

SHORT COURSES FOR VACATION CARE WORKERS

Course Number 4: Art and Craft on a Budget

Course duration 1.5 hours

Aim

This short course is designed for vacation care workers to identify different ways of planning art and craft at their centre without blowing the budget.

Learning outcomes

- Participants will have the opportunity to discuss how to save money when planning craft activities.
- Participants will develop a list of suppliers and outlets for sourcing cheaper materials.
- Participants will have an opportunity to share and gather different ideas for art and craft on a budget at their centres.

Planning the Activity

Before you begin to think about the resources required and where they can be obtained, you need to spend some time thinking about the activities you would like to plan. You need to ensure that they are compatible with your centre's environment and the needs and interests of the children.

It is a waste of time and money planning and organising an activity if your centre does not have the space, time, staff to fulfil the program.

Remember to discuss your ideas with other staff members and the children at the centre your ideas. You might discover alternative ways of approaching activities that you hadn't considered. Make the planning of art and craft a team approach, other people may have information on budget conscious resources that you weren't aware of.

Give yourself plenty of time to source materials if necessary. Do not plan an activity for the next day if you need to race around your neighbourhood or town purchasing materials.

It can be useful having a look in your cupboards to see what you already have. Making an inventory of existing materials at your centre may lead to great ideas on how to use them. Consider having the children make the inventory - you may be surprised with the ideas they come up with.

Activity 1

Think about what skills you have in your group or community. How could they help with your art and craft activities program?



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Resources

Every centre is located in different areas ranging from inner city, city fringe, suburban and rural. All of these locations have different pros and cons when addressing resources for your centre. Have a look in phone books, talk to other workers and centres to discover what's in your neighbourhood.

Below is a list of some suggestions that may help in resource collection for your centre.

- **Parents/families** - this is a wonderful area to collect a huge amount of resources for your centre. Things you can collect from them include: old clothes for dress-up, cheap lipsticks and nail polish for dramatic play, cereal and other food boxes, books, games, puzzles, recycled paper, sports equipment, soft toys, lego, duplo, etc. Encourage your families to have a spring clean once a year and bring in their useful junk for the centre.
- **Resource catalogues** - these are very useful for purchasing resources, especially if your area does not have many shops close by. Remember that these businesses tend to be on the pricey side, it's a good idea to compare prices in a few different catalogues.
- **Supermarkets/\$2 shops** - you'll be surprised what you can find in these shops. They will often stock similar products to the catalogues but for a fraction of the cost. An example of this are feathers, these can be expensive to order in catalogues, but by purchasing cheap feather dusters at the supermarket you have saved over half the cost.
- **Recycling centres** - these can be more difficult to access in remote areas. Centres such as Reverse Garbage in Sydney source materials from factories and sell it to organisations for a small fee. You can go and fill up garbage bags of art and craft materials for less than \$20. Reverse Garbage also has a mail order service.
- **Charity shops** - these are great resources for craft materials, they often sell scraps of fabric, great clothes for dress-ups at a small price. These shops are extremely useful for buying beads for art and craft by purchasing old necklaces you can have interesting beads for a fraction of the cost.
- **Businesses in your area** - have a look in your community for businesses that may like to donate left overs or cast offs to the centre. Printing shops are an excellent source of coloured paper, lumber yards often give away off cuts of wood and timber, florists can pass on older flowers than can be used for pressing and decorating, furnishing factories are a good supplier of material scraps. Approach anyone and everyone - you never know what it will turn up. Don't forget to find out where your parents work - they may also be able to help.
- **Your local environment is also a great resource** - take the children on a walk through parkland, picking up pinecones, sticks, bark, leaves is an activity in itself. Remember to collect only fallen materials, please do not encourage the children to harm the living plants. Also be aware if there are any restrictions in the area, National Parks and Wildlife Service have very strict rules regarding removal of materials from national parks and protected areas.
- **Equipment hire centres** - you may be able to hire equipment needed for activities rather than spending a lot of money purchasing them. Organisations such as Network hire out badge making machines, woodwork equipment, silk screen sets and paper recycling kits.

Activity 2

Using the suggestions above, in the group share ideas for other sources of cheap materials and compile a list of resources

- in your local area
- from other sources.

Ideas for activities

There are a huge amount of books and journals that give many, many ideas for planning art and craft on a budget. If your centre does not have their own library then contact other centres in your area who will be willing to lend you some. Go to your local library - they will also have books to borrow.

Visit network's website, or ask for a list to be posted, to find out about publications and resources available through Network.

You can also use your art and craft activities to address such environmental issues and recycling. Children can learn a lot by just being aware of how the staff sourced the materials for the activity. Discuss with children how you came up with the idea and where the materials came from. This can often be just as important as the actual activity.

Activity 3

Each person share one idea on an art and craft activity which cost your centre nothing to resource.

Recommended Resource

Vacation Care Training and Resource Kit available from Network

Useful publications available from Network

see Network's website www.netoosh.org.au

How To - Craft Activities

Awesome Activities for Older Children in OOSH