Stanislaus County
Office of
Education

Child/Family Services

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ART DEVELOPMENT

Resource & Referral Handout

Scribble Stage. Ages 2 – 3 -- These scribbles involve vertical, horizontal, diagonal, curving and circular lines. All art is based on scribbles.

Vague Shapes. Ages 2 – 4 -- Circles, crosses, spuares, rectangles etc. are roughly visible. This child does not have the motor ability to master the shape yet.

Actual Shapes. Age 3 – 5 -- This is a singular outline of a shape. Motor control is now more refined.

Combined Shapes. Ages 3 – 5 -- These are designs created by combining and repeating various shapes. Shapes within shapes are common.

Mandalas and Suns. Ages 3 - 5 -- These are so common in children's art that they can be traced back to prehistoric times. The Mandalas and Suns display perfect balance. This is a turning point in childrens' art because from this stage we begin to see the emergence of recognizable art.

People. Ages 4 – 5 -- These first appear as a large head with the arms and legs extending from the head. Later a trunk and more details appear.

Beginning Recognizable Art. Ages 4 - 6 -- These pictures are now identifiable. You may see several, unrelated objects on a page. These pictures are built upon the figures and shapes mastered during previous stages.

Later Recognizable Art. Ages 5 – 7 -- The entire page tells a story. You may see birds, trees, people, flowers, suns, houses and kites. This child may still prefer to draw abstract art, however, this is done with good control and intent.