

# Is it Still Important to Teach Children to Sew?

When I was 10 years old, the opportunity to attend a living history program one summer day left me in a tizzy of anticipation. There was only one problem. I had outgrown all of my historically accurate costumes and had nothing to wear to the event.

My mom assessed the situation, pulled out her sewing machine, and decided it was time for me to learn how to use it.

After picking out a pattern and material, she took me home and taught me the ins and outs of sewing which she herself had learned in junior high: how to pin on a pattern, how to baste, how to backstitch, and so on.

I still have that dress. Occasionally the need arises for me to pull it out for another little girl to wear. Whenever I do, the recipients kindly overlook the slightly crooked ruffle on one sleeve and marvel, "You made that? At age 10?!"

Such marveling undoubtedly stems from the fact that sewing of any kind, done by any age, has pretty much disappeared from the culture.

But such a disappearance does not mean that there isn't an interest. On the contrary, young children are still fascinated with learning to sew, as [evidenced recently](#) recently at the American Sewing Guild booth at a Florida County Fair:

*"Sewing machines line the booth's tables, enabling multiple children to try their hand at sewing and take home their newest creations."*

*Last year, the booth helped 400 children operate a sewing machine, said Sarasota/Gulf Coast chapter president Paulette*

*Braga. So far this year, more than 270 children have stopped by. She said those who stop are inquisitive.*

*“‘They’re pretty fascinated by the taking two pieces of material and they stick together,’ Braga said. ‘They love to create something. ... They’re very proud of what they do.’”*

But if children like these are so enamored with sewing their own creations, then why don’t more do it? Braga explains her theory:

*“‘I think the disconnection comes from schools. They don’t have life-learning events in schools anymore,’ Braga said noting that she and her daughters learned to sew, balance a checkbook and cook while in school. ‘With both parents working today, it’s so difficult to find time (to teach).’”*

Many might say that in the heavily modernized society we live in today, crafts such as sewing really are unnecessary to teach in schools, particularly since one can go to the store and slap down a few bucks for a piece of clothing.

But putting the economics of sewing aside for a moment, consider the other benefits that handicraft instruction can offer today’s kids. The precision work of sewing enhances eye-hand coordination skills. Problem-solving often comes into play when a project is short on material or a few wrong stitches have jammed the machine. Perseverance is often needed in order to see the project through to the end. And anyone who has ever tried their hand at some type of manual labor knows that it often takes more mental energy and critical thinking than is sometimes required from sitting at a desk working on homework problems.

Is it time we recognized the value handicrafts offer to children? Furthermore, is it possible that their reinstatement in the nation’s schools would rekindle creativity, inspire

thought, and provoke greater enthusiasm for learning of all kinds?

—

*Dear Readers,*

*Big Tech is suppressing our reach, refusing to let us advertise and squelching our ability to serve up a steady diet of truth and ideas. Help us fight back by [becoming a member](#) for just \$5 a month and then join the discussion on Parler [@CharlemagneInstitute](#)!*

Image Credit:

Tumblr