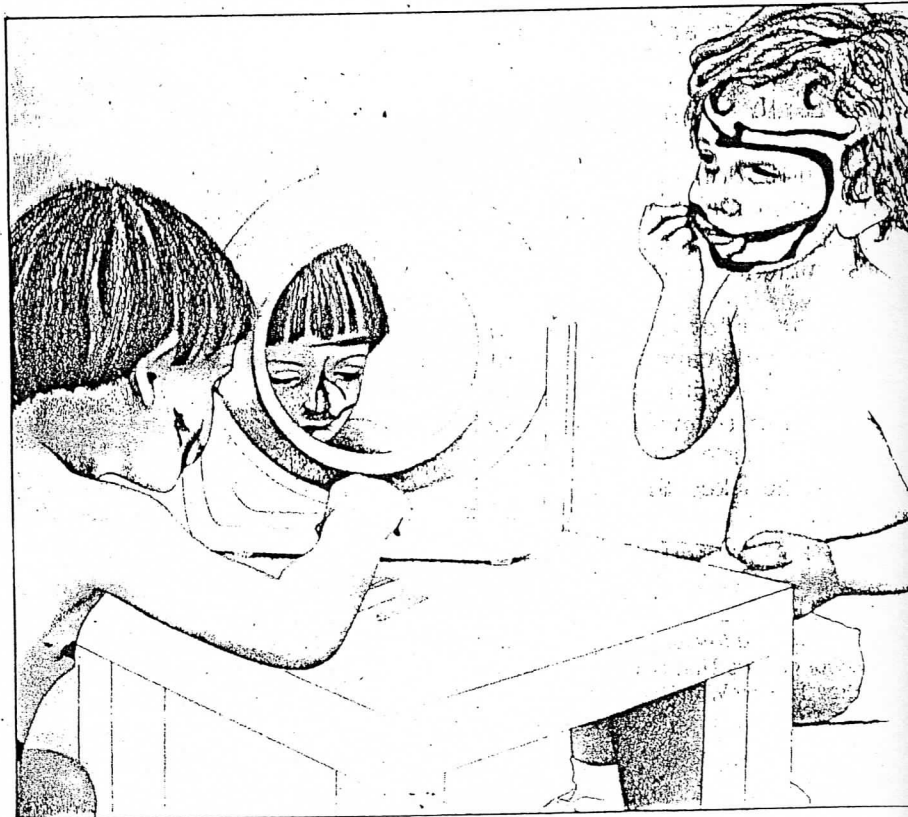
No matter how your child is transformed, it is only temporary. A dip in the wading pool can follow this activity. The addition of a bar of soap will not only clear away the make-up, but will also mean you won't have to give your child a bath at bedtime.

Sidewalk Art

Large sticks of colored chalk and a clear sidewalk can keep a group of children busy all afternoon. If you mix food coloring with water and soap flakes, you will create a soap-based finger paint that also works well on sidewalks. Clean-up is easy—just wait for the rain or take out the hose.

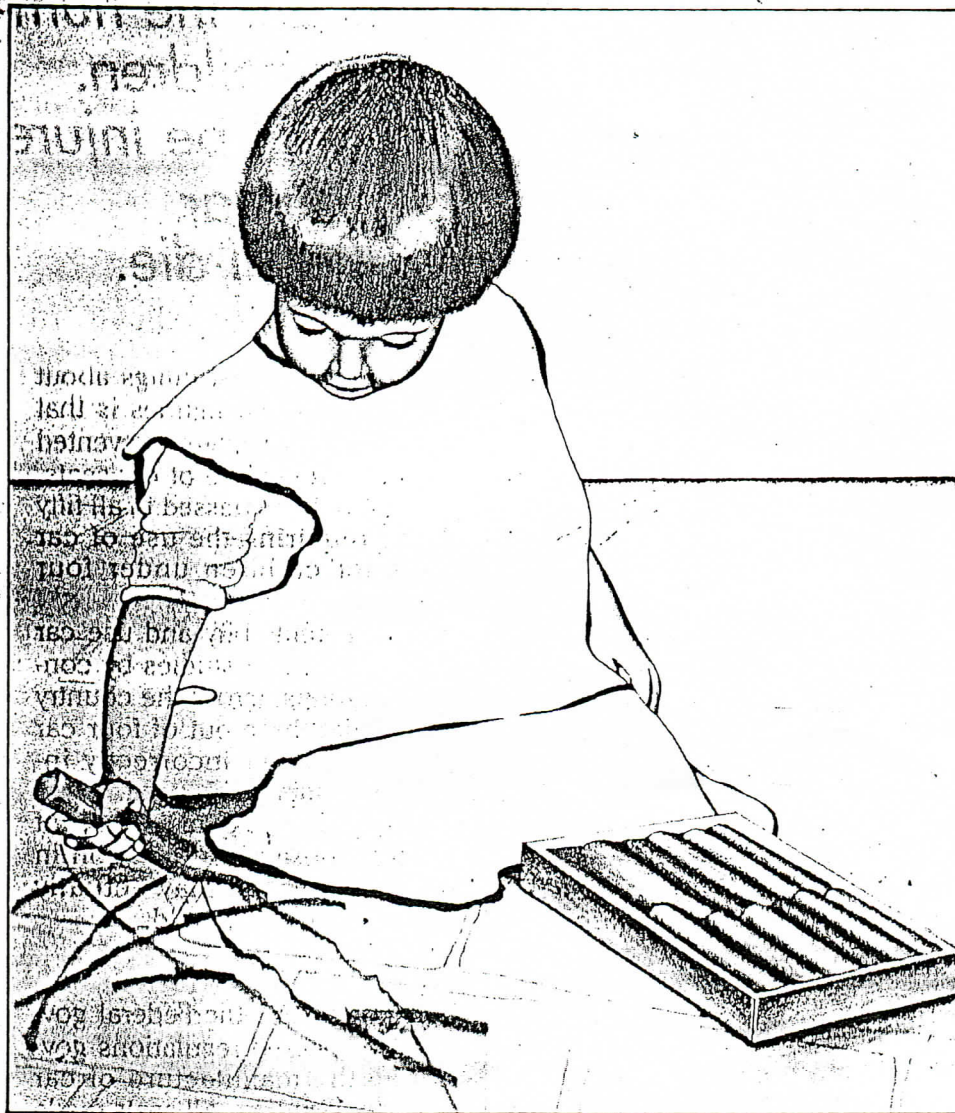
Painting

All children love to paint and the wide outdoors on a warm afternoon is the ideal location. Instead of taking out the easel, hang large paper on a tree or gate, or spread large sheets directly on the ground. If window cleaning is on your agenda in the near future, let your child paint directly on the outside of the windows. Tempera



OR ART

BY SUSAN STRIKER



works well on glass and is easy to clean off if you add some liquid soap before your artist begins.

Art Show

You can have an outdoor art show right in your backyard! Hang your child's creations on a clothesline stretched between two trees or telephone poles and invite the neighbors and passersby to view the exhibit. Encourage your children to put a price on their artwork and sell them. You can

turn this into a lesson in money management in addition to one in pride and self-expression. Who can resist parting with five cents for a scribble? Proceeds from the sale can be used to purchase new art materials.

Art activity is an essential part of your child's growth and development. It can be difficult to encourage while maintaining high standards of housekeeping indoors during the long winter months, but now that summer is

here, creativity can blossom outdoors. Like a budding flower, your child will be transformed in the warmth of the sun by your nurturing attitude towards his or her creativity.

Susan Striker is the founder of Young At Art studios in New York City and the author of The Anti-Coloring Books. Her recent book, Please Touch (Simon and Schuster, 1986), shows parents how to raise a creative child.

