

CRAFT TRENDS

e-Book Volume 4

Creative Ideas & Inspirations

10 FREE PROJECTS

PLUS...

**PSYCHOLOGIST
RENEE MILL SHARES
HOW CRAFTING CAN
HELP PARENTS
CONNECT WITH KIDS**



DESIGNER PROFILE



GREAT FINDS



PAPERCRAFT



EMBROIDERY



CROSS STITCH



FABRIC GALLERY



KNITTING



PATCHWORK



**“Crafting Can
Help You
Connect with
Your Kids” Say
Experts**



Whether it's fathoming up a new Easter hat design for the annual school Easter hat parade, making an Easter basket, or painting eggs, as a parent of young kids, there's nowhere to hide from Easter craft at this time of year.

While many of us may cower away from digging out craft materials owing to the hassle and mess, experts say there is something to be said by putting some time aside, taking a big deep breath and diving in.

"While many mums love crafting with their kids, many also avoid crafting activities because they see them as time consuming and messy. However, with a bit of planning, you can choose a simple activity just with scissors, colouring pens, paper and glue, for example, that is fun and mess-free," says psychologist and parenting specialist, Renee Mill.

Renee says that getting involved with a craft activity can take you away from the busy everyday routine that can help you connect with your young child, something that can benefit you both.



Some of the benefits, says Renee are:

Time away from technology. Good connection happens when there is eye contact. Our brains are ‘social brains’, which means that when we connect through eye contact, it helps our child’s brain develop. When a parent and/or the child is engaged in technology, eye contact and face to face communication is diminished. Bonding, love and affection are best displayed when there are no screens or other devices in the way

Non-confrontational conversation. A lot of parenting involves telling a child what to do and the child reacting to it, frequently in a negative manner such as being oppositional, defensive or sulky. When you work cooperatively on a craft activity, the focus is on working together, both being contributors and respectful of each other's opinions. This generates closeness and warmth. It sets the tone for collaboration in the future.



Creating confidence. Confidence does not come from being praised. It comes from achieving something, which is called mastery. When a child learns a new skill or finishes an activity, they develop feelings of mastery which increase confidence. Of course, the parent should give helpful praise which will reinforce the confidence e.g; “I noticed you were able to concentrate for 30 minutes”, “That border required good eye hand co-ordination.” “You really mastered that”, “How creative to think of adding red to the drawing.”

Mood enhancement creativity and time with mum. Arts and crafts are good for lowering stress and lifting one’s mood. When you create something, you release dopamine which is the “happy hormone”. Therefore, spending time together doing an activity is great for mental wellness. When you are both happy and calm there is more space for loving moments.



Use of imagination. The imagination is a very powerful tool. With the advent of technology, children are not engaging their imagination as much as before. When you watch a video, you are watching the creativity of another person passively. In therapy and hypnotherapy, sports psychology and performance enhancing psychology the imagination is harnessed. It is a good “muscle” to keep active for mental wellbeing.

Re-connecting with your own creativity/inner child. As adults we often take life too seriously. It can feel like life is all about paying the bills, getting the kids to appointments and daily chores. What a grind it becomes. When you take time out for creative play, you step out into another dimension for a while and it relieves those burdensome feelings. It also is an opportunity to be mindful and in the moment. You are activating different parts of your brain (right side) which will help you feel more balanced and alive. Also, it is a reminder not to take life so seriously all the time.

RENEE MILL



Clinical psychologist and parenting specialist

Renee Mill is a Sydney-based clinical psychologist who specialises in parenting and anxiety. She is also the author of books *Parenting Without Anger* and *Anxiety Free, Drug Free*.

For more information visit www.reneemill.com or www.anxietiesolutionscbt.com/renee-mill