

Pointers for Parents

Encouraging A Child's Creativity In The Arts

(NAPSA)—Everyone has the ability to be creative in some capacity. And by simply fostering a child's creative muscles, he or she might develop more than just a hobby. Here are some tips to help unearth children's interests and encourage their creativity:

- **Visual art**—Keep an ample supply of craft items on hand. Limit coloring books; instead, offer crayons, markers, colored pencils and paper. Attend art classes and local art shows. Talk to artists.

- **Writing**—Ask your child to suggest alternate endings to the book you're reading together. Write captions for pictures pulled from a magazine. Write a book or short story together.

- **Drama**—Make or buy a puppet stage and put on your own shows. Give your child a video camera. Take an acting or production class. Take in a live theater performance.

- **Music**—Listen to a variety of music at home and in the car. Attend local concerts. Play musical games. Find a good music teacher.

- **Dance**—Put on some music and dance with your child. Teach him or her a dance you used to do. Enroll your child in a class; observe so you'll have something to talk about on the way home.

Another option for encouraging a wannabe dancer or choreographer is a new video game for the Nintendo DS. In Ubisoft's "Ener-G Dance Squad," players embody Laura, an athletic and enthusiastic girl who is ready to work as hard as it takes to become the world champion of modern dance. With the help of her eccentric coach and his charming son, she



A new dance and choreography video game can help encourage girls' creativity and interests.

will learn new skills and soon reveal her full potential as a dancer.

Players can play through story mode or try their skills in challenge mode. Girls can also express their creativity by choreographing dances through the combination of the coolest moves—and score extra points by following the rhythm of the music. Players can also choose custom outfits and accessories to wear during competitions.

With a variety of musical styles (from R&B/soul to funk/disco to tribal) and 12 different opponents, each with his or her own specific strong points and personalities, "Ener-G Dance Squad" lets girls have a virtual blast on the dance floor—a refreshing way to keep up their interest in dance when they're between classes, or to raise a young one's interest in trying out her own steps.

To learn more, visit the Web site at www.ener-ggame.com.