



What's your little artist telling you?

There's more to your youngster's creations than meets the eye. Her art reveals how she feels about herself, her family and her world

When Debbie Nanni's six-year-old daughter Samantha has a fight with her older sister Stacey, her crayons speak out for her. "Samantha will draw Stacey off in a corner," says the Hicksville, New York, mother of three. If Samantha has been having fun with her siblings, she'll draw herself between Stacey and their little brother Anthony. Samantha, like other kids her age, is expressing herself through her artwork without even realizing it.

"Before age five, kids mainly draw abstract lines, scribbles and stick figures," says New York City psychotherapist Helen Mandlin. "But later they start adding details." She cautions against delving too deeply into the meanings behind your child's drawings. Instead, use your child's creations to learn a little more about her. On these pages, Mandlin shares what some typical drawings mean.

—Rona Gindin



Mommy and me

Here, mom and daughter share the same face, clothes and hair, and are the same size. This indicates that the artist, a six-year-old girl, is still developing a clear sense that she's an individual. Black clouds with figures standing under them aren't a bad sign; they may mean that whatever the two people are in for, good or bad, the child knows they're in it together.

Boy stuff

It just takes one look at this picture to know it was drawn by a boy. Clenched teeth indicate that the seven-year-old artist was feeling angry when he drew this. Dark colors and lack of detail can also be signs of anger. Here, the building and tree are not attached to the ground. Floating objects show that the child isn't comfortable with his anger. You might want to ask your son

why the boy in the picture is angry. This will clue you in to what your child is feeling. Power symbols, such as dolls and buses, are common in boys' drawings too. People who use money and drive motor vehicles have control—and this is probably exploring what control he has over his



Photodramatization (with model): Bill

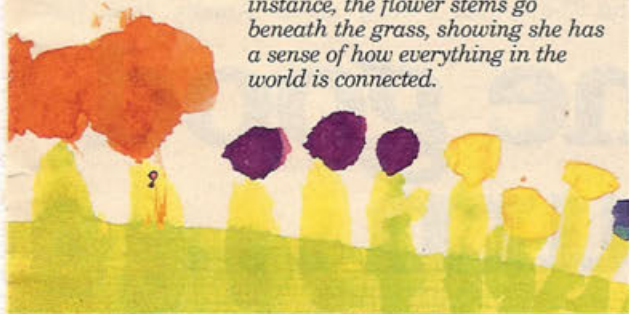
Happiness!

When your child chooses the most colorful markers, as this six-year-old girl did, it probably means he or she feels happy. Look for lots of pairs in your child's masterpieces, like the two people and two balloons here. When a young artist depicts things in pairs, she's showing that she feels one-on-one relationships are important. Pairs may also indicate that she feels very close to her mother or may have trouble separating from her mom.



Family ties

Children who draw objects in groups generally feel secure in their own families. In this watercolor by a five-year-old girl, the flowers are grouped in color families—even the birds fly as a cohesive unit. Watch too for how your little Michelangelo attaches related objects. In this instance, the flower stems go beneath the grass, showing she has a sense of how everything in the world is connected.



Independence

When children draw the sky and the ground, as in this picture by a seven-year-old girl, they're showing an awareness that there's a whole world beyond "Mommy, Daddy and me." Note that everyone in this family is in proportion to everyone else and that family members are standing together but not touching. When your children draw realistically in this way, it's probably a sign that they feel like part of the family, but know they are also independent.



Stay young and healthy with **W**

How doctors can give you beautiful legs

If you've always dreamed of sleek, slim legs, and diet and exercise haven't done the trick, you may be interested in these surgical options

Sometimes it can take more than exercise and counting calories to get a great pair of legs. Many women are uncomfortable showing off their legs because of cellulite or varicose veins.

For some of us these problems are unavoidable, but that doesn't mean we have to live with them. Innovative medical techniques can give almost anyone more beautiful legs.

Varicose vein therapy

Bulgy blue veins or sunburstlike patches of surface veins can make even the shapeliest leg look unsightly. Enlarged (varicose) veins occur when one-way valves in the leg veins fail. Blood that should go to the heart pools instead in the veins, causing swelling; it may also flood capillaries, creating spider veins.

Varicose veins are frequently hereditary—and women are more likely than men to inherit them, possibly because female hormones somehow weaken vein walls and valves. In addition,

pregnancy and jobs requiring prolonged sitting or standing can put pressure on veins.

Spider and smaller varicose veins can be treated with sclerotherapy, in which a shrinking agent injected into the blood vessels causes them to wither. "The downside is that the needles can cause scarring," warns Howard Donsky, M.D., author of *Beauty is Skin Deep*.

Laser surgery, another option, vaporizes varicose and spider veins with intense heat, leaving no marks. Traditional surgery is usually recommended for large varicose veins. They're removed through small incisions, which are closed with a plastic surgery technique that minimizes scarring.

Thigh shaper

You've dieted. You've exercised. And you still have saddlebags or cellulite on your thighs. The fault may lie in your genes—fat distribution and skin elasticity are both inherited—though



aging plays a role in development of cellulite. With age, the fiber bundles anchoring skin to muscle stretch out, and the pouches bulge through. According to Dr. sky, "Liposuction is a very effective solution for both saddlebags and cellulite." In this procedure, doctors put the patient under general anesthesia and then use a strawlike instrument attached to a mechanical "vacuum cleaner" to suck up stubborn fatty deposits.

The change is permanent—you can't create new fat cells to replace the ones removed. doctors warn, you need to exercise and watch your weight so extra calories aren't redistributed to fat cells in other parts of your body. Liposuction is best for people who are in good health and at or near their ideal weight.

—Edita

To prevent varicose veins

- Walk daily. Exercise contracts leg muscles, which helps push blood up to the heart.
- Get up and move around periodically if you're forced to sit or stand for long stretches.
- Lie down with your legs elevated above your

- heart for 10 minutes three or four times a day.
- Don't cross your legs—it creates a roadblock to blood flow.
- Eat lots of fiber-rich fruits, vegetables and whole grains; straining due to constipation puts pressure on leg veins.

NEXT WEEK: Soy—the miracle bean

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