



**Artists in
Neighbourhoods**
Fall 2025

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Kento Cady

TODDLER A - Watercolours

I brought in an Autumn themed still life with some gourds and pinecones and the children had a really good time experimenting with the steps of watercolour. Once I guided them through the **process** of wet brush - pan - paper, they were able to get creative. Watercolour is successful with toddlers- there's a big **sensory aspect** with the wet on their hands, and they enjoyed making organic prints with the pinecones and their handprints.

With BGC, we decided to do three weeks of focus time with each toddler group, so I took note that with watercolours, **small pieces of paper led to more confidence building** as they were able to create a lot of small pieces instead of being intimidated by one huge piece of paper.

week one

AFTER SCHOOL - Watercolours

I wanted to focus in on **colour theory** with the after school group- I used the same still life, but I knew the prompt of autumn would be more than enough to sustain them. I created a watercolour colour wheel to show how we can use a primary palette to create depth of colour. I also brought out some markers in case they wanted to do lines. **A child came in and proclaimed herself as an Artist**, and I was really excited at how she got her shy friends to take part in the watercolouring. Below, you can see how she took the Autumn prompt to be about Halloween!

Children had a great time using the **higher quality brushes to make textural marks** they were unable to make with the stock brush watercolour palettes come with. They also liked using the rainbow "magic" pencils for range.



TODDLER A -

Watercolour Pencils

To continue the theme of watercolour exploration, I decided to bring in **watercolour pencils** to continue the dialogue from last week. I expected them to use the brushes, but the brushes weren't really used- they had more success by dipping the watercolour pencils directly in water and getting a richer, softer line that way.

Last week the children were interested in **naming the colours**, so I introduced watercolour pencils by only bringing out warm colours, and then later on introducing cool colours. It was nice to do a level of **colour theory**, though I'm uncertain if it clicked because they were busy having fun! I noticed lots of unconventional mark making with stippling, using the back of the pencil, and gripping with two hands.

week two

AFTER SCHOOL -

Watercolour Pencils

I combined watercolour pencils with watercolour pans, and the children did the same thing as toddlers by dipping the pencils directly in. I also brought out a range of BGC's other materials with a range of **water solubility** (washable markers, regular pencil crayons) to see if they were interested in a mixed media approach. It was one of the last warm days of the Autumn, so it was a quieter drop in group. I got to know the kids a bit better that way. One child said "figuring out these materials is pretty relaxing- **sometimes art is hard, but this time it's more chill.**"

I was also able to speak with Harrison, a staff member who is interested in pursuing higher education in visual art. He's a great artist, and it was cool to be able to share some knowledge on the portfolio process and the reality of art school.



TODDLER A - Culinary Art

This was my last day with this group, and I wanted to do something special. I've been experimenting in the kitchen more myself and wanted to bring culinary art- so I prepared some simple bread dough in accordance with the allergens in the room and brought along raisins to make **bread sculptures**.

In hindsight, sculptures are a bit too much for toddler motor skills, so next time I did this, I brought two different colours of raisins to make more mosaics. Still, toddlers had loads of fun with **hiding the raisins** in the dough, **pressing** the dough, rolling and **feeling the stickies**- of course, they also loved snacking on raisins. We talked about how the oven makes things very hot, and that changes the dough to bread. They ate all their warm bread during snack!

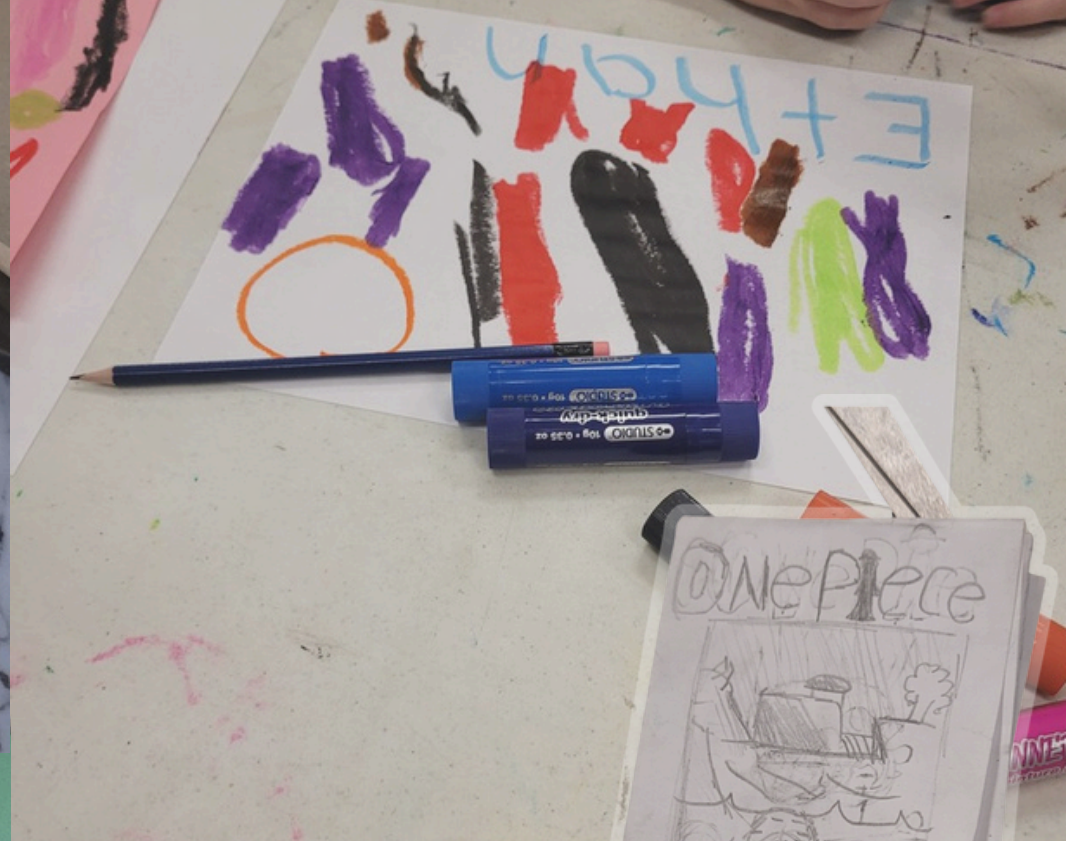
AFTER SCHOOL - Zine Making

Today we made zines! Each child took on the complex 8 page fold like a champ. I set out some prompts on 'all about me' but allowed them to create anything else if they had ideas.

There was a huge breadth in creativity- some children made fancomics, some just wrote, some did long spanning illustrations. A child mentioned that "she really appreciated how I included family in an all about me topic. **Family is important and that love shapes who we are.**" Just wow.

Everyone wanted to take their zines home to finish, or kept them with me so we could work on them together next week. Zines are such a connecting force- whenever someone finished a zine, they were **eager to share** and passed it on around our table.

week three



TODDLER B - Watercolour

Today was a child's very first day in the centre. It was his first day away from parents, so he was understandably in lots of tears. Being separated for the first time is a difficult transition. When he had gotten used to being out of the classroom, an educator handed him a brush and helped him start on a painting. **He was a bit hesitant at first, but quickly calmed down, giggling as he explored the feeling of the watercolours on the page.**

I set out a bunch of different papers for him to move and explore. He left the educator's arms to walk along the table and focus on his many paintings. **The way art could help with emotional regulation was really incredible.**

AFTER SCHOOL - Sticker Making

The children last week really enjoyed illustrating art about themselves, so I brought sticker paper and acrylic markers so they could personalize their books and laptops later.

It was lovely to talk about their interests and personal goals as they created stickers. One child wanted to experiment and go with a collage route on these stickers- he printed out pictures of dragons and pasted them on the paper, then covered it with the tape to be extra secure.

I like to see media experimentation done with the sticker paper. Acrylic markers are strong tools for children in this age group!



TODDLER B - Watercolour Pencils

This group of kids is very kinetic! We were focused on how the pencils sounded on our papers, as there was a strong echo in the gym today. As they made marks, I encouraged them to vocalize- “poink poink poink!” “bam bam bam!” When they soaked the pencils in water and the line came out softer, so did the structure of their onomatopoeia. **I also tried to encourage a mixture of soft and loud sounds. How does echo affect loud? Quiet? Fast? Slow?**

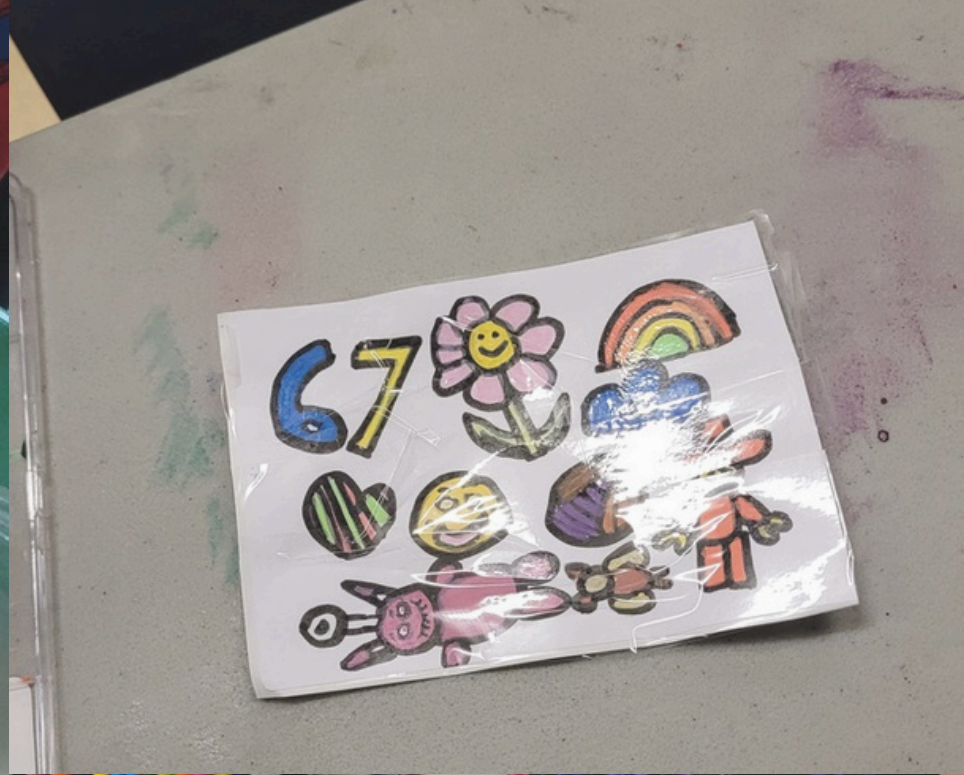
The children were very energetic, and you could see that energy and devotion to sound and exploration in their watercolour pencil art. Lots of active marks and lines.

AFTER SCHOOL - Sticker Making 2

I brought in another activity using watercolour and making tape to create resist art, but they were more interested in continuing to make stickers with the paper I still had in my bag- so **I pivoted to respond to their interests.**

I had a lot of children that didn’t usually participate this time, and I learned **they joined in because they heard from their friends who took part last week about how fun** the stickers were.

I noticed there was a bit of a dependence on needing phones as reference, and I tried to offer a “challenge” where we look for fifteen seconds and try to do it based off memory, then compare at the end as a game. It sort of worked- I wish there was a way to help shake off the need for perfection.



TODDLER B - Culinary Art

The bread dough sculptures are always really fun! The children were very engaged with hiding the raisins inside the bread dough, **or tucking them in with their bread and saying "night night!"**

I brought two different colours of raisins, and while snacking, I asked if there was a difference in taste between the two. I didn't think there would be, but I wanted to have them notice taste a bit deeper.

At the end, the oven made both raisins the same colour, which confused some of the children. Herein comes the conversation on cause and effect- they also noticed the bread was warm. And delicious!

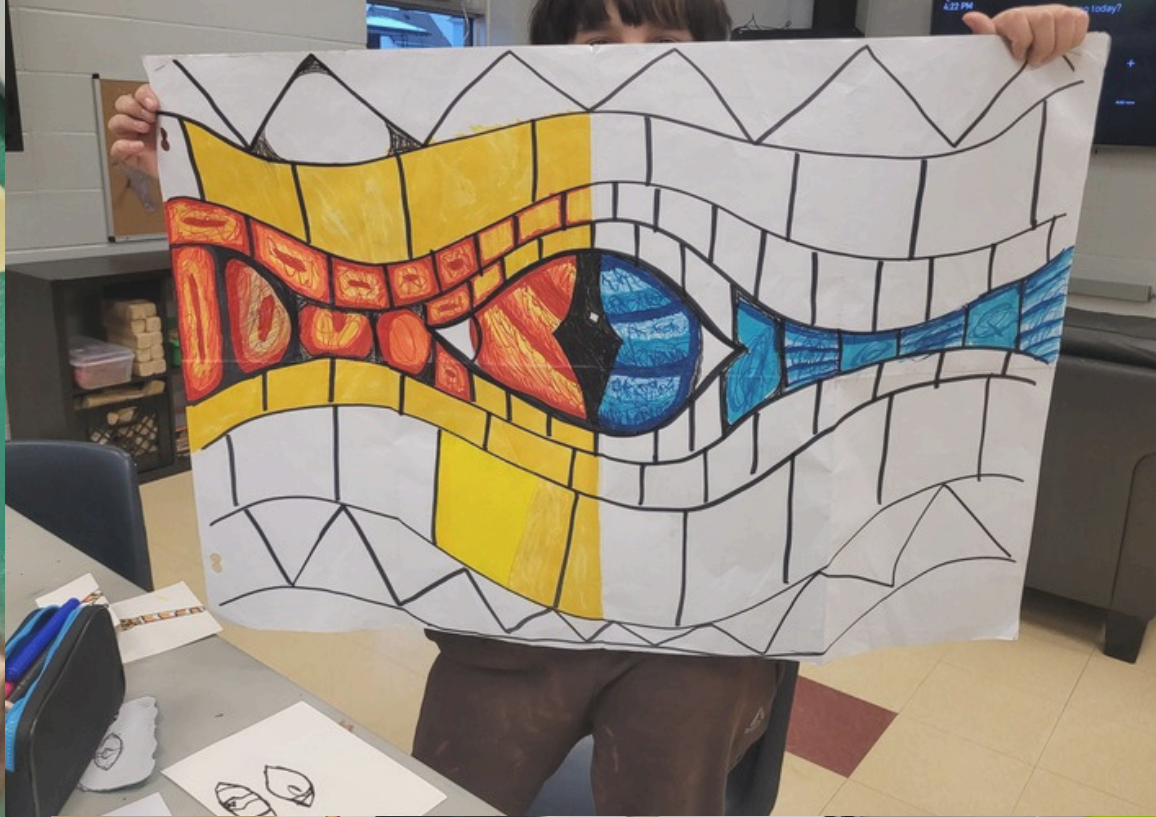
week six

AFTER SCHOOL - Acrylic Markers

Children who had been taking part in almost every activity brought their own art to show me this time! One child who had initially told me he wasn't a "great artist" (though I disagree!) showed me this huge dragon illustration with an exploration of warm and cool colours. I was excited, as I mentioned the dichotomy in the past.

Another child who takes part and always promised he'd show me his sketchbook brought it in! He showed me his anime illustrations and was really keen to use the acrylic markers to create comics in his book and add the final touches to some other illustrations he's been saving for the moment.

I was glad to hear that these art sessions are so positive from the kids themselves. They made some cool comics with the acrylic markers!



INFANTS - Salad Spinners

After six weeks with toddlers, infants are a completely different change of pace- I was a little nervous! But the infants were very sweet! There is a smaller amount, so I was able to get a lot more individual time with each child.

I really enjoyed doing the salad spinner activity with them- there was a range of motor abilities, but there was always **excitement as soon as it got to the pressing the button for the salad spinner.**

I was glad to hear that the salad spinner activity was good for working on **fine motor skills** like squeezing and pressing. I really enjoyed the coos of the children as they saw their art. We had some time afterwards, so I spent some time free playing with the infants to learn more about their developmental level.

AFTER SCHOOL - Clay

Our usual group tripled in size thanks to a new group of drop-in students from a nearby school. I brought in clay thanks to a suggestion from the previous week, and I was initially worried I didn't have enough! I really enjoy the fluctuation of drop-in. On one hand, the supply is a challenge, but on the other, **the children that take part usually have a genuine passion for the activity they choose to do.**

A student spent the entire time meticulously making a figure from "Five Nights at Freddy's", using slip and scoring techniques and toothpick armatures to keep all her pieces together. She was really helpful to other children there, and two students built a friendship based on their shared interests. I was glad to see art being a communal task.

week seven



INFANTS - Bubble Wrap Painting

The babies had a great time with bubble wrap finger painting. I came in while they were preparing to go outside- though I planned for indoors, I was able to pivot and do it outside for some outdoor art.

Thanks to the setting, I set some up that were horizontal and some vertical. **There was a lot of movement as they infants went back and forth, smearing paint and popping bubbles.** It was sweet to see them bundled up and enjoying the popping motion- I noticed this was more successful when the paint was held up vertically as opposed to flat. The paint dripped in a more inviting manner! After they were ready to go inside, I mounted everything to a large piece of paper for them to hang in their room for an exhibition piece!

AFTER SCHOOL - Printmaking

For the Pop Up Art exhibition, we experimented with a more complex practise by delving into styrofoam printmaking to decorate the games room with our own custom prints. We went over the whole process of reductive printing- etching, rolling, and revealing in a kid-friendly format with pens and styrofoam boards.

The pop up art event with printmaking was really successful. **Participants enjoyed the diverse mark making of the printing ink and layering different ink colours together to make new textures.** There was so much iterative experimentation!

One child made 3 plates and 15 prints- a record! Educators got in on the fun and Pardis made me a really sweet thank you card.

