

## **Help! My clay piece broke!**

Yes, it happens to everyone. No matter how careful you are accidents happen and one poor child's beautiful masterpiece ends up broken. Don't worry – it is not the end of the world! Here are our suggestions to save the student any heartbreak.

The worst breaks typically occur during the green ware stage – this is the time between clay forming and the first fire. *(The pieces are extremely delicate and even the slightest touch can break the pieces apart. Please be extra careful during this stage and set your pieces to dry in a safe, secure spot. Also never place your pieces in the wagon to roll them over to the kiln – just the vibration will shatter pieces. Always carefully hand-carry your pieces to the kiln.)*

If your piece breaks during this stage, just go ahead and fire the pieces as they are – broken and separate! Be sure to keep them close to each other in the kiln so you remember which pieces go where. You will glue them together right after the firing.

## **How do I fix it?**

### **1) Seriously Broken or Shattered Pieces:**

Some pieces are shattered so badly that it is just not feasible to glue them all back together. If this happens to any of your pieces, one option is to allow the child an additional time to recreate their piece. This would involve the student coming in to the art portable during a recess to recreate their piece and would also need the direct permission of the teacher. This would also put the student one month behind on the project.

If this is not an option, we always have extra blank tiles in the clay cabinet. As a last resort the student can use one of these pre-fired tiles to glaze during your glaze lesson. These tiles are also a good option for students who missed the clay forming lesson.

### **2) Slightly Broken Pieces:**

If your piece is only slightly broken, you can easily glue it back together before the glazing process. There is always a supply of GEL super glue in the clay closet and this is the best option. Regular super glue is often too runny and does not give a good stick. Use the gel super glue to simply glue the pieces together just as you would a broken vase at home! *(Try not to get any glue on the surface area that will be glazed.)*

Gluing the piece at this stage allows the student to then glaze their artwork all together in one piece, rather than separate pieces. When the student glazes their pieces, encourage them to get a little extra glaze in the cracked area – this will help fuse the two pieces together in the glaze firing.

Now allow the piece to dry and glaze fire it as normal. There is a small chance that the piece will break again during this firing process; this is because the kiln actually gets hot enough to burn the glue away entirely. However, if the student was able to get enough glaze in that area, the glaze may keep the pieces fused together.

If the piece does break, just use the GEL super glue again to carefully glue the piece together again – good as new!