Art Therapist

An art therapist can help a person express their feelings through making art. Children with autism have a hard time talking about and understanding their feelings. Sometimes creating something beautiful can help a child can find their voice.

Career Path

To be an art therapist, you have to be skilled in art and be interested in helping people to express themselves. An art therapist must know as much about psychology as they do about art. Most art therapists have a master's degree in art therapy.

Practicing art therapy can be very rewarding. Children with autism who are taught to express themselves in pictures often become calmer and happier. Sometimes these children become talented artists as well! An art therapist can help a child learn about feelings by asking the child to draw a picture of something that is happy, sad, lonely or scared. The therapist can also help the child learn to communicate with words by asking them to talk about their art. Some therapists work with groups of autistic children, teaching them how to cooperate by giving them a project to complete together.

The picture on the right was painted by a boy who rarely speaks. Learning to paint has given him a way to tell the world how he feels. He calls this picture, "Green and Gold Fantasy Horse" and writes that the picture makes him feel "happy" and "excited". This artist spends time every day painting at a special school for children with autism, but he also spends many hours a day at home working on his art. He has participated in several art shows. He has even sold several of his paintings!

Technology Spotlight

Click on the link below and look at the online art gallery. All these art pieces were made by people with autism. Choose a picture you like and try to describe what you think the artist was feeling when they created the piece. Can you see how art could help someone who has trouble communicating to express their feelings? Next time you have trouble expressing yourself, try communicating through art!

Click here: www.autismarts.com/photo_album.0.html