

Painting a Bright Future

Use: This activity may be used as a workshop, activity at a camp program or class

Goals:

Participants will come away knowing:

- How they picture themselves in 5 – 10 years in the future
- To set a goal for the future you need to start with the end in mind.
- Planning for the future should be about more than just career/work plans.

Timeframe: 60 minutes

Target Age: middle school age to adult

Activity: This art activity utilizes the concept that painting and/or drawing uses both hemispheres of the brain, and will help with active processing. Youth will move through four areas of goal setting around the topics of **family & friends, career/work, fun/leisure activities and service.**

Procedure

Supplies:

Card stock, two full sheets per student and preferably tempera paints/brushes, cups for water and napkins. If that is not feasible, then markers or water color pencils.

Directions:

Divide the card stock sheet into four sections as below.

<p>What my family & friends will look like in 5-10 years:</p>	<p>What I will be doing to achieve my career/work goals in 5 – 10 years:</p>
<p>What I will be doing for fun/leisure in 5 – 10 years:</p>	<p>Three ways I will be giving back in 5 – 10 years through service:</p>

- Have the student paint or draw their ideas of their future in each area. Encourage students to not be worried about quality of art work, as it is for their satisfaction only.
- When they are finished, encourage volunteers to share their art work and explain their picture of their future.
- Have students use the additional card stock to write out what their goals statements will be for each area of their future.
- Take time to reflect on the activity.

Background

Giving youth an opportunity to use their thoughts, emotions and imagination and predispositions operates concurrently and can happen when youth perform many functions simultaneously, such as drawing while thinking of the future. According to Caine & Caine, 1990 *Journal of Educational Leadership*, providing a stimulating classroom environment can help satisfy the brain's enormous hunger for discovery and challenge. By utilizing art and the shared classroom space for imagination, youth can often dream bigger and set higher goals for themselves.

Reflection Questions

- Is it hard to think about what fun might look like for adults?
- Do you think service will be an important role for you in the future?
- Who will still be your friends? What if one of you moves away? Do you plan to marry? Have children?
- Will your job or work make you happy? Or is it only about earning money?
- Research tells us we need to be active at least 60 minutes every day. What will you do to stay active?
- After you write out your goals, use the SMART Goals method to test the goals:
 1. Specific: A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal.
 2. Measurable: Can you measure your success toward your goal? How?
 3. Attainable: attitudes, abilities, skills, and financial capacity to reach them
 4. Realistic: willing? Motivated?
 5. Time centered: When? How long with it take you get there?