

Implement A Successful Art Therapy Program With Youth Affected By Traumatic Events & Health Challenges

Youth often find non-verbal expression the only outlet to their intense feelings of fear, isolation, sadness, anger, and loss. An art therapy program helps kids build resilience and move beyond life's hurdles, promotes self-awareness, improves self-esteem and competence, develops coping and control skills, and leads to a stronger future. Explore the many beneficial outcomes of an effective art therapy program.

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Engaging Children & Young Adults In Creative Discovery & Healing

“One important aspect of art therapy is the creation of a safe space where traumatic feelings can be processed. Sometimes the verbal skill is lacking to describe traumatic experiences and by creating art, the person can feel more confident.”

— Breat, E.A., & Ostroff, R.
American Journal of Psychiatry 142: 417-424 (1985)

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS

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OUTCOMES & APPLICATIONS

Art Therapy is an effective, versatile treatment modality that addresses a myriad of complex issues such as [Abuse](#), [Adolescence](#), [Bullying](#), [Death & Bereavement](#), [Disasters](#), [Homelessness](#), [Illness](#), [Lifestyle Choices](#), [Sexual Abuse](#), [Terrorism](#), and [Violent Crime](#).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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[Contacts](#)
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Outstanding Programs & Events

Throughout life, our bodies, minds, activities, families, friends, and living environments change. Disturbing events can be doubly unsettling to youth. Art therapy can help in any setting, through any stage, by providing a safe, supportive, creative and positive experience to help ease transition, depression, and fear. Integrating a healing, trauma-informed approach to care greatly reduces the harmful health impact of violence and trauma on the young.

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COMMUNITY

[Wraparound Orange / Orange County, FL](#)

The program formed a partnership with the local Neighborhood Center for Families site to emphasize children's mental health and target families within the community's high-crime zip codes. Currently working with youth aged 12 and under, and their families.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

[Project ABC / Los Angeles, CA](#)

The program is designed to create a system of care for young children who are in need of mental health services in the Los Angeles area. The goal is to ensure that children birth to five years have access to mental health services that are family-centered, strength-based, and culturally competent.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

[Impact / Lansing, MI](#)

The program is a partnership of child and family-service agencies working with youth and families that strives to build and enhance home- and community-based services for young people involved with the juvenile justice system and/or Department of Human Services.

MEDICAL

[Children's National Medical Center / Washington, DC](#)

The New Horizons program helps children transcend the hospital experience. Activities encourage continued learning, promote wellness through self-expression, and speed healing.

MENTAL HEALTH

[WIN Georgia / Ft. Oglethorpe, GA](#)

A regional effort serving children between the ages of birth and 21 with a diagnosed mental illness. The program helps families handle a child's behavior and offers help finding and coordinating necessary services.

MILITARY FAMILIES

[Operation Oak Tree / Chicago, IL](#)

The program assists military children and families throughout the cycle of deployment. Its mission is to foster personal growth, deepen interpersonal roots, strengthen coping strategies, and to make it easier for families to branch out into their communities for support.

REHABILITATION

[Inspirations For Youth & Families / Ft. Lauderdale, FL](#)

The purpose of the program is to help teens express concepts that they may not be able to articulate. The drawing, painting, collage, or sculpture can then help bridge artistic expression into verbal expression. And from there, healing begins.

RESIDENTIAL

[Daytop New Jersey / Mendham, NJ](#)

The program offers a variety of treatment programs; all of which are committed to working with those adolescents who have a diagnosis of a co-occurring mental health disorder in addition to their substance abuse disorder.

SPECIAL EVENT

[Community Initiatives Foundation / Baton Rouge, LA](#)

The collected art and the videotaped interviews of children and youth who experienced the trauma of Hurricane Katrina are a powerful testimony of their needs as well as the positive impact of a trained response.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS & EVENTS

[Click here for more information](#)

Implementation Tools

There are a number of accessible options for implementing an appropriate, thriving art therapy program. Credentialed art therapists are experienced professionals that work with children and youth to help advance their confidence, resilience, self-esteem, and bring promise to the future.

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This user-friendly electronic toolkit was developed to assist the many diverse groups serving the youth population throughout the nation in initiating or expanding an art therapy program. Credentialed art therapists hold either a master's or doctoral degree in art therapy, and are best qualified to implement a beneficial, therapeutic, effective program.

“Among even very young children, ages 18 to 36 months, exposure to potentially traumatic events is associated with a range of socio-emotional and behavioral problems that may compromise healthy development and place them at risk for persistent serious psychological problems later in childhood and in adulthood. More than 35 percent of children exposed to a single traumatic event will develop a serious mental health problem.” -Turning Point

**Art Therapist Job Description &
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**Institute For Continuing Education
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Program Options & Salary

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Outcomes & Applications

There are a number of important social and therapeutic benefits that are advanced through art therapy. Research and study clearly reveal art therapy's positive impact with regard to health, cognition, social interaction, trauma, stress reduction, anxiety, confidence, abuse, and most of life's challenges. Art Therapy aids children and youth of all ages – from toddlers to tweens, and teens to young adults.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Providing children and youth with timely, appropriate services promotes effective coping and resilience. The following selections provide additional information and research relating to the treatment of trauma-related issues.

-  Adverse **Childhood Experiences** Reported By Adults, Five States
-  American Psychological Association, **Resilience Guide** For Parents & Teachers
-  Art Making As A Component And Facilitator Of Resiliency With **Homeless Youth**
-  Art Therapy For Adolescents With **PTSD** Symptoms: A Pilot Study
-  Art Therapy Literature: **Extensive List** of Art Therapy In The Treatment Of Trauma
-  Art Therapy May Improve Quality Of Life In **Cancer** Patients
-  Art Therapy With Childhood **Tsunami** Survivors In Sri Lanka
-  Art Therapy With **Sexually Abused** Children & Adolescents: Extended Research Study
-  Beyond The **Orphanages**: Art Therapy With Russian Children
-  Childhood Abuse & Mental Health Indicators Among **Ethnically Diverse LGB** Adults
-  Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Effective For Children & Adolescents Exposed To **Trauma**
-  Coming Out Through Art: A Review Of Art Therapy With **LGBT** Clients
-  Coping With **Traumatic Events**
-  Creative Art Therapy Groups: A Treatment Modality For **Psychiatric Outpatients**
-  Emotional Wellness: **Collection Of Articles**, American Academy Of Pediatrics
-  Empowering The **Traumatized** Child Through The Use Of Art And Action
-  Forgiveness Illuminated: **Holocaust** Survivors' Testimonials Shed Light
-  Functions Of Art-Making In **CISD** With Children & Youth
-  **Glassbook** Project
-  **Medical** Art Therapy With Children
-  Mental Health, Report Of The **Surgeon General**
-  Raising Self-Esteem In Female **Juvenile Offenders**
-  Reducing PTSD Symptoms In **Pediatric** Trauma Patients
-  Testing The Efficacy Of A Creative Arts **Intervention**
-  The Effectiveness Of Art Therapy Interventions in **Pediatric** Trauma Patients
-  Treatment of Child **Crime Victims**
-  Understanding The **Near-Death Experience** Through Art
-  Using Art In **Trauma** Recovery With Children
-  Working With Children Exposed To **Domestic Violence**
-  Working With Survivors Of **Torture**

Resources

Now, more than ever, valuable resources exist to assist in the funding, development, staffing, and implementation of a successful art therapy program. Public, private, nonprofit, health and research sectors, and others offer financial and organizational support.

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Funding Alternatives:

Government

Corporate & Foundation

Art therapy is an effective, proven treatment modality and has demonstrated that it can enhance mental health of all ages. Art therapy greatly benefits children and young adult trauma survivors, and helps them break through their silence, confusion, fear, and anger . . . facilitating communication and recovery.

Research & Assistance Groups Focused on Youth & Trauma

- [American Academy Of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry](#)
- [American Academy Of Pediatrics](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics, Children & Disasters](#)
- [American Health Care Association](#)
- [American Psychiatric Association](#)
- [American Public Health Association, Mental Health](#)
- [Cedars-Sinai Psychological Trauma Center](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control, Mental Health](#)
- [Child & Adolescent Services Research Center](#)
- [Child Trauma Academy](#)
- [Child Trauma Institute](#)
- [Child Trends](#)
- [Children's Defense Fund](#)
- [Children's National Medical Center Trauma Tool](#)
- [Clearinghouse On Early Education & Parenting](#)
- [Dartmouth College, C. Everett Koop Institute](#)
- [Families USA](#)
- [Georgetown University Center, Child Development](#)
- [HelpGuide.org](#)
- [International Society For Traumatic Stress Studies](#)
- [Mental Health America](#)
- [9/11 Memorial](#)
- [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#)
- [National Association For Education Of Young Children](#)
- [National Association Of School Psychologists](#)
- [National Center For Mental Health Promotion & Youth Violence Prevention](#)
- [National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)
- [National Child Traumatic Stress Network, Learning Center](#)
- [National Coalition For The Homeless](#)
- [National Federation Of Families For Children's Mental Health](#)
- [National Guild For Creative Arts Education](#)
- [National Institute For Trauma & Loss In Children](#)
- [National Institute Of Mental Health, Children](#)
- [National Institute Of Mental Health, Statistics & Outreach](#)
- [National Native Children's Trauma Center](#)
- [National Resource Center On Homelessness & Mental Illness](#)
- [Office Of Juvenile Justice And Delinquency Prevention](#)
- [Pearson](#)
- [Program In Education, Afterschool & Resiliency](#)
- [Project ABC](#)
- [Project Resilience](#)
- [Society For The Arts In Healthcare](#)
- [Starting Early Together](#)
- [State Departments & Divisions Of Mental Health](#)
- [State Health Facts](#)
- [The Grief Recovery Institute](#)
- [Trauma Information Pages](#)
- [U.S. Dept. Of Health & Human Services Admin.](#)
- [UCLA Center For Mental Health In Schools](#)
- [UT, Building Resiliency After Trauma](#)
- [Urban Institute](#)
- [Witness Justice](#)
- [Zero To Three](#)

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration

[American Art Therapy Association Tip Sheet](#)
[Best Practices By System Of Care Communities](#)
[Children's Mental Health Awareness Day 2011 Report](#)
[Data On Children's Mental Health & Trauma](#)
[Early Childhood & Trauma Resources](#)
[Helping Children & Youth Who Have Experienced Trauma](#)
[My Feelings Coloring Book - Chinese, English, Spanish](#)
[Project Launch](#)
[Social Marketing & Drop-In Articles](#)

Learn More

Art therapy is utilized in a wide array of settings to promote well-being, socialization, communication, and healing; ease stress, pain, and loss; improve cognitive and motor skills; and empower through end-of-life and transition concerns. There are a number of resources available to assist in developing, incorporating, expanding, or enhancing an art therapy program.

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[American Art Therapy Association-Headquarters](#)

[Art Therapy Credentials Board](#)

[American Art Therapy Association-Chapters](#)

Articles & Videos

- [A Task-Oriented Approach To Art Therapy In Trauma Treatment](#)
- [Art Therapy & Effective Bullying Prevention](#)
- [Art Therapy & The Resolution Of Trauma](#)
- [Art Therapy For Adolescents With PTSD Symptoms](#)
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- [Healing Emotional & Psychological Trauma](#)
- [Healing Grief Through Art: Art Therapy Bereavement Group Workshops](#)
- [Helping Your Child Build Inner Strength](#)
- [How Bereavement Art Therapy Can Help Children](#)
- [I Am Safe & Secure: Promoting Resilience In Young Children](#)
- [Medical Art Therapy: Tracy's Kids](#)
- [Resilience: Build Skills To Endure Hardship](#)
- [Resilience: Helping Your Child Build Inner Strength](#)
- [Resiliency: Who Goes The Distance & Why?](#)
- [Steps To Healing](#)
- [The Efficacy Of Art & Writing Therapy](#)
- [The Emotional Toll Of School Shootings](#)
- [The Road To Resilience](#)
- [Understanding War, Visualizing Peace: Children Draw What They Know](#)
- [Using Art In Trauma Recovery With Children](#)
- [What Is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder?](#)
- [What Is Resilience? PBS](#)
- [When Trauma Happens, Children Draw](#)