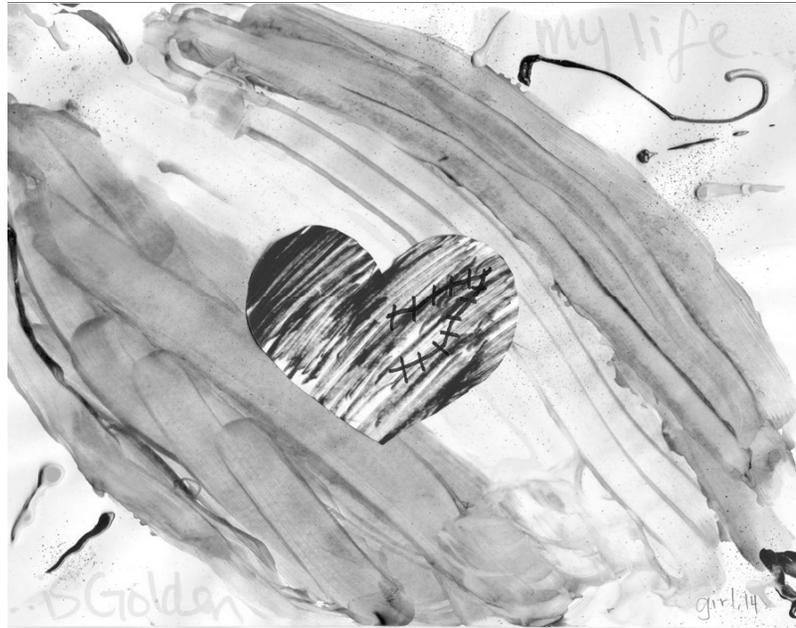


Art Heals!

How to infuse therapeutic elements
into your arts programming



Jessica Flowers and Kristy Baker Chorba

**“Art on all levels is an
expression of the
human spirit.”**

**-Viktor Lowenfeld
Creative and Mental Growth**

Results we have seen

- Youth turning to art instead of violence
- Youth discovering talents they never knew they had
- Facility staff seeing youth smile for the first time ever
- Youth finding a place where they can be themselves
- Youth taking chances or risks knowing that they cannot fail

Why is this important?



How the Arts Heal

- Build self-esteem
- Express imagination and creativity
- Express emotions in a positive way
- Renew trust in adults
- Create art with intention
- Experience success

— American Art Therapy Association

**Being aware of and
incorporating healing
elements into your arts
programming will give
youth the opportunity to
have a truly
transformative
arts experience.**

Structure of Workshop

- Beginning
 - Build Rapport
 - Get to know group members
 - Get grounded in the group
- Middle
 - Time for expression and creativity
- Ending
 - Wrap up, reflection and discussion

Beginning Activity

1. Write a word on slip of paper
 - contributing to group poem
2. Getting to know you game
 - discovering commonalities
3. Group guidelines
 - creating a safe environment

Middle Activity: Giving Tree

Create a tree that expresses:

- 1 - how you fill yourself up
- 2 - what gifts you give to your community

Ending Activity

1. Silent Gallery

- opportunity to see other's work

2. Discussion and Reflection

3. Read Group Poem

Therapeutic Elements

(Art Therapy and Youth Development)

- Creating a safe, non-judgmental environment
- Structure and consistency
- Building relationships
- Choice (freedom to create)
- Outlet for emotional expression
- Developing positive coping skills

**How do I incorporate
these elements?**

Creating a safe, non-judgmental environment

- Create group rules/boundaries/expectations
 - What do you need to feel safe?
- Respond to participants in an open and encouraging way
 - allowing each to work at their own pace
 - providing frequent, specific positive feedback
 - **redirecting instead of scolding** challenging behavior
 - encouraging participants to work with their mistakes reiterating there are **no mistakes in art!**

Structure and Consistency

- Structure sessions the same every day, week or month
- Reviewing group guidelines every session
- Don't make promises you cannot keep

Building Relationships

- Opening activities build rapport with instructor and each other before beginning to create
- Allow and encourage conversation during the creative process
- Allow time for positive and specific feedback among participants

Choice (freedom to create)

- Provide a variety of media
- Encourage youth to stretch the boundaries of your instruction
- Allow youth to participate in their own way

Outlet for emotional expression

- Help participants understand how creating art **makes them feel**
- Offer youth the opportunity to write about the meaning and feelings of their art piece
- It is ok to **NOT** share the meaning of their piece
- It is most important to have the safety and freedom to express whatever the youth desires

Developing Positive Coping Skills

- Help participants learn that art is accessible on a limited budget
- Encourage participants to discuss their “before and after” feelings
- If youth is having an emotional day, encourage them to create based on what they are feeling
- Help participants internalize these elements by leading a discussion and/or self reflection period (ie. journaling) following the main activity

**How can you integrate
these concepts into your
existing programs?**



Art Heals! Every Child Matters Mentoring Works

Free Arts of Arizona
103 W Highland Ave, Suite 200
Phoenix AZ 85013
602.258.8100

www.freeartsaz.org



Find us on
Facebook



Art Heals! Every Child Matters Mentoring Works

Jessica Flowers –
jflowers@freeartsaz.org

Kristy Baker Chorba –
kbakerchorba@freeartsaz.org