

Professor Laura Zeisler

ART 375.01

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Critical Reading Response #15

In the article, Kearns (2004) describes sensory integration techniques in art therapy for neurodivergent children and elaborates that “While such strategies address some of the physical needs at the root of the problems of the child with SI difficulties experiences, they do not address the social and emotional aspects of the child’s internal experience” (p. 96). This statement illustrates that although these stimulating activities are successful in decreasing impulsive behaviors in children, they do not fully tackle other aspects. This is a significant subject to address because social relationships and emotional wellbeing are important aspects of human life. However, SI-challenged children often have difficulties forming relationships as some of their challenges result in behavioral problems or issues with inattention. In addition, school activities can be intimidating or overwhelming, causing emotional distress and a decline in motivation. To combat this issue, Kearns suggested focusing an art therapy session on the art/pre-art activity experience and implementing intrinsic motivation to create art, rather than extrinsic motivation to appease the school curriculum’s high expectations. The combination of this “sensory diet” and an intrinsic-focused mindset would increase appropriate behaviors in educational settings and increase positive emotions of SI-challenged children.

Reference

Kearns, D. (2004). Art therapy with a child experiencing sensory integration difficulty. *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association*, 21(2), 95-101.