

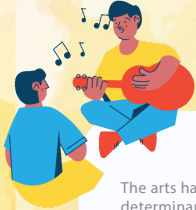
Connecting the Dots

Health as Art Toolkit

Art & The Impact on Health and Well-Being

Art - including the acts of creating art, performing art, witnessing art, and more - is a vehicle for health and well-being. There are few other opportunities throughout our day-to-day life that provide us as many chances to foster our relationship with ourselves, with others, and with our community, in the same way that art does. Regardless of the medium, the power of art can influence our self-confidence, strengthen our resilience, improve our connection with peers, support how we process our past and prepare for our future, and enhance how we advocate for a better tomorrow.

Action for Healthy Kids' Health as Art Toolkit provides snapshots of the significant impact that art can have on furthering healthy bodies and healthy minds, and how the arts can be leveraged at home, in the classroom, and out in the community. Our hope is that this resource equips you with the tools necessary to understand the influence of the arts, and the practical ways in which the arts can be more easily integrated into furthering your own social emotional health and the social emotional health of the children in your life.



The arts improves social determinants of health

The arts have been found to improve social determinants of health - the conditions in the environments where people live, learn, work, play, and grow.

The arts build social and community capital within societies, promote capacity-building and skills development, and have been found to:

- Foster cooperation and social inclusion in children, adults, and families
- Support conflict resolution, strengthened empathy, cultural competence, and transformative learning
- Build connections and bridge groups of people
- Encourage cultural competence and preserve cultural traditions

Programs involving the arts have been found to improve outcomes and reduce inequities among vulnerable populations of children, including those:

- Living in urban areas
- From families experiencing poverty
- Experiencing ongoing maltreatment
- Exposed to violence

Arts programs have also been shown to provide job opportunities and support social mobility.



Learn more at actionforhealthykids.org/blog or scan the QR code with your mobile device.



The arts supports child development

The arts can be integrated in to the four domains of child development that are recognized by the CDC, to further support growth, learning, health and well-being in children and adolescents.

What are some ways to integrate the arts into each domain?

- **Language/Communication:** Poetry, spoken word, story-telling
- **Learning/Thinking/Problem-solving:** Photography, reading music, drawing
- **Movement/Physical:** Dance, theater, playing an instrument
- **Social/Emotional:** Improv comedy, singing, playing pretend

The arts have been found to positively impact:

- Mother-infant bonding;
- Language development and verbal communication;
- Social development and prosocial behaviors;
- Reading skills;
- Self-confidence;
- Increased attention in the classroom;
- and more!

The arts, and music specifically, have also been found to positively impact child and adolescents from lower income homes, and those with developmental, physical, and learning disabilities.



Learn more at actionforhealthykids.org/blog or scan the QR code with your mobile device.





The arts strengthen health promoting behaviors

Health-promoting behaviors are the individual actions we take that lead to improved health and well-being. The arts play a role in promoting healthy living through increased access and awareness-building.

The arts can be utilized to strengthen health-promoting behaviors by:

- Promoting healthy living
- Improving health communications
- Reducing health-related stigma
- Improving engagement with primary healthcare
- Engaging marginalized communities and hard-to-reach populations

The arts have been found to:

- Improve mental health literacy, attitudes towards mental health, empathy, and inclusion
- Improve children's nutritional knowledge and healthy eating attitudes
- Increase enjoyment of and improve participation in physical activity
- Increase awareness of the dangers of substance misuse and reduce use among adolescents

The arts have also been found to be effective in engaging marginalized communities and reducing health-related stigma.



Learn more at actionforhealthykids.org/blog or scan the QR code with your mobile device.



The art fosters connection

When applied in a culturally responsive and developmentally appropriate way, the arts weave a thread throughout the pillars of social-emotional learning and the five competencies identified by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) – self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, relationship skills, and social awareness.

The arts bridge connection between these pillars while fostering growth that supports a healthy relationship with ourselves, our peers, our community, and the world around us.



The arts have been found to:

- Build social cohesion and produce collaborative relationships among community members
- Strengthen parent-child relationships
- Build strong bonds among students, teachers, parents, and caregivers
- Strengthen family-school partnerships through increased parental and caregiver involvement

The arts are collaborative in nature and create environments where individuals feel safe, supported, and encouraged to use their creativity to share ideas, reflect on experiences, and tell their stories with others.



Learn more at actionforhealthykids.org/blog or scan the QR code with your mobile device.

All sources are cited within each article. Primarily retrieved from:

Fancourt D, Finn S. What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review [Internet]. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2019. (Health Evidence Network synthesis report, No. 67.) 2. RESULTS.

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Connecting the Dots

Health as Art Toolkit

Art & Experiential Learning

Experiential learning means "learning by doing" or hands-on activities. These activities give children an opportunity to apply skills and knowledge learned within the context of their community, cultural background, and own lived experiences.

AFHK's ConnectEd program promotes four types of experiential learning to thread the building blocks of foundational social-emotional learning skills and youth risk behavior prevention. Each experiential learning type builds off of the other and supports the five social-emotional learning competencies as defined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL): self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making.

By emphasizing the ways in which children can focus on supporting themselves, supporting and building relationships with others, and making healthy decisions for themselves and when interacting in the world, children build character and grow into confident, caring, competent, and connected humans that make long-lasting and meaningful contributions to the world!

Differentiated Learning

Differentiating activity-based learning to provide varying opportunities for learners is critical to allowing children the space and the practice needed to truly develop and grow their skills. Learning styles are unique and individual to each person, so leveraging a variety of approaches and strategies will enhance the inclusiveness of a lesson and deepen its impacts. The developmentally-appropriate activities included in this toolkit are framed around three core learning styles - visual, auditory, and tactile/kinesthetic. In order to further support the whole child and holistic development, activities are also designed to incorporate opportunities for physical activity and for nutrition awareness. By blending the impact of social emotional health activities with nutrition or with physical activity, students are given the opportunity to become healthier both in body and in mind.

	Mindfulness & Sensory-Based Learning	Play-Based Learning	Service-Based Learning	Peer Leadership-Based Learning
	Grades PreK-2nd	Grades 3rd-5th	Grades 6th-8th	Grades 9-12
Visual (takes in information by sight)	Creative Collages	Stamp the Rainbow	Many Minds Mural	Capture Your Community
Auditory (takes in information by sound)	Let the Music Move You	Recycled Rockband	A Show for All Talents	TBD
Tactile/Kinesthetic (takes in information by feeling or movement)	A Garden of My Own	Yoga Freeze Dance	Connecting Art & Community	Empty Bowls Project

● Integrates nutrition education component

● Integrates physical activity and creative movement component

Find twelve art-based social-emotional health activities for mindfulness/sensory, play, service, and peer leadership-based learning on the next couple of pages. Scan the QR code with your mobile device or follow the link below to access a printable download of all activity guides.

Mindfulness/Sensory & Play-Based Learning Activity Set
<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/wp-content/uploads/health-as-art-set-1.pdf>

Service & Peer Leadership-Based Learning Activity Set
<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/wp-content/uploads/health-as-art-set-2.pdf>

Mindfulness & Sensory-Based Learning



Mindfulness and sensory-based learning helps our brains identify different ways of bringing our attention to the present moment and encourages learning through creativity, exploration, and imagination using one or more of our five senses. It helps us to build connections between the brain and body and learn new information in a way that is most helpful to us.

Here are three art-based social-emotional health activities for mindfulness and sensory-based learning that support visual, auditory, and tactile learners!



Creative Collages (Visual)

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/creative-collages/>

Discover ways to think outside the box and use different colors, shapes, textures, and materials to create a picture of how you're feeling, tell others a little bit about you, map out a goal, or get abstract.



Let the Music Move You (Auditory)

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/let-the-music-move-you-ribbon-dancing/>

Create your own ribbon wand and express feelings through movement by exploring beat, tempo, and rhythm.



A Garden of My Own (Tactile)

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/a-garden-of-my-own/>

Create a garden of your own with homemade sensory paints. Discover how household items can transform into colorful fluffy, bubbly, and yummy-smelling paints.



Play-Based Learning

Play-based learning encourages learning through unstructured and self-directed exploration and discovery through play. It helps us develop new vocabulary skills, practice teamwork, communication, and build relationships with others. It helps us make sense of the world around us through discovery and the freedom and fun of play!

Here are three art-based social-emotional health activities for play-based learning that support visual, auditory, and tactile learners!



Stamp the Rainbow (Visual)

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/stamp-the-rainbow/>

Create your own paint using simple pantry ingredients and your own stamps out of various fruits, vegetables, and dry goods like beans and pasta.



Recycled Rockband (Auditory)

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/recycled-rockband/>

Create your own rock band and help the planet by creating instruments using recycled materials!



Yoga Freeze Dance (Tactile)

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/yoga-freeze-dance/>

Practice mindful moves with the integration of yoga, creative expression, and dance. Create your own dance moves, and when the music stops you will freeze and practice deep breathing in different poses!



Service-Based Learning



Service-learning encourages the application of social-emotional skills through civic engagement and social responsibility. It helps us develop a sense of self-efficacy and critical thinking skills, practice teamwork, build relationships with others, and exposes us to new environments. It helps us contribute to the world around us while empowering us to engage with our community in an impactful way!

Here are three art-based social-emotional health activities for service-based learning that support visual, auditory, and tactile learners!



Many Minds Mural (Visual)

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/many-minds-mural/>

Bring many minds together to create a mural that celebrates your community.



A Show for All Talents (Auditory)

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/a-show-for-all-talents/>

Discover how a talent show – no matter how big or small – can boost confidence, promote social inclusion, and create opportunities to show off the things we enjoy most.



Connecting Art & The Community (Tactile)

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/connecting-art-and-the-community/>

Discover how activities such as art-pals (a spin on pen-pals), virtual art class or art clubs, and more can create a space where creativity and connection collide.



Peer Leadership-Based Learning

Peer leadership encourages the application of social-emotional skills through peer-to-peer connection, behavior modeling, teamwork, and goal setting. It helps us develop self-confidence, personal agency, collaboration, and communication skills. It helps us enhance the world around us through collective action and prosocial behaviors!

Here are three art-based social-emotional health activities for peer leadership-based learning that support visual, auditory, and tactile learners!



Capture Your Community (Visual)

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/capture-your-community/>

Highlight what's special about your community and strengthen leadership skills by organizing a photography campaign or creating a photography project.



Peer Project Poetry (Auditory)

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/peer-project-poetry/>

Give the opportunity to lead, connect, and create by organizing a student-led poetry group of your peers or creating a classroom group poetry project.



Empty Bowls Project (Tactile)

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/empty-bowls-project/>

Learn how to create decorative bowls out of homemade air-dried clay that can be turned into healthy activity bowls. Strengthen your leadership skills, learn more about nutrition education, and gain an appreciation for the foods that keep us healthy and strong.

