

Homebound Consumers Dive into Arts and Crafts

In response to the COVID-19 public health crisis, many families in the U.S. are working and schooling from home and trying to balance screen time with real-world activities. From activity books to coloring and chalk games, activity-based categories in the office supplies industry drove positive sales increases in the third week of March. **Here's a closer look. . .**

Coloring and art was the standout category in terms of growth

86%

Chalk sales grew by 56%.

Writing instruments including window/glass markers (+146%) and color markers (+81%) also saw notable upticks.

56%

School from home and online classrooms boosted traditional back-to-school supply list categories by 18%

overall during the week ending March 21.

18%

There was triple-digit growth for crayons, children's watercolors, and colored pencil sets.

with weekly sales up

More virtual art and drawing activities led to increases in:

Watercolor paper **+188%**

Finger paints **+313%**

Painting accessories **+111%**

Tempera paint **+272%**

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The strongest growth in the office supplies space is tied to both traditional school supply list products and art and drawing activities. Trending activities include rainbow scavenger hunts, kindness art and messaging, stained glass sidewalk chalk art, chalk games, and car parade celebrations where consumers make signs for one another. To spread kindness and make connections with one another while simultaneously social distancing, consumers are becoming very creative in how they interact.

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Source: The NPD Group/ Weekly Retail Tracking Service, Dollar Sales, Week Ending March 21, 2020

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