



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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Arts Education Theme For October National Arts & Humanities Month

Americans for the Arts Offers Tips for Parents on How to Keep the Arts in Children's Lives

WASHINGTON, D.C. —Americans for the Arts joins hundreds of arts organizations and communities to launch National Arts & Humanities Month, an annual collective celebration of the arts and culture in America. The theme for this year's month-long celebration is arts education and the need to provide comprehensive arts education programs for children in schools and in communities. The theme reflects the successful national public service advertisement campaign—"Art. Ask for More."—released earlier this year by Americans for the Arts and the Ad Council.

In observing October as National Arts & Humanities Month this year, President George W. Bush issued this statement, "As tools for learning, the arts and humanities have a positive impact on our children's cognitive development, their confidence, and their motivation. I encourage all citizens to participate in activities that celebrate our rich artistic and intellectual heritage, and to learn more about the artists and scholars whose work continues to enrich our society, our Nation, and the world."

"To kick off National Arts & Humanities Month, Americans for the Arts is making a special effort to highlight the—"Art. Ask for More."—PSA campaign to increase the public's active involvement in promoting arts education both in and out of school. Many national broadcast and cable networks have committed to running the PSA spots in higher rotation throughout the month of October," announced Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts.

Americans for the Arts marks this year's celebration with other key events, including the presentation of The National Arts Awards on October 7, the release of 2,000 billboard advertisements as part of the new installment of the PSA campaign—"Art. Ask for More."—which also includes three new TV PSAs, and the announcement of the "Steps to Art" early childhood education grants winners. In connection with the month, Americans for the Arts has developed ten tips for parents on how to keep the arts in their child's lives. The ten tips are attached.

National Arts & Humanities Month originally grew out of National Arts Week, which was started in 1985 by the National Endowment for the Arts and Americans for the Arts. It has now become the largest annual celebration of the arts and humanities in the nation. National Arts & Humanities Month is coordinated by Americans for the Arts, the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts in America. With offices in Washington, DC, and New York City, Americans for the Arts has a 40-year record of service. It is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. For more information, visit www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

TEN TIPS FOR PARENTS ON HOW TO KEEP THE ARTS IN CHILDREN'S LIVES

AT HOME

- Share your interest in the arts. Listen to music, go to live performances and art exhibits, experience theater, dance, and literary events together with your children. Professional theaters, libraries, symphony orchestras, and museums often have programs for children at reduced ticket prices.
- Keep a journal of your trips—whether it is a vacation or a trip to the zoo or a walk in the park. Collect memorabilia like tickets, flowers, shells, or pictures. Write a description of the event and paste the mementos in a notebook or journal.
- Keep a variety of art materials available and encourage your children to use them—crayons, colored paper, newsprint, paints, colored pencils, and pastels.
- Choose a popular work of art and re-create it. For instance, look at Van Gogh's *Starry Night*—talk about it and think about how *Starry Night* would sound? How would it look as a dance? Could it be a Halloween costume?

AT SCHOOL

- Learn about the arts education programs offered at your child's school. Are all art forms taught: music, visual arts, dance, drama, poetry, film, etc.? Is there an arts credit requirement? Are there achievement standards for the arts in your schools? Is there a budget to support the arts in your schools as well as appropriate space and equipment?
- Invite your local arts council and community-based arts organizations to speak at your school and meet with PTA leaders and teachers. Testify at your board of education meetings about the need for standards-based arts education for all children.
- Volunteer to work on an arts project in your child's school or help organize an arts day.

IN THE COMMUNITY

- Involve your children in community arts events. Look for Shakespeare festivals, music, or the visual and performing arts. Attend your local high school's theater productions.
- Introduce your children to the arts through art camps, classes, and music lessons. Encourage your local arts council and cultural institutions to celebrate October as

National Arts and Humanities Month. Encourage your local newspapers, TV and radio stations to promote arts education by running public service ads supporting the arts.

- Attend the budget night in your town, city, or county. These leaders decide how your local dollars are spent. Tell your leaders that public funding for the arts is key to keeping them available to every child. Take your children with you.

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, it has a record of more than 50 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

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