



Council for Art Education, Inc.

Sponsor of Youth Art Month



What is Youth Art Month?

Youth Art Month is an annual observance each March to emphasize the value of art education for all children and to encourage support for quality school art programs.

Youth Art Month provides a forum for acknowledging skills that are fostered through experience in the visual arts that are not possible in other subjects offered in the curriculum.

Youth Art Month's Purposes Are:

1. To direct attention to the value of art education which develops divergent and critical thinking; multicultural awareness; and technical, communication, and expressive skills.
2. To increase community, business and governmental support for art education.
3. To recognize art is a necessity for the full development of better quality life for all people.
4. To expand art programs in schools and stimulate new ones.
5. To increase community understanding and interest in art and art education through involvement in art exhibits, workshops, and other creative venues.
6. To provide additional opportunities for individuals of all ages to participate in creative art learning.
7. To encourage commitment to the arts by students, community organizations, and individuals everywhere.
8. To recognize art education as a viable component in the total education curricula that develops citizens of a global society.
9. To reflect and demonstrate the goals of the National Art Education Association that work toward the improvement of art education at all levels.

Who Sponsors It, Why and How?

In 1961, The Crayon, Water Color & Craft Institute, forerunner of The Art & Creative Materials Institute (ACMI), a non-profit association of art and craft materials manufacturers, created Children's Art Month. Created in cooperation with the National Art Education Association (NAEA), a professional society of art educators, the purpose of Children's Art Month was to "emphasize the value of participating in art for all children." In 1969 the observance was expanded to include secondary school students and has been celebrated nationwide since that time as "Youth Art Month."

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In 1984, ACMI created the Council for Art Education (CAFE), to administer the national Youth Art Month program and to encourage funding for the program. Current members of the Council include:

ACMI – which provides all administrative support and a majority of funding for national Youth Art Month;

NAEA – whose members carry out local Youth Art Month activities and whose state affiliates help fund state Youth Art Month programs;

The SHIP – a group of art materials exhibitors at the annual NAEA Convention.

The General Federation of Women's Clubs – a volunteer non-profit organization committed to community improvement through volunteer service.

The Council seeks the active cooperation and support of national organizations and institutions. The Council also seeks and has received monetary and in-kind contributions from individual art material manufacturers and distributors.

To help promote observances, CAFE stimulates and coordinates Youth Art Month activities at the national level. The annual event, "School Flag Across the U.S....Flying High," is an example. Each year, state Youth Art Month Chairpersons hold a student flag design program. A theme is selected that is representative of the individual state and the spirit of Youth Art Month. A design is selected and made into a flag. An opening ceremony is held in Washington, DC (funds permitting) the first week in March to honor the student designers in front of families, friends, teachers and U.S. legislators. The flags are flown in a place of prominence in Washington, DC for the remainder of March. The flags also are displayed in the Youth Art Month booth at the NAEA Convention and in the ACMI booth at the National Art Material Trade Association Convention before being returned to the individual state.

Each March the observance spotlights art education through governors' and mayors' proclamations, states' capitol events, and thousands of local exhibits. It has the endorsement and support of many U.S. Senators and Members of Congress and state legislators who speak out on behalf of art education. The Council and NAEA encourage and assist state Youth Art Month Chairpersons, who are appointed by state art education association presidents, in their efforts to stimulate and coordinate state and local activities. These Chairpersons submit reports to the Council each year detailing their efforts and results.

At the NAEA Convention each year, the Council recognizes outstanding achievement at the state level by conferring awards on certain state Chairpersons.

For more information on Youth Art Month, contact the Council for Art Education, 1280 Main St., P. O. Box 479, Hanson, MA 02341. Tel: (781) 293-4100. Fax: (781) 294-0808.
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