

# Arts & Crafts Safety

Use only non-toxic arts and crafts materials. Look for the Approved Product Seal by the Art and Creative Materials Institute. Products with the “Cautionary Label Seal” should not be used with young children.



Approved product seal



Cautionary product label seal

- Avoid eating or drinking during arts and crafts activities.
- Ensure children wash their hands after arts and crafts activities.
- Ensure arts and crafts materials are stored in a secure, inaccessible area to children.

AVOID	USE
Powdered clay. It is easily inhaled and contains silica and possibly asbestos. Do not sand dry clay pieces or engage in other dust-producing activities.	✓ Talc-free, premixed clay. After using clay, wet mop or sponge surfaces thoroughly.
Ceramic glazes or copper enamels.	✓ Water-based paints instead of glazes. Adults may waterproof pieces with shellac or varnish.
Cold-water, fibre reactive dyes or other chemical-based commercial dyes.	✓ Vegetable and play dyes (such as onion skins, or tea) as well as food dyes.
Instant paper mâchés, which create inhalable dust and may contain lead or asbestos.	✓ Make paper mâché from black and white newspapers and library or white paste. If flour is being used to make the paste, do not use raw flour. Instead, use ready-to-eat flour or heat-treated flour.
Powdered tempera paints, which create inhalable dust and may contain toxic pigments.	✓ Liquid tempera paints or paints premixed by an adult.
Solvents such as turpentine, toluene, and rubber cement thinner and solvent-containing materials.	✓ Water-based products only.
Aerosol sprays.	✓ Water-based paints with brushes or splatter techniques.
Pastels, chalks, or dry markers that create dust.	✓ Oil pastels, crayons, or dustless chalks.
Epoxy, instant glue, airplane glue, or other solvent-based adhesives.	✓ Water-based white glue or library paste.
Permanent felt-tip markers which may contain toxic solvents.	✓ Water-based markers only.

Casting plaster. Besides creating dust, casting body parts can result in serious burns.	✓ Adults can mix plaster in ventilated area or outdoors for sand casting and other safe projects.
Toxic bingo dabbers	✓ Bingo dabbers that state they are non-toxic.
Objects that are small enough to lodge in a child's ear or nose or that may cause a choking hazard for children under 3. Styrofoam may be a choking hazard for young children.	✓ Larger, non-toxic craft objects.
Toxic crayons or ones broken into small pieces. For children under the age of 3, broken crayons may be a choking hazard.	✓ Waxed or pressed crayons designed for children that are non-toxic.
Egg cartons with visible dirt on them.	✓ Clean egg cartons can be purchased at craft stores or ask a local egg processor to donate unused egg cartons. If the children are bringing products from home, Styrofoam cartons are preferred over cardboard cartons. Alternatively, spray Styrofoam cartons with a 100ppm chlorine solution.
Products not designed for use on the body for body art and face painting.	✓ Products designed for use on the body.
Scissors that have sharp points.	✓ Safety scissors or children's scissors with blunt ends.
Leaves and straw may have residual chemicals, be infested with insects, or contain bacteria, mould or dust that may cause problems for children with allergies.	✓ Artificial leaves and/or store-bought decorative straw
Eggshells from raw eggs.	✓ Eggshells must be immersed in boiling water or heated in the oven for at least 10 minutes at 175°C (350°F).
Homemade playdough using raw flour and/or boric acid (Borax)* <i>*heat treating flour in-house may not kill harmful bacteria</i>	✓ Commercially sold playdough. ✓ Playdough made with cornstarch, commercially purchased heat-treated flour, or ready-to-eat flour (consider allergens).

Contact us at 1-833-476-4743 or [submit a request online](#) at [ahs.ca/eph](https://ahs.ca/eph).

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