

# Handprint Gratitude Tree

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*This craft captures a hands-on moment (pun intended) in this increasingly busy season. Take time, or set the time aside, to stop and bond with those you love by painting each other's hands (or paws!) and creating a beautiful handprint tree. Share as a gift or keep as a memento to remember these simple, but special moments.*

## **Materials:**

Paint – fall landscape colors (use washable paint to keep this relatively mess-free)

White cardstock (or white paper glued to a repurposed cereal box)

Glue stick & scissors

Scrap paper and newspaper to cover your surface

Paint brushes

Pencil and brown marker



## **Directions:**

Start by preparing your background. Cardstock is recommended, but white paper glued to a trimmed cereal box will also work. Use a pencil to outline a tree on the bottom half of the white cardstock canvas. Add outlines, details, and texture to the tree trunk with the brown marker.

Next, prepare the hands. Roll up your and your partner's sleeves, and take turns painting a thin coat of non-toxic paint on your partner's (once) clean hand. Do a few practice handprints on a sheet of scrap paper. When ready, repaint and press your palm onto the paper creating the top portion of the tree. Repeat with your volunteer's hand in a complementary color, overlapping to blend.

See if your furry friend is willing to cooperate. Have a wet and dry towel prepped before painting the paw (again, non-toxic washable paint). Both a puppy and senior dog were able to add their pawprints in the example photo, adding the finishing \*touch\*. Finally, add brown branches between the hand and/or pawprints, creating the full tree. Use the blank space to write your message of gratitude during this Thanksgiving season.

## **Extension:**

- ✓ Create handprint trees to denote the **seasons**. Use thumb prints for springtime flowers and bare trees for winter. How would you show summer?
- ✓ Continue to experiment with art by **blending colors**. How can you get your fall tree to show three or four different colors from only two colors of paint?
- ✓ **Make multiple prints** for the special people in your life. Frame and share as gifts of gratitude for your Thanksgiving host or own home.
- ✓ Share your trees on social media at **#littlechildrenBIGactivity**.

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