

"I knew that coming to art group would mean a lot to the kids, but I just didn't realize how much!" – New DrawBridge Volunteer

Art Exercise

It's time to relax a bit and get your hands dirty!

Working effectively with children often requires a shift in perspective. Learning to see the world from the viewpoint of a child is one of the most helpful things a DrawBridge volunteer can do. It allows you to really understand where behavior is coming from and helps you to meet children where they are. The following exercise is designed to help you get into the mindset of the children we serve. It is also intended to help you understand how we use art in our groups: as a tool that can help children express emotions and memories, which may be easier to access via the artistic process.

Exercise:

Take a moment to think back to being 7 years old, the average age of the children we serve.

1. Visualize where and with whom you were living.
2. Try to remember something that was challenging in your life. Was there something at home or school that was difficult to deal with, such as a fear of the dark or a challenge with a friend or family member?
3. Fold a piece of paper in half (any color you choose) and draw this challenging time in your life on one half of the page. It can be a quick sketch with any kind of art materials that you are comfortable using.
4. Next, try to remember someone who was a mentor in your life at that time and how they assisted you through the challenge. Draw this person on the other side of the paper or write down qualities that made you feel supported by them.
5. Reflect on what you think you can offer as a mentor to a young person, who may or may not be struggling with multiple challenges in his or her life.