

## Community Connections with the ARTS

As a facilitator you will be aware of the many organizations, resources and services in your community. Some of these have the potential for art partnerships that can support parents and families in your program.

The following includes several ways local programs are promoting the Picturing America artworks with children and families. Stimulated by their experiences with the Picturing America artworks, programs are connecting with their own local arts communities. The approach reflected in several of the suggestions below extends the notion of art to be broad-based and to reflect connections with the local community and culture. Such community-based artwork and experiences could be culturally relevant and help promote local connections between artists and programs.

- Display the poster-size artworks in the public spaces of your program rotate these on a scheduled basis, so parents, families, and children become familiar with them;
- Identify works from local artists, including craft items that are suitable for display at the center; display them and rotate the artworks;
- Sponsor a parent-child session where parents and children together create art using the different media reflected in the Picturing America artworks;
- Set up a check out system with the smaller 8X10 version of the pictures with the related books with take home activities for parents and their children;
- Create your own gallery and art show using works of art created by parents and children;
- Collaborate with a local coffee shop, library or restaurant to display these parent/child created art works;
- Use specific topics or environments reflected in the artworks to explore the community for real life examples of the art. For example:
  - The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere—visit the town center or local church
  - Benjamin Franklin—view a statue and explore the textures, colors, shapes
  - The Oxbow—explore a local park or scenic vista
  - Fallingwater—visit a local creek or pond
- Visit local examples of public art including statues, buildings (architecture), murals, etc.
- Visit local art galleries and/or museums, if available;
- Invite community artists to an "art" evening to share their creative expression with parents and family members;
- Invite community artists to share their art with children in classrooms;
- Partner with an art department at the local high school, community college or university to extend the Head Start program's connection to the art community;
- Visit a local craft fair or farmers' market to identify local arts and culture, and expand the idea of "art" and what it might include;
- Attend the high school or community college concert to expand art to include music and dance;
- Have a musician visit the classroom to discuss his/her instruments and art.