

A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words –

Encourage Children to Express Themselves Thru Art

Annually Valley Mental Health sponsors a Third Grade Self-Esteem Art Contest in Salt Lake, Summit and Tooele schools. We celebrate the Winners in May --Mental Health Month (A few of the pictures will be available to be shown).

Expressing ourselves through art began as far back as we can find documentation of cave art, temples and ancient scrolls. The Dana Foundation released a three year study in 2008 suggesting that early training in the arts can be good for your brain.

Neuroscientists and psychologists from several universities have studied this area and believe they now have enhanced understanding of how the arts help us in many ways:

- **ART: can help children express themselves and discover their feelings. Art therapists believe that the act of making art triggers internal activity that contributes to emotional healing.**

Encourage children to express themselves through art and then discuss the pictures. Have art supplies available to them, they do not need to be store bought – they can be natural items, items you have around the house, to help teach children to be creative.

- **MUSIC: improves thinking, memory language skills and math.**
- **DANCE: Thinking through, following action and expression**
- **ACTING: Expands language skills**

Reference: Psychology Today.com