

While an Adapted Art Program is not a new concept, we strive to make the students' experience unique and exceptional.



Our focus is each student's voice and choice in creating original works of art, and using community resources and support to make the experience one of a kind.



ADAPTED ART



artsforme.org



ARTS FOR ME!

A Guide for Teachers, Artists, Volunteers, Peer Models, and Educational Assistants.



A GUIDE TO WORKING IN THE ADAPTED ART ROOM

We have learned so much from working closely with our amazing students enrolled in the Adapted Art Program, also know as **“Arts For Me!”**. This guide is meant to help and guide everyone who enters the classroom.



We are grateful to have an amazing staff that is always willing to jump in and help our students. We realize it is very difficult to change the mindset that success is measured by what a student's work looks like.

Each student is unique and so is their art work. Although we all mean well, it can be hard to take a hands off approach when it comes to creating. We truly appreciate all you do to help our students, and trusting in the vision of **“Arts For ME!”** as we strive to create a truly meaningful experience for neurodiverse students, who are often marginalized. Every voice is important, and we want to celebrate each and every student enrolled in **“Arts For ME!”**



GUIDE FOR TEACHERS AND GUEST ARTISTS:

Communicate clear expectations to all assistants, before class begins in order to avoid misunderstandings during the creative process.

Create a safe and welcoming environment for students, staff, caretakers, and guests. We are all partners in this journey.

Have tables, equipment, supplies, and adapted tools set up and ready for use. You will want full attention on your amazing students.

GUIDE FOR EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANTS, CARETAKERS, GUESTS:

Leave your expectations and ideas of what success looks like at the door. For some students success might mean moving their arm, for others it may mean drawing a likeness of the world around them.

Remember it is all about the student creating and expressing their voice and choices.

Read the student's body language in order to adjust your volume level, and proximity. One adult per student is all that is needed in most cases, otherwise students may become overwhelmed. Often a student may only need a periodic check in from an adult.

Be careful not to suggest things. Such as, “How about put some blue here?”, or “What about drawing a heart?” Suggesting such things creates an expectation and a situation where the student will try to please the adult. Slow down, breathe, listen, and wait for students to make choices.

Do not “fix their work”. This immediately devalues their work and who they are as a human being. Each student will express their ideas in their own way. Parents want to see what their student's can do, not what the adults in the room can do.

Hand over hand should be only as needed. Such as helping to apply glue, or other technical applications. It is important to keep the integrity of the student's work as they see it.

Listen carefully to the Art Instructor for cues and instructions. Please do not work ahead or assume what we are expecting. Lessons often change and evolve as we learn what works and what does not.

Strive to build meaningful relationships with each student.

Be actively engaged with the student or students you are assisting. Move with them, avoid stationary positions for long periods of time; be attentive. Sitting next to the student for an extended period of time can create a stagnant environment. Cell phones should be put away unless needed to contact a teacher or in an emergency.