“ARTS in HEALTH” and “ARTS and the MILITARY”

Across the nation, the arts are an integral component of healthcare and public health & well-being. Creative arts therapists, expressive arts therapists, artists, architects, arts administrators, and arts agencies provide a wide-range of experiences that range from using the arts for therapeutic outcomes, reducing people’s experience of pain, designing uplifting environments, and helping active-duty military and veterans heal from service-related injuries and build resilience. In addition, the arts are increasingly being incorporated into the education of doctors, nurses, and other health professionals, used to address the growing challenge of burnout amongst caregivers and first responders, and to give voice to individuals marginalized in society.

Participating Organizations

https://arttherapy.org
https://adta.org

https://americansforthearts.org
www.americansforthearts.org

www.musictherapy.org
www.chorusamerica.org

https://thenoah.net/
https://tcg.org/default.aspx
APPLICATIONS

Creative arts therapies services and artist-facilitated programs are known to benefit a vast array of society’s health and wellness related needs and challenges. These include symptoms related to mental health and/or chronic illnesses, post-traumatic stress disorder, Alzheimer’s and dementia, neurological disorders and brain injuries, autism, premature infants, and physical disabilities—to improve patients’ overall health outcomes, treatment compliance, and quality of life.

Research demonstrates the benefits of the creative arts therapies and artist-facilitated programs in traditional healthcare settings as well as in veterans’ facilities, mental health programs, schools, rehabilitation treatment centers, military bases, hospice programs, prisons, psychiatric forensic units, nursing homes, community centers, disaster response teams, and wellness programs.

RESEARCH

The following citations highlight evidence related to pain management, substance abuse treatment, and services for active duty military and veterans:

Positive outcomes gained through art therapy and art interventions:

Art therapy was associated with positive effects when compared with control groups in a number of studies in patients with different clinical profiles (including dementia, Alzheimer’s, military populations, and more). It was reported to be associated with a number of benefits and cost-effective compared with other clinical treatment approaches.


Medical patients (n=95) at an urban teaching hospital with diagnoses including cancer, neurological disease, gastrointestinal issues, heart and vascular disease, transplant, post-surgical, and orthopaedic procedures participated in art therapy sessions and demonstrated significant improvements in pain, mood, and anxiety levels for all patients regardless of gender, age, or diagnosis.


Fifty-three parents of children and adolescents enrolled in an intensive interdisciplinary pediatric pain rehabilitation day hospital program participated in weekly group art therapy sessions. Overall, participants reported art therapy to be a supportive and validating experience. Parents agreed that they would try art therapy again and recommend the intervention to other parents of children with chronic pain.
Participants (111 women, ages 26 – 82) with a variety of cancer diagnoses were paired by age and randomized to either an eight-week mindfulness-based art therapy (MBAT) intervention group or a wait-list control group. The MBAT group demonstrated a significant decrease in symptoms of distress and significant improvements in key aspects of health-related quality of life. This investigation provides encouraging data that support a future role for the MBAT intervention as a psychosocial treatment option for cancer patients.

This study assessed the effects using art production in treating adults presenting symptoms of substance abuse that affect moods and anxiety. The individuals producing art showed noticeably greater reduction in substance use.

This randomized controlled trial was designed to determine if art therapy in conjunction with Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) was more effective for reducing symptoms of combat posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) than CPT alone. Art therapy in conjunction with CPT was found to improve trauma processing and veterans considered it to be an important part of their treatment as it provided healthy distancing, enhanced trauma recall, and increased access to emotions.

In this study of the therapeutic effects of group art therapy in a psychotherapy unit of a Russian veteran’s hospital, 112 veterans being treated for stress-related disorders were randomly assigned to an experimental group (art therapy) and a control group. Results suggest that image formation and artistic activity foster cognitive and creative problem solving and increased self-esteem, and that humor serves as an important therapeutic function in this population.

This study correlated an art therapy descriptive technique with adult combat-related victims in an effort to identify art themes and graphic elements associated with post-traumatic stress disorder. The designed rating instrument, referred to as the Combat Trauma Art Therapy Scale (CTATS),
consists of 62 items aimed to detect common themes associated with war time experiences. Using the CTAS, raters examined 158 pictures, with depictions of women, violence, and combat interwoven, suggesting an ongoing struggle to cope with the emotional aftermath of recent traumatic experiences.


Positive outcomes achieved through **music therapy and music interventions**:

Symptom management for breast cancer patients improved with music therapy, with patients reporting decreased pain and anxiety.


Music interventions may provide an effective complementary approach for the relief of acute, procedural, and cancer/chronic pain in the medical setting.


Participants diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) experienced greater reductions in symptoms with music therapy than with cognitive behavioral therapy.


Soldiers diagnosed with PTSD regained a sense of control and increased self-confidence through music therapy techniques of rhythmical synchronization, while playing basic and complex rhythmic patterns in a circle group drumming. Drumming was found to serve as a substantive instrument for expressing aggression and communicating anger. Though trauma can isolate and disconnect the victim from society group therapy can restore social relationships by fostering feelings of belonging.


Individuals diagnosed with brain injuries that participated in neurologic music therapy showed improvement in executive function and overall emotional adjustment, and lessening of depression, sensation seeking, and anxiety.
Arts Advocacy Day 2019


Music Therapy reduces pain perception during burn dressing changes.


Including music therapy as a complementary service with cancer surgery may help manage preoperative anxiety in a way that is safe, effective, time-efficient, and enjoyable.


Studies in pain and symptom management demonstrate greater patient preference and tailored outcomes when skilled and credentialed music therapists provide interventions vs. services administered by other health professionals or the patient/family.


Positive outcomes attained through dance/movement therapy and dance activities:

Meta-Analysis of Dance/Movement Therapy Interventions and the Therapeutic Use of Dance


Dance/movement therapy contributes to the healing process directly on a body level when utilized in the treatment of complex psychological trauma with survivors of torture, rape, and war.


A randomized controlled trial implementing a 10 week DMT group examined changes in the short- and long-term (N = 162) on people suffering from stress. Utilizing The World Health Organization Quality of Life Questionnaire 100 (WHOQOL-100), the study found that DMT significantly improved quality of life, especially psychological well-being and general life in the short and long term. Social relations, global value, and physical health improved significantly in the short term. Spirituality and general life improved in the long term as an effect of dance therapy.
In an RCT of Dance/Movement Therapy (DMT) as a group intervention in stress treatment, researchers found that negative strategies decreased and distraction improved significantly through DMT. Psychological distress and psychopathology decreased significantly after treatment. Gains were found to be maintained even at 6-months’ follow-up.

Integrated dance/movement therapy and body psychotherapy intervention for patients with schizophrenia resulted in significant improvement in negative symptoms and showed greater treatment outcomes.

Dance/movement therapy has been utilized as the primary therapeutic intervention for families exposed to domestic violence. DMT offers not only a way to address the physical and emotional patterns of immobilization but also, as a reparative tool, it assists victims in integrating healthy self-regulatory capacities that have been stunted by trauma experienced through the body. DMT provides a direct approach to address specific symptoms of abuse that appear in individuals within a family, and helps re-choreograph the family dynamics and relationships dysregulated by the domestic violence.

Interventions involving drama therapy, psychodrama, and dramatic arts have demonstrated the following benefits:

Working with clients with PTSD, drama therapy safely increases capacity to tolerate the remembering and expressing of difficult memories.


- Drama Therapy Testimonials
  [http://www.nadta.org/what-is-drama-therapy/testimonials.html](http://www.nadta.org/what-is-drama-therapy/testimonials.html)

- Drama Therapy with Children and Adolescents
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➢ Drama Therapy with Addictions Populations

➢ Drama Therapy for Geriatric Populations

Research focused on the benefits of **architecture and evidence-based healthcare design**:

  SOURCE LINK

  SOURCE LINK


**Additional Arts in Health Research**


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**Art in Children’s Hospitals**


**Creative Arts Therapies and Artist-Facilitated Programs**

Creative Forces Clinical Research Summit, 2017
[https://www.arts.gov/CreativeForcesSummit](https://www.arts.gov/CreativeForcesSummit)

National Initiative for Arts and Health in the Military Network Directory
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Closing the Gap: Research on the Impact of Creative Arts in Military Populations
https://nccih.nih.gov/research/blog/creative-arts-in-military-populations

Art therapy: Another way to help manage pain
https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/art-therapy-another-way-to-help-manage-pain-2018071214243

Science and Culture: Searching for the science behind art therapy
https://www.pnas.org/content/116/3/707

Healing With Art: Coral Springs Museum’s Program Provides Therapy During Parkland School Shooting Anniversary

Study Links Content of Service Members’ Art to Their Trauma Levels

Use of Art Therapy in the Treatment of Veterans
http://www.arttherapy.org/upload/useofarttherapywithveterans.pdf

Art Therapy and CPT Benefit PTSD, Early Results Suggest
http://www.familypracticenews.com/specialty-focus/mental-health/single-article-page/apa-ips-art-therapy-and-cpt-benefit-ptsd-early-results-suggest/7a2725e5d11e4e90ed45d4c286f1a856.html

Navy Doctor Promotes the Healing Power of Artistic Expression

Second Lady Karen Pence Advocates Art Therapy for Wounded Warriors

How Art is Helping Veterans Overcome PTSD
https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-art-helping-veterans-overcome-ptsd

Behind the Mask: Revealing the Trauma of War (through Art Therapy)
http://www.nationalgeographic.com/healing-soldiers/

Creative Arts Therapy a Useful Tool for Military Patients
Art Therapy Helps Service Members Cope with Trauma

Marines Using Dance to Improve Coping Skills

Kennedy Center and National Institutes of Health: Sound Health: Music and the Mind
http://www.kennedy-center.org/festivals/soundhealth

Kennedy Center: Breakthroughs with Music Therapy: Recovery, Resilience, Quality of Life,
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzJB3oI4RH

Music Therapy Featured in 2017 National Memorial Day Concert
http://www.pbs.org/national-memorial-day-concert/features/music-therapy/

Music Therapy Strikes a Chord
http://www.cochrane.org/news/music-therapy-strikes-chord

Music Therapy Documentary Premieres at the Kennedy Center
https://www.musictherapy.org/music_therapy_documentary_premieres_at_the_kennedy_center

World News Tonight with David Muir - March 2015
Persons of the Week: Celebrating All Music Therapists

Music Therapy and Military Populations
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ronna-kaplan-ma/music-therapy-and-military_b_4875374.html

Therapeutic Music Opportunities for Military Veterans
http://www.operationwearehere.com/MusicTherapy.html

Creative Expression and Therapeutic Opportunities for Military Veterans and Families through the Arts
http://www.operationwearehere.com/ArtTherapy.html

Music Therapy for Arizona Veterans
http://arizonasonoranewsservice.com/music-therapy-arizona-veterans/

Healing Through Music
http://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/healing-through-music-201511058556

Temple VA Music Therapy Program Helping Vets with PTSD
Music Therapy: Healing for Body and Mind

Dance Therapy to Heal the Body and Mind

NYU's Drama Therapy “As Performance” series uses therapeutic theatre to address challenging issues, such as eating disorders, mental health, race, disability and more.
https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/music/dramatherapy/asperformance
https://steinhardt.nyu.edu/music/dramatherapy/asperformance/past

Assessing the impact of live music in Emergency Departments
http://arts.ufl.edu/academics/center-for-arts-in-medicine/researchandpublications/ed/

Assessing the impact of the arts in medical-surgical environments
http://arts.ufl.edu/academics/center-for-arts-in-medicine/researchandpublications/nursing/

Benefits of artists collaborating with nurses on interprofessional care teams

Using the arts for health messaging
http://arts.ufl.edu/academics/center-for-arts-in-medicine/researchandpublications/arts/

National Organization for Arts in Health: “Arts, Health, and Well-Being in America”
https://thenoah.net/about/arts-health-and-well-being-in-america-a-white-paper/

Using arts and architecture to understand social exclusion
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/312495286_The_social_invisibility_of_mental_health_facilities_understanding_social_exclusion_through_art_and_architecture

NEA partners with UF’s Center for Arts in Medicine on Telehealth Initiative

Arts and Wellness at the Kennedy Center Millennium Stage: American Dance Therapy Association.
http://www.kennedy-center.org/video/index/M60049

Drama therapy short videos
http://www.nadta.org/what-is-drama-therapy/gallery.html

Drama Therapy with the Military
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fRYK4Ld4esA
Standing Tall, documentary about children who engaged in Drama Therapy after witnessing the fall of the Twin Towers from their classroom on 9/11
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-HAsTr2LO4&spfreload=10

Drama Therapy Bibliography
http://www.nadta.org/what-is-drama-therapy/bibliography.html

Health Risks and Cost of Social Isolation
https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/ppi/2017/10/medicare-spends-more-on-socially-isolated-older-adults.pdf

TCG’s Blue Star Theatres Program
https://www.tcg.org/Advocacy/BlueStarTheatres.aspx

TCG’s Veterans & Theatre Institute
https://www.tcg.org/Advocacy/BlueStarTheatres/VeteransTheatreInstitute.aspx

Blue Star Museums Program
https://bluestarfam.org/resources/family-life/blue-star-museums/

NEFA Report of convening bridging artist, military, veterans' and civilian communities
https://www.nefa.org/blog/art-service-understanding-convening-learnings

Walker Art Center

Portland Art Museum
https://portlandartmuseum.org/artnow/

Frye Art Museum
http://fryemuseum.org/program/here_now

Carnegie Museum of Art
Programs for Accessibility | Carnegie Museum of Art

Museums Using the Arts to Enhance Observation Skills of Medical Students

Harvard
https://www.harvard.edu/media-relations/harvard-joins-growing-trend-arts-education-med-schools

Boston Museum of Fine Arts
https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/what-medical-residents-learn-from-art-museums_us_56bb95ae4b0c3c5504fd6c5
Additional Program Examples

**National Capital Region Quality Symposium Poster: Dance/Movement Therapy: An Integrative Approach to Warrior Wellness.** The need for integrative mental health services for veterans is evidenced by a rise in interest in non-pharmacological approaches, including arts-based practices. This pilot case study is an analysis of an existing dance/movement therapy (DMT) based mind-body wellness program within a larger traumatic brain injury (TBI) program for military service members. Data from patient surveys, clinical notes, the researcher-practitioner’s embodied observations, and historical data from the TBI program indicate 1) potential increase in mind-body awareness for patients and 2) a possible shift in movement flow. Inconsistencies in program messaging suggest further exploration of the critical tenets of integrative medicine.

**Drama Therapy at Hackensack University Health Network (New Jersey)** utilizes Drama Therapy to focus on the strength and resilience of pediatric medical patients to encourage the development of age-appropriate coping skills for children who are being treated for life-threatening illness or injuries. In addition, drama therapy is used to aid in healing of families who have lost loved ones.

**Drama Therapy** at the New York City funded Health + Hospitals network utilizes Drama Therapy, and other creative arts therapies, in the inpatient and outpatient, treatment of children, adults and the elderly who experience chronic and acute mental illnesses. In using Drama Therapy, these patients are able to safely express themselves with compassionate and strength-based treatment to find stability, appropriate socialization and desired behaviors.

The **Phoenix Indian Medical Center** hosted a “Healing Through the Arts Health Fair,” which welcomed several local organizations and nearly 600 Native American artists and entrepreneurs. An estimated 3,500 community members attended the event on Saturday, December 16, 2017. The health fair was organized by the Office of Community Relations and Tribal Affairs and supported by PIMC Dental, Pediatrics, Behavioral Health, Benefits Coordination, and Public Health
Nursing. Community partners included Native Health, Phoenix Indian Center, Unity Homecare Agency, Phoenix Public Library, and Catholic Charities Community Services, Inc.

CYC Connecting Youth and Community, in cooperation with The Prevention Team, has received drug free communities grants from the US Substance Abuse and Mental Services Administration to reduce the use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs by youth in Wilmington and Lake Placid as well as throughout Essex County, NY. These grants have helped underwrite a series of murals and other public art activities organized to empower youth to make healthy choices and become engaged citizens. The youth design, fabricate, and install murals in public settings that range from Olympic sports venues to youth centers, create banners and posters for public display, and photographed and interviewed adults under the guidance of professional artists.

The art therapy program at VA Medical Center in Memphis, Tennessee offers art therapy to veterans in the residential program as well as individual and group therapy for patients in outpatient care. Clinicians use the creative process to reconcile emotional conflicts, foster self-awareness, and increase self-esteem.

The Ars Bellum Foundation’s mission is to provide evidence-based art therapy programs to veterans and military family members struggling with PTSD and related mental health conditions due to service-related trauma, loss, and grief. The foundation also serves Gold Star families, military children, spouses and caregivers and has developed a unique program that helps women veterans struggling with the aftermath of military sexual trauma. Sites are open in St. Paul, Brooklyn Park, and Benson Minnesota and under development in Rochester and northern MN, Tampa Bay, Florida, and North Carolina.

The Independence Fund’s Art of Healing in South Carolina utilizes art therapy to support veterans experiencing PTSD. Art therapy is a critical component of the Family Program, which offers individualized comprehensive aftercare for each family.

Kids Like Us operates within the Frederick County Health Department Behavioral Health Services Division in Maryland with funding through SAMHSA’s Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant and serves 26 schools across the county. The program offers free art therapy and counseling services to youth grades 4 and above who are affected by the addiction or substance abuse of a close family member. Internal and external evaluations show reductions in isolation, worry, and anger and increases in the ability to focus and the sense of support among participants. School counselors report that the program helps identify children at risk for suicide and facilitates linkages to individual therapy. A longitudinal evaluation study began in 2010, and is still underway.

Desert Hope Treatment Center, operated by American Addiction Centers (AAC) in Las Vegas, Nevada incorporates art therapy services in customized treatment plans for adults dealing with substance abuse and co-occurring conditions.

Sagebrush Virginia Addiction Treatment Center in Virginia utilizes art therapy as a central component in a holistic residential addiction treatment plan focused on the root causes of
addiction. The clinicians use the creative process to help patients increase awareness, cope with post-acute withdrawal symptoms, de-stress, and process traumatic experiences.

Cleveland Clinic in Ohio offers art therapy groups for patients and caregivers in the Heart and Vascular Institute, Cancer Institute, Transplant units, and behavioral health. Research shows significant reduction in pain and anxiety and improved self-esteem, mood, coping skills, and sense of control.

The Art Therapy Program at Riley Children’s Health at Indiana University Health helps children process medical illnesses and treatments to enhance mental, physical, and emotional wellness though the creative process of art therapy.

Tracy’s Kids Art Therapy Program of the Cancer Research and Prevention Foundation uses art therapy with cancer patients and family members to cope with emotional stress and trauma of cancer. The program uses a child-centered, open studio approach in inpatient and outpatient settings. The organization has expanded to seven medical facilities across the country – with four in or near D.C. and the others located in New York City, Baltimore, and San Antonio.

The Art Therapy program at Massachusetts General Hospital supports clients through art therapy to help reduce the stress with cancer. Staff reports the use of art therapy as an effective complement to medical treatment and reduced perceptions of pain experiences among patients.

The Creative Arts Therapies department at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia provides art therapy to children and adolescents with chronic pain or chronic illness. The interdisciplinary treatment team facilitate self-expression related to chronic pain/illness to promote pain management and reduce stress and anxiety.

Partners in Drug Abuse Rehabilitation Counseling (PIDARC) in Washington DC, supports client wellness for adults with opioid dependence. Utilizing an interdisciplinary treatment team, the art therapists use person-centered approach to address mental and physical health along with socio-emotional development.

Art therapy at McClendon Center in Washington DC allows for individuals with co-occurring disorders of substance abuse to work towards committing to a substance free lifestyle. The program is rooted in self-reflection and personal discovery to focus on the path towards recovery.

The Art Therapy Project in New York is dedicated to providing art therapy to women’s and men’s veteran groups confronting issues surrounding re-entry to civilian life, post-traumatic stress, military sexual trauma, substance abuse and homelessness. The veterans have explored issues that disrupted their lives as subjects of their artwork, demonstrating transformation and resiliency.

Arts in Healing program at The Veterans Affairs of Hudson Valley Health Care System, New York utilizes art therapy to work with veterans with overwhelming trauma to aid the participants in
relaxation and/or to help understand and heal from traumatic experiences where words are difficult to find.

**Veterans Outreach Center in Rochester, New York** provides creative arts therapies to veterans. Art therapy is provided to empower veterans to express their experiences feelings, provide mastery, and transform cognitions and recollections of combat experiences.

**Austin State Hospital, Texas Department of State Health Services**, provides experiential therapies to veterans, among their adult behavioral health and medical units, to increase socialization and mental and emotional stabilization.