

Create something special this summer

Abrakadoodle aims to educate kids about art

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Abrakadoodle offers a variety of art classes for children 20 months old to sixth grade. The company works with schools and other organizations to provide the classes. Summer programs also are available across the valley.

While children taking the same ceramics class might emerge with variations on the same clay pot, students enrolled in an Abrakadoodle class or workshop might come out carrying something completely different than their neighbor.

"(Abrakadoodle is) not an arts and crafts program; we are an arts education program," said Marla Hockfeld, the director and owner of the Henderson and Las Vegas

franchise of the arts program. "We try to have kids have an understanding of the process to create something meaningful to them."

Abrakadoodle came to the Las Vegas area less than a year ago and is going into its first summer in Clark County. The program offers a variety of workshops, classes, partnerships with schools and arts-themed parties for children 20 months old through sixth grade throughout Las Vegas and Henderson.

Hockfeld said the classes and workshops offered by Abrakadoodle are an alternative to some of the other programs children might be involved with over the summer.

"Art education is the only activity where children can express themselves freely without fear of mistakes," she said.

The classes are divided into three categories by age: Twoosy Doodlers, for children ages 20 to 36 months, Mini Doodlers, for children ages 3 through kindergarten, and Doodlers, for first through sixth grades.

Instructors from Abrakadoodle also work directly with schools to teach an art curriculum based on the program's philosophy. Twitchell Elementary School in Henderson is one school scheduled to participate in the program in the upcoming school year.

Abrakadoodle programs feature one-day workshops or week-long camps.

Included in this year's summer camp programs are Camp Abrakadoodle Anime, a camp on the basics of the Japanese art of animation; Camp Abrakadoodle Studio 1, featuring the techniques of famous painters; Camp Abrakadoodle Pirate Island, with ships, castles and all things seaworthy; and Camp Abrakadoodle Wild 'N Wacky Art, where students will learn about techniques and materials.

"Parents are amazed at the self-expression skills," Hockfeld said.

Children also can have themed parties run by Abrakadoodle.

"If you have a child with an interest in art, then being able to include Abrakadoodle as part of this special day makes it all the more incredible," Hockfeld said.

Abrakadoodle camps and workshops are ongoing throughout the year. Because Abrakadoodle does not have a retail site, Hockfeld said it is easily accessible to people all over.

"We come to you, and we're in your neighborhood," she said.

Cindy Goussak, the education chairwoman at the Midbar Kodesh Temple, said she chose to go with Abrakadoodle for the childhood center because of the program's philosophy.

"They give them the tools that allow (the children) to explore the different shapes and artists that the ages have used," Goussak said.

The center will use Abrakadoodle for the summer camps and kindergarten class in the fall.

"I think that's so important for children young and older to explore more than just the basics," she said.

For more information on Abrakadoodle and a complete class listing, visit www.abrakadoodle.com/nv01.html.