



Special Project Grants

As your county arts council, ArtsinStark actively seeks artists and small non-profit organizations that are doing wonderful work in our community. Through our Special Project Grants, we provide funds for targeted activities that create smarter kids, new jobs, and healthier communities through the arts.

An independent Art Therapist and a teacher from Eastgate Childhood Development Center co-wrote — and were awarded — an ArtsinStark Special Project Grant that is making a tremendous project possible. One little boy who benefitted from this grant is named Aiden.

Aiden is high on the autistic spectrum. He has very low tolerance for new noises and physical sensations. At Eastgate, Aiden is learning how to stretch his very narrow limits and is gradually becoming more trusting --- when and where appropriate. In this project, there are two main components to the classroom time with the kids, many of whom struggle with new experiences like Aiden. First the kids lie down on a piece of paper, while a trusted adult loosely traces their form. Then, as a very exciting “reward” for going a little outside their comfort zone, the kids get to paint their cut out shapes in as many colors as they like, with a paint brush or sponge of their choice.

Aiden took one step onto the roll of paper and quickly retreated. He flatly refused to even step back onto the paper --- he didn't like the feel or the sound or feel of the paper under his feet, and certainly would not lie down on the paper for his shape to be traced. When patiently his teacher worked with Aiden to learn if there was ANY way he would

consider going back on the paper, Aiden finally consented to riding a tricycle across the paper! Aiden nervously hopped on a trike, inched cautiously onto the roll of paper, paused only for a brief moment to be traced, then quickly sped off the crinkly, dry paper.



This was a real breakthrough for Aiden! Here is Aiden on the left, proudly painting his unique body shape --- celebrating his big accomplishment just like all the other kids.

Art Changes Lives



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