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process > perfection

artNEST®

A simple guide to raising creative, confident kids
For parents to use at home - for free!
by artNEST®

This Process Over Perfection cheat sheet is a small window into how artNEST® nurtures creativity at its core. We share it because we've seen what happens when children are given permission to explore instead of perform confidence grows, emotions settle, and self-trust takes root. This work matters deeply to us and we know, since you are here, it matters to you too. By sharing what we've learned, we hope to help shape a future filled with emotionally grounded, creative, and confident humans. Read on to learn about the magic that can happen when you give your kids these simple tools that make a huge impact.

WHY THIS MATTERS

Creativity isn't about making something that looks "right."

It's about thinking, feeling, exploring, and trusting yourself.

When kids are allowed to focus on process instead of outcome, they build skills that last far beyond art: confidence, resilience, problem-solving, and emotional awareness. The art is just the evidence.

WHAT WE'RE TAUGHT ABOUT "GOOD ART"

Most of us grew up believing that good art should:

- Look like something recognizable
- Match the example
- Be neat and controlled
- Be finished
- Be praised for how it looks

This unintentionally teaches kids to:

- Seek approval
- Avoid risk
- Fear mistakes
- Quit when it feels hard
- That they may not be an artist or good at Art

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Process > Perfection

WHAT ACTUALLY BUILDS CREATIVE CONFIDENCE

Creative confidence grows when kids are encouraged to:

- Explore freely
 - Take risks
 - Engage their senses
 - Solve problems on their own
 - Express emotions visually
 - Stay with something even when it feels uncomfortable
 - These experiences build the foundation for focus, adaptability, and self-trust.
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WHY PROCESS MATTERS MORE THAN THE PRODUCT

When children focus on how they are creating rather than what they are making, their brains are actively:

- Making decisions
 - Strengthening focus and attention
 - Practicing emotional regulation
 - Developing resilience
 - Entering a state of creative flow
 - The final piece doesn't matter nearly as much as what happens while it's being made.
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WHAT TO SAY (AND WHAT TO SKIP)

Instead of saying:

- "What is it?"
- "That doesn't look like..."
- "You're so talented!"
- "Let me help you."
- "You should try..."

Try saying:

- "Tell me about what you're working on."
- "What made you choose that?"
- "I can see how focused you are."
- "What do you want to try next?"
- "How does it feel to make this?"
- Curiosity keeps creativity open.
- Evaluation shuts it down.

5 SMALL SHIFTS THAT CHANGE EVERYTHING

1. Remove the Example

No sample means no comparison.

2. Delay the Praise

Notice effort, decisions, and persistence — not appearance.

3. Let the Mess Happen

Mess is visible thinking.

4. Resist Fixing

Struggle builds confidence and independence.

5. End Before Burnout

Stop while it still feels good. That's how kids want to return.

WHEN CREATIVITY FEELS HARD

When your child says “I can’t”, try:

- “What part feels tricky?”
- “What could you experiment with?”
- “It doesn’t have to be finished.”

Avoid:

- Taking over
 - Correcting
 - Rushing to a solution
 - Learning to sit with discomfort is a powerful life skill — and art is one of the safest places to practice it.
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THE artNEST® PHILOSOPHY

At artNEST®, we believe:

- Creativity is a mindset, not a talent
- Confidence grows through exploration
- There is no single “right way” to create
- The mess is where learning lives
- Nuggets of gold live in tangents
- Process over perfection. Always.

WHAT'S NEXT



Want more tools that support creative confidence at home?

Explore our Prompt Packs to bring process based learning to your home or join us in the studio for process-based art experiences designed to help kids thrive.

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