Gain Important Education Outcomes: Implement a Successful Art Therapy Program within K-12 Schools

Art therapy is a creative and engaging way to address inappropriate behaviors such as bullying; identify an individual’s barriers to learning; increase student retention; support special needs students; enhance academic performance; provide gifted youth with a new skill; increase motor and sensory skills; and, excite kids' learning experience . . . and there are a variety of funding stream opportunities available to implement a program.

Art Therapy: Making A Difference in K-12 Schools
“Art therapy attends to a student’s verbal and nonverbal communications with the aid of a master’s level therapist who is trained in art, psychology, and the therapy process. The art therapist is qualified to observe and analyze behaviors, art products and processes, a student’s communications, and formalizing art therapy assessments and treatment plans for students for adherence to educational goals and benchmarks. As a whole, art therapy can offer students the opportunity to work through obstacles that may be impeding their educational success while facilitating appropriate social behavior and promote healthy affective development so students can become more receptive to their educational environment.”

— Robert Lackie, MS, MA, ATR, LPC, TLMFT Shawnee Mission School District, KS

MODEL ART THERAPY PROGRAMS IN K-12 SCHOOLS
Florida: Miami-Dade County Public Schools (urban)
Kansas: Shawnee Mission School District (suburban)
Kentucky: Oldham County Schools (rural)
New Jersey: Jersey City Public Schools (urban)
Pennsylvania: Mt. Lebanon School District (suburban)
Texas: Hays Consolidated Independent School District (suburban)
Alabama: Community Consulting Model (suburban)
Vermont: Burlington School District - Integrated Arts Academy Magnet School (urban)
Wisconsin: Green Bay Area Public Schools District - Alternative Programs of Chance for Change and Curry Lane Alternative School (suburban)

IMPLEMENTATION TOOLS:
Art Therapy in K-12 Schools
Art Therapist Job Description
Responsibilities & Activities
Certification & Licensure
Program Options
After School
Art Instructor
District Coordinator
Special Needs

OUTCOMES & APPLICATIONS
Academic Performance Enhancement
Cognition / Remove Barriers to Learning
Retention / Attendance Improvement
Gifted Students Program
Socialization Improvement
Positive Interaction as Alternative to Bullying
Special Needs Students Program

RESOURCES
Fund a Program
SAMHSA Support
K-12 Guides
Early Childhood
Coloring Books
Systems of Care
Tips & Lessons

LEARN MORE
Contacts
Articles
ADHD
Autism
Bullying
Retention
Socialization
Special Needs
Bibliography

American Art Therapy Association© 2011
Model Art Therapy Programs in K-12 Schools

**Florida:** Miami-Dade County Public Schools (urban)

**Kansas:** Shawnee Mission School District (suburban)

**Kentucky:** Oldham County Schools (rural)

**New Jersey:** Jersey City Public Schools (urban)

**Pennsylvania:** Mt. Lebanon School District (suburban)

**Texas:** Hays Consolidated Independent School District (suburban)

**Alabama:** Community Consulting Model (suburban)

**Vermont:** Burlington School District - Integrated Arts Academy Magnet School (urban)

**Wisconsin:** Green Bay Area Public Schools District - Alternative Programs of Chance for Change and Curry Lane Alternative School (suburban)

---

**Florida**

Miami-Dade County Public Schools (urban)
5555 Southwest 93rd Avenue • Miami, FL 33165
Craig A. Siegel, MA, ATR-BC
The Miami-Dade County Public Schools art therapy program began in 1979. Due to the successes in students’ emotional functioning, the focus of art therapy in M-DCPS changed from serving a wide variety of special needs students to servicing students identified with Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities.

[Click here for more information]

**Kansas**

Shawnee Mission School District - Special Education Department (suburban)
7235 Antioch Road • Shawnee Mission, KS 66204
Robert Lackie, MS, MA, ATR, LPC, TLMFT
Art therapy within the Shawnee Mission School District began informally in 1972 as an adaptive art provision for special needs children who were not part of the regular education classrooms until passage of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1975. Currently, art therapy is offered as a Related Service to Special Education students with Individualized Education Plans (IEP) who are identified as not making progress on goals.

[Click here for more information]

**Kentucky**

Oldham County Schools - Exceptional Children Services (rural)
1350 N Hwy 393 • Buckner, KY 40010
Max Wineinger, MA, ATR-BC, LMFT, LPAT
The Oldham County Schools’ art therapy program works with seven schools to offer direct support of children, safe schools assessments, intervention, and serves as liaison with many regional resources. The program works to help students with a variety of issues including school transition, behavioral, and attendance.

[Click here for more information]

**New Jersey**

The Jersey City Public Schools Creative Arts Therapy Program (urban)
346 Claremont Avenue • Jersey City, NJ 07305
Brian Tepper, MPS, ATR-BC, LCAT, LPsyA
The Creative Arts Therapy Program provides students the opportunity to participate in a process of creative expression using various media to enhance emotional, behavioral, and social growth. CATP is designed to address the needs of youth in crisis and offers counseling within the context of enjoyable, confidential, and non-threatening activities.

[Click here for more information]

**Pennsylvania**

Mt. Lebanon School District (suburban)
31 Spalding Circle • Pittsburgh, PA 15228
Lisa Wright, Lisa, MA, ATR-BC
The Art Expression program mission is to facilitate positive socialization with youth through expressive art activities in an inclusive educational environment. The after school program is a fully inclusive program designed to meet the needs of all learners in a noncompetitive setting. The purpose is to increase socialization, self-esteem, and communication skills among students.

[Click here for more information]

**Texas**

Hays Consolidated Independent School District (suburban)
4800 Jack C Hays Trail • Buda, TX 78610
Megan Van Meter, M.A., LPC-Intern, ATR-BC
The primary purpose of the program is to provide art therapy as an enrichment service and a related service to special education students as specified by IEPs. Services are provided in both individual and group settings using accepted theories and techniques. The art therapist works to assist students in achieving goals through the promotion of learning, which is an action-based, dynamic process.

[Click here for more information]

**Alabama**

Community Consulting Model (suburban)
Targeted News Service
November 2, 2010 Tuesday
Art Abilities Program Serving 16 Schools in Shelby County
Several Shelby County schools participate in a special art therapy program, Art Abilities. The supplementary program runs nine weeks and focuses on developing motor skills, socialization, sensory adaptation, and more for children with moderate to severe special needs.

[Click here for more information]

**Vermont**

Burlington School District - Integrated Arts Academy Magnet School (urban)
1141 Falls Road I Shelburne, VT 05482
Elizabeth Myers, ATR-BC, LCAT, LCMHC
The school population is comprised of approximately 218 students in grades K-5. Of these students, 98 were English language learners, 38 were on IEPs, and 88% of the students qualified for free and reduced lunch. Art therapists also provide school clinician services to 18 students and their families; some services are also provided to other IAA students. Sessions utilize the arts to address and increase pro-social skills, social reciprocity, positive communication, problem solving and conflict resolution skills, while enhancing self esteem and sense of mastery and autonomy through the art process.

[Click here for more information]

**Wisconsin**

Green Bay Area Public Schools District - Alternative Programs of Chance for Change and Curry Lane Alternative School (suburban)
4029 Willow Tree Lane I De Pere, WI 54115
Anne Rakow-Weist, ATR-BC
The program is run by one art therapist. Art therapy services serve a vital role in helping students with special needs or circumstances to gain a readiness for school participation and to make emotional and cognitive gains. Students are comprised of two groups: those with school policy-violations in the areas of violence, threats, weapons & AODA issues; and, those living with chronic mental illness.

[Click here for more information]
Implementation Tools:
Art Therapy in K-12 Schools

There are a number of accessible options for implementing an appropriate, thriving Art Therapy program.

- Art Therapist Job Description
- Responsibilities & Activities
- Certification & Licensure
- Program Options
  - After School
  - Art Instructor
  - District Coordinator
  - Special Needs
Outcomes & Applications

There are a number of important educational and social development benefits that are advanced through the use of Art Therapy.

**ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE ENHANCEMENT**

Nine schools were included in this study to obtain measurable observable terms and to identify the: problematic behavioral presentations observed in inner city schools; overall effect of school resources on target behaviors; and, changes promoted by art and music therapy intervention. Tepper, B. & Silva, R. (2010).


**COGNITION / REMOVE BARRIERS TO LEARNING**

Three elementary students having experienced personal trauma reap the benefits of art therapy which helped them re-energize, relaxed sense of sadness, and developed or re-developed a sense of empowerment and hopefulness. Kaufman, B. (2010). Study of 34 primary school children to investigate the use of three art-based instruments using imagery that measure children’s cognitive development. Hagood, M. (2002).


**RETENTION / ATTENDANCE IMPROVEMENT**

Art therapy services implemented for students in a ninth-grade English classroom of an urban high school were successful in reducing drop-out rates, decreasing school failure, and improving students’ attitudes about school, family, and self. Rosal, M., McCulloch-Vislisel, S., & Neese, S. (1997).

**GIFTED STUDENTS PROGRAM**

Do gifted students have greater depression levels in contrast to non-gifted students? Clarissa Nieves, Lisa Buckingham Mentors: Michaela M. Barsnack, Sabato D. Sagaria. According to Mueller (2009) “gifted children that are exposed to bullying, and their extreme sensitivity have led them to aggressiveness, extreme depression and social isolation.” Gifted students function at higher cognition levels than non-gifted students, but may require greater attention to their emotional needs because of barriers they encounter with depression (Neihart, 1999). “Distance Training in Gifted/Talented Education: Description of a Collaborative Working Mode,” Rural Special Education Quarterly (1996); “Enhancing Emotional Development Through Art and Imagery With Gifted Students” (1993), Dr. Heidi Van Ert.

**SOCIALIZATION IMPROVEMENT**


**POSITIVE INTERACTION AS ALTERNATIVE TO BULLYING**


A cooperative classroom art therapy intervention in a public elementary school that provided conflict resolution education, social learning, and group cohesion among sixth-grade students. Gibbons, K. (2010).

**SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS PROGRAM**

Art therapy treatment implemented with two boys who had similar classroom behavior disorders. Rosal, M. (1993).


Art therapy study of two boys opens the door to children participating in tangible ways in the screening and evaluation of their own AD/HD drug trials. Munley, M. (2002).
RESOURCES

There are a number of resources available to assist in the funding, development, and implementation of a successful Art Therapy program.

FUND A PROGRAM

Art therapy is cost effective. It is a preventive treatment modality and has demonstrated that it can improve academic performance as well as enhance mental health. In treating students before academic and social problems arise, art therapy reduces the need to treat students when they experience problems that require immediate and costly measures. Art therapy approaches, techniques, and strategies in schools are already in place.

Corporate and Private Grants

Government Grants

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
www.samhsa.gov/grants/

SAMHSA Sample Program Budget
http://sshs.samhsa.gov/media/sshs_media/pdf/SampleFY09budget.pdf

The Foundation Center (membership required or visit a location free of charge)
Homepage: http://foundationcenter.org/
Locations: http://foundationcenter.org/about/locations.html
Services: http://foundationcenter.org/about/
Requests For Proposals: http://foundationcenter.org/pnd/rfp/

U.S. Department of Education
http://www2.ed.gov/fund/landing.jhtml

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Health Resources & Services Administration
www.hrsa.gov/grants/index.html#Health%20Professions%20Open%20Opportunities

SAMHSA Support

Too Smart To Start

K-12 Guides
www.samhsa.gov/children/earlychildhood_school.aspx

Early Childhood

Coloring Books
English www.projectabc-la.org/dl/materials/My_Feelings_en.pdf
Spanish http://projectabccla.org/dl/materials/My_Feelings_es.pdf
Chinese www.projectabc-la.org/dl/materials/My_Feelings_cn.pdf

Systems of Care
www.samhsa.gov/children/systemofcaremat.aspx

Tips & Lessons
www.samhsa.gov/children/aatahandout.aspx
Learn More!

There are a number of resources available to assist in developing, incorporating, expanding, or enhancing an Art Therapy program.

CONTACTS

American Art Therapy Association-Headquarters
www.americanarttherapyassociation.org

American Art Therapy Association-Chapters
www.americanarttherapyassociation.org/aata-chaptersmain.html

Art Therapy Credentials Board
www.atcb.org/

Arts In Education
http://artsusa.org/networks/arts_education/001.asp

Find an Art Therapist

Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration
www.samhsa.gov/

U.S. Department of Education
www2.ed.gov/

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Health Resources & Services Administration
www.hrsa.gov/

ARTICLES

Youth art class helps in grieving: Bereavement Program gives kids a creative way to express feelings

Art Abilities Program Serving 16 Schools in Shelby County

Parents fight for special-needs therapy in Frederick County Public Schools

A Tracy’s Kids Art Therapy Program

Empowering the Traumatized Child Through the Use of Art and Action

Expressive Mask Making for Teens: Beginning Insights

Art Expression Incorporated–An Innovative School Based Approach

Help Kids Decompress

Minn teen copes with cancer through art, poetry

Help for deaf kids after abuse: What I do

Autistic children, families offered help from Children’s Center of Wayne County

Autistic Children and Families in Detroit Are Offered Help from the Children’s Center of Wayne County as They Prepare for School

BIBLIOGRAPHY

For more background about art therapy and education.