

Looking Through The Eyes of Children:

Viewing Creativity Through a New Lens

By: Evi Milanovic, and The Children of Lawfield Elementary School

This fall, I was given an opportunity to go on an art journey that has shifted the way I view creativity and art. For ten weeks, I attended Lawfield Elementary School and engaged with children of all ages. Toddlers, preschoolers, and school aged children all joined me in our shared attempt to create a space where art can be made freely; and over those ten weeks with the children, I learned so much.

When we think of art, we think of it through a personal lens. We create from the mind, asking ourselves questions such as: *Did I make something that I like? Did I make something that people will think of as good? Did I succeed at what I set out to do? How can I make my art the best it can be?* These are all reasonable questions to us, but what if we looked at creating things through the eyes of children?

At Lawfield Elementary School, I learned that children create from the heart. I learned that if a toddlers' favourite animal is a porcupine, they are going to find a way to make a porcupine, whether it be with clay or paint or beads. To children, art is not about being *good*, art is about feeling.



“Porcupine” by Gavin

When seen through the eyes of children, art is not a task to be conquered, but a feeling to be shared. Many of the children at Lawfield Elementary showed me that time spent exploring and playing with different mediums of art can be just as valuable as time spent perfecting one's project; and in the end, artwork where a child expresses themselves has proven to be the most valuable kind of artwork there is.



“Blue” by Nicholas

Through the inquisitive and expressive nature of the children, I learned that creativity thrives most when it is given a boundless expanse. Children are willing to try new things, take risks, fail and start again, and ask questions until they have satisfied their own minds, reminding me that art does not need rules or barriers to be meaningful; what art needs is complete freedom.



“Collaboration” by the Toddler Room

Through watching the children create, I was shown that the true success of an artwork does not lie in perfection or polish, but in the happiness, experience, confidence, and sense of identity that children can gain through creating. To children, creating is not rigid, and why would it be?



Toddler room, “exploring multimedia” day

When we view art through the eyes of children, we allow ourselves to open our minds to what is possible when we break down the barriers of societal perfection. When we see art through the eyes of children, we allow ourselves to strip away the years of rigid art lessons that tell us things must be perfectly proportional, and just *create*. When we view art through the eyes of children, we develop a deeper understanding of the world, unbridled by rules and tradition; and through this, we are able to create a space in which children feel truly *free*, to make the things that they resonate with, to express themselves, and to be free in the act of creation.