



Introduction Guide To



Arts & Health

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We wish to thank and recognize the invaluable contributions of the individuals and organizations in the field of arts and health, whose work is highlighted in this guide.

Building on this introduction guide, stay tuned for upcoming resources, including a policy brief and advocacy toolkit, designed to provide further educational insights and support your efforts in advocating for arts and health.

This guide is published by CA for the Arts as part of the Arts & Health Initiative sponsored by The Music Man Foundation.



Established 1996: A **comprehensive lobbying organization** for the arts, culture and creative industries, working to influence equitable and just systems change through public policy and public investment.

www.caartsadvocates.org



Established 2007: Champions arts and culture as essential to vibrant CA communities through **statewide programming, services, and advocacy networks** that foster public awareness and generate resources to cultivate a thriving cultural sector and creative industries.

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Acknowledgment

California for the Arts (CA for the Arts) champions arts and culture as essential to vibrant California communities through statewide programming, services, and advocacy networks that foster public awareness and generate resources to cultivate an equitable and thriving arts and cultural workforce sector and creative industries.

One of our key initiatives is Arts & Health, as we recognize the arts as a powerful tool to enhance the health and wellbeing of our communities. Therefore, we like to acknowledge the many artists, culture bearers, and creative workers who have been serving as health and wellness practitioners for generations. We understand that while the conversations around arts and health may seem new, these practices have been deeply rooted in diverse communities worldwide.





What is

Arts & Health?

The field of arts in health is a diverse and multidisciplinary area focused on improving health and healthcare experiences through the arts. It incorporates literary, performing, and visual arts, as well as design and other creative expressions, into various healthcare and community environments to promote health and wellbeing across different settings.

Source: National Organization for Arts in Health (NOAH). (2017 September). *Arts, health, and well-being in America [White paper]*. <https://thenoah.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/NOAH-2017-White-Paper-Online-Edition.pdf>

Where Does Arts & Health Happen?



There are two main settings where arts and health programs can occur: clinical settings such as hospitals and other healthcare facilities and in community settings such as community-based organizations (CBOs), schools, non-profits, and arts and culture centers. Typically in **clinical settings**, arts-based interventions are administered by licensed creative arts therapists (CATs) for patients with specific diagnoses or chronic conditions. CATs or other trained arts in health professionals collaborate with healthcare workers to develop how arts-based activities can be utilized for patients' treatment plans that can help with the recovery process (*refer to the "[What Are Creative Arts Therapies?](#)" section for more info*). In **community settings**, arts-based activities can be facilitated by teaching artists, culture bearers, and creative workers for the general public in the form of group classes and community events as ways to build social connection and enhance personal wellbeing. The goal is to equip community members with creative techniques that act as preventive tools for maintaining their overall wellbeing.

Engaging in the arts delivers shared benefits and impact across both clinical and community settings. It is important to note that the workforce, people who plan, implement, and evaluate arts and health initiatives, can vary with different skill sets, requirements, and experiences. Depending on the goals of each initiative, working in cross-sector partnerships is encouraged to exchange best practices and optimize resources. The following chart offers a general comparison of arts and health programs in clinical and community settings and is not rigid or definitive.

	Clinical Settings (Healthcare Focus)	Community Settings (Public Health Focus)
Population Served	Patients	General public
Format	Mostly individual sessions or in small groups	Group classes or large one-time events
Workforce	Licensed creative arts therapists (CATS) who can partner with healthcare workers and trained arts in health professionals	Artists, creative workers, culture bearers, and public health practitioners who can partner with CATs and trained arts in health professionals
Purpose	Arts-based interventions can help with the recovery process, overall wellbeing, and patient care experience	Provide creative techniques that act as preventive tools to maintaining overall wellbeing and enhance social connection



Source: PBS NewsHour. (2022, June 27). Artists work next to doctors to help with healing in hospitals [Video]. <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/artists-work-next-to-doctors-to-help-with-healing-in-hospitals>



Arts & Health Video

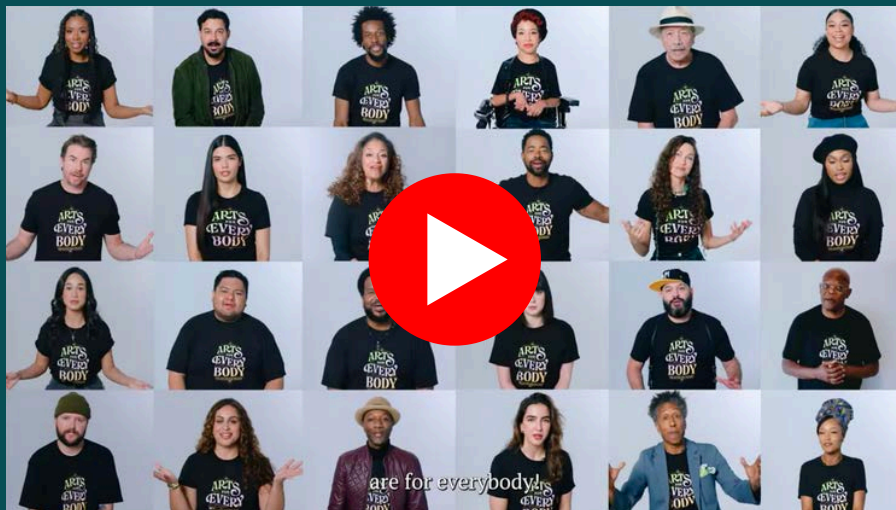
This educational video provides a snapshot of arts in health practices in healthcare and public health settings, and the various types of professionals needed for partnerships to achieve the goals of arts and health programs.



Source: Carytsas, F. & Bucciarelli, A. (2020). *What is arts in health?* [Video]. University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine. YouTube. https://youtu.be/yra77oVmZ_s?si=8hn52lm-R7ZL2YPN

Arts For Everyone PSA

This public service announcement highlights Arts for EveryBody artist ambassadors sharing why the arts are good for your health.



Source: Arts for EveryBody. (2024, July 23). *Arts for Everybody PSA* [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/lej0BncG6eo?>



What is

Arts Participation?

As a result of a mixed methods study using both qualitative and quantitative data, the most current definition of arts participation compasses a broad range that includes two sections:

1.
Modes

2.
Forms

Source: Sonke, J., Rodriguez, A. K., Colverson, A., Akram, S., Morgan, N., Hancox, D., Wagner-Jacobson, C., & Pesata, V. (2024). Defining “arts participation” for public health research. *Health Promotion Practice*, 25(6), 985–996. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15248399231183388>

Modes

The ways in which people engage, including informal, live, virtual, individual, and group participation.

- Attending live arts and cultural events & activities
- Creating, practicing, performing, and sharing art
- Participating in social, civic, spiritual, and cultural arts practices
- Consuming arts via electronic, digital, or print media
- Learning in, through, and about the arts



Forms

The art forms or disciplines with which people engage.

(the examples provided are intended to suggest a broad range and are not intended to note every possible art form)

Dance/Movement: Aerial, Ballet, Ballroom, Ceremonial, Contemporary, Cultural, Hip-Hop, Jazz, Step, or Tap

Literary Arts: Storytelling, Fiction, Nonfiction, Short Stories, Memoir, Screenwriting, Poetry, Children's Literature, Graphic Novels

Media: Film, Animation, Work at the Intersection of Technology, Aesthetics, Storytelling, Digital Cultures

Music: Rap, Choral, Contemporary, Experimental, Gospel, Instrumental, Hip Hop, Classical, Chanting, Rock, Electronic, Drumming, Pop, World, Jazz

Theatre/Performance: (such as theatre, musical theatre, devised theatre, puppetry, performance art, ritual, opera, spoken word, stage design, circus arts, comedy)

Visual Arts, Craft, & Design: Illustration, Painting, Drawing, Collage, Printmaking, Installation, Photography, Gardening, Sculpture, Video Art, Street Art, Pottery, Glass, Jewelry, Metalworking, Textiles, Fashion, Culinary Arts, Graphic, Floral, Architectural, Environmental, Industrial Design

Source: Sonke, J., Rodriguez, A. K., Colverson, A., Akram, S., Morgan, N., Hancox, D., Wagner-Jacobson, C., & Pesata, V. (2024). Defining "arts participation" for public health research. *Health Promotion Practice*, 25(6), 985–996. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15248399231183388>

Benefits of Arts in Health & Wellbeing

Physical activity, nutrition...



...and regular participation in the arts is good for our health!



Just like how we are told that physical activity and nutrition is good for our health, so is regular participation in the arts. These can be experienced by receptive engagement or active participation such as watching a performance, listening to music and dancing, going to museums, attending drum circles or a painting class. The focus is on engaging in the process of arts participation rather than emphasizing the end result of the final product.

Studies have shown that integrating the arts into our daily lives can benefit our health and wellbeing on the physical, mental, and social levels.

Reduce risk of ailments

Increase longevity

Decrease stress

Prevent depression

Reduce loneliness

Improve social
connection

Enhance cognitive
functions

Support academic
success

- Just like practicing physical activity and a well balanced diet, participating in the arts can **reduce** the risk factors of ailments such as hypertension and heart disease.
- Participating in the arts can **decrease** stress and cortisol levels, which affects our mood and blood pressure.
- Participating in the arts can **reduce** social isolation by fostering meaningful experiences that enhance a sense of belonging.
- Arts participation leads to **better** cognitive and mental functions like memory, which is equivalent to the benefits of weekly exercise.
- Students who engage in the arts are **more likely** to have better academic attendance and performance.

Source: One Nation/One Project. *The Arts & Health Connection*. <https://www.onenationoneproject.com/arts-health-connection>

Benefits of Arts in Health & Wellbeing

Health risks of
loneliness are
equivalent to smoking

15

cigarettes per day ¹

20%

less likely to be
depressed with
once a month arts
participation ²

People who attend
arts/culture events at
least once a month are

31%

less likely to die early ³

Making art for just

45

minutes can reduce
cortisol (stress
hormone) ⁴

Source:

1. Office of the Surgeon General. (2023). *Our epidemic of loneliness and isolation: The U.S. Surgeon General's advisory on the healing effects of social connection and community*. <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-social-connection-advisory.pdf>
2. Bone, J. K., Bu, F., Fluharty, M. E., Paul, E., Sonke, J. K., & Fancourt, D. (2022). Engagement in leisure activities and depression in older adults in the United States: Longitudinal evidence from the Health and Retirement Study. *Social Science & Medicine* (1982), 294, 114703. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2022.114703>
3. Bygren, L. O., Jansåker, F., Sundquist, K., & Johansson, S.-E. (2023). Association between attending cultural events and all-cause mortality: A longitudinal study with three measurements (1982–2017). *BMJ Open*, 13(2), e065714. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2022-065714>
4. Kaimal, G., Ray, K., & Muniz, J. (2016). Reduction of cortisol levels and participants' responses following art making. *Art Therapy*, 33(2), 74–80. <https://doi.org/10.1080/07421656.2016.1166832>; One Nation/One Project. *The Arts & Health Connection*. <https://www.onenationoneproject.com/arts-health-connection>

Impact of Arts-Based Activities in Clinical Settings



- **72%** of Americans believe the arts can improve personal healing and the healthcare experience.¹
- Up to **50%** better pain management and reduction in medication needs for patients, likely resulting in **shorter** hospital stays and **decrease** in medical costs.²



- It can **decrease** the load for emergency care services.³
- It can **boost** confidence and improve health and wellbeing of staff.⁴



- It can **reduce** the risks of burnout and turnover of clinical workers.⁵



Source:

1. Americans for the Arts. (2024 December). *Americans speak out about the arts: An in-depth look at perceptions and attitudes about arts & culture in America in 2023*. <https://www.americansforthearts.org/newsroom/press-releases/americans-speak-out-about-the-arts-in-2023>
2. Raudenská, J., Šteinerová, V., Vodičková, Š., Raudenský, M., Fulková, M., Urits, I., Viswanath, O., Varrassi, G., & Javůrková, A. (2023). Arts therapy and its implications in chronic pain management: A narrative review. *Pain and Therapy*, 12(6), 1309–1337. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40122-023-00542-w>
3. Polley, M., Bertotti, M., Kimberlee, R., Pilkington, K., Refsum, C. (2017). *A review of the evidence assessing impact of social prescribing on healthcare demand and cost implications*. University of Westminster. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/318861473_A_review_of_the_evidence_assessing_impact_of_social_prescribing_on_healthcare_demand_and_cost_implications
4. Tjasink, M., Keiller, E., Stephens, M., Carr, C. E., & Priebe, S. (2023). Art therapy-based interventions to address burnout and psychosocial distress in healthcare workers-a systematic review. *BMC Health Services Research*, 23(1), 1059–1059. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12913-023-09958-8>
5. Engel, T., Gowda, D., Sandhu, J. S., & Banerjee, S. (2023). Art interventions to mitigate Burnout in health care professionals: A systematic review. *Permanente Journal*, 27(2), 184–194. <https://doi.org/10.7812/TPP/23.018>

Impact of Arts-Based Activities in Community Settings

- About **9 in 10** Americans (**86%**) believe “arts and culture improve my community’s quality of life and livability.”
- **69%** of Americans say that participating in the arts and culture has “a positive effect on their overall health and well-being.”
- More than **4 in 5** Americans (**81%**) believe the arts may “help some people deal with mental health issues such as loneliness, depression, and anxiety.”
- Arts and culture can strengthen communities and builds social cohesion. **72%** of Americans believe that “arts and culture provides shared experiences with people of different races, ethnicities, ages, beliefs, and identities.”
- **63%** agree that the arts “help me better understand other cultures in my community.”



Source: Americans for the Arts. (2024 December). *Americans speak out about the arts: An in-depth look at perceptions and attitudes about arts & culture in America in 2023*. <https://www.americansforthearts.org/newsroom/press-releases/americans-speak-out-about-the-arts-in-2023>

Economic Impact

Utilizing arts initiatives can reduce healthcare costs with a potential savings of

\$2.25 billion¹

Integrating elements of art in hospitals can decrease the length of stay which can result in

\$56 billion in savings annually²

79% of Americans believe the arts are “good for local businesses, the economy, and jobs” ³

72% favor government funding of arts and culture to address job and economic development ³



Source:

1. Sonke, J. (2012, October 17). Arts and creative engagement: Establishing arts in healthcare as a field of arts management. *Culturework*, 16(4).
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272490688_Arts_and_Creative_Engagement_Establishing_Arts_in_Healthcare_as_a_Field_of_Arts_Management
2. The Healing Power of Art: Can Hospital Collections Help? (2014, September 23). *NBC News*.
<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/healing-power-art-can-hospital-collections-help-n208966>
3. Americans for the Arts. (2024 December). *Americans speak out about the arts: An in-depth look at perceptions and attitudes about arts & culture in America in 2023*. <https://www.americansforthearts.org/news-room/press-releases/americans-speak-out-about-the-arts-in-2023>



What are Creative Arts Therapies?

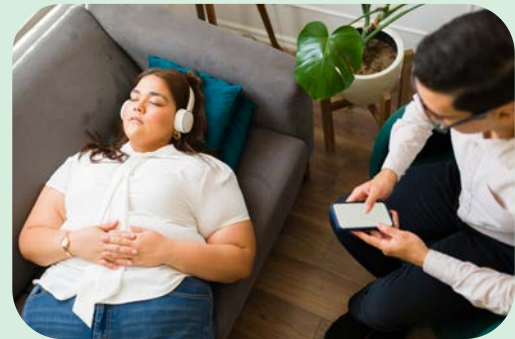
Creative Arts Therapies (CATs) are therapeutic interventions that use artistic mediums such as art, music, dance/movement, poetry, and drama to mitigate illnesses and improve health and wellbeing.

Therapists in the five modalities require distinct formal education and credentials, which can vary by state. They typically work in clinical settings, private practice, or schools and mostly in one-on-one and small group sessions.

The expressive arts therapy combines the visual arts, movement, drama, music, writing and other creative processes to foster deep personal growth and community development.

What are Creative Arts Therapies?

- Therapeutic interventions that use various art modalities to mitigate illnesses and improve health and wellbeing.
- Each modality (field) is governed by a separate professional association.
- Credentialing and professional requirements vary by modality/state.
- Most CATs work in clinical settings, schools, or private practice.
- Typically work with individuals in one-on-one or small group sessions.



Associations



American Art Therapy Association (AATA)



American Music Therapy Association (AMTA)



Northern American Drama Therapy Association (NADTA)



American Dance Therapy Association (ADTA)



National Association for Poetry Therapy (NAPT)



International Expressive Arts Therapy Association (IEATA)

What is Arts on Prescription?

Arts on Prescription (AoP) “refers to any program in which health and social care providers are enabled to prescribe arts, culture, or nature experiences to patients or clients in order to support their health and wellbeing. While the words ‘culture’ and ‘nature’ do not show up in the term, they are fully implied with each mention.”



Source: Golden, T.L., Bantham, A., Mason, K., Sonke, J., Swaback, K., Kuge, M.N., Lokuta, A.M., Caven, J., Shan, M., Clinesmith, R., Keene, K., Manhas, N. (2023). *Arts on Prescription: A Field Guide for US Communities*. Mass Cultural Council / University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine. <https://www.tashagolden.com/fieldguide>



Arts and Culture on Prescription Video



Source: London Arts and Health. (2021, March 24). *Arts and culture on prescription* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4j4SDtPS8t4>



Arts on Prescription Video



Source: NDPHS Secretariat. (2024, May 3). *Arts on prescription, 2024* [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/53cilx70bBQ?si=wihRuaBgrj1fzKBz>

What is Social Prescribing?

AoP is a modality with the wider lens of **“Social Prescribing” (SP)**, which is a progressive approach where healthcare providers suggest community-based, non-clinical and non-pharmaceutical activities, including the arts, to support health and wellbeing. In 2023, a study was conducted to establish an internationally accepted conceptual and operational definition of social prescribing.



“A means for trusted individuals in clinical and community settings to identify that a person has non-medical, health-related social needs and to subsequently connect them to non-clinical supports and services within the community by co-producing a social prescription - a non-medical prescription, to improve health and well-being and to strengthen community connections.” ¹

Social prescribing originated in the United Kingdom (U.K.) decades ago, and is now in about 31 countries with high visibility in the U.K., Canada, and Australia, with growing momentum in the United States. England was the first country in the world to make social prescribing a part of its healthcare system. Since being made available to all in 2019 it has benefitted over 2 million people. ²



Source:

1. Muhl, C., Mulligan, K., Bayoumi, I., Ashcroft, R., & Godfrey, C. (2023). Establishing internationally accepted conceptual and operational definitions of social prescribing through expert consensus: a Delphi study. *BMJ Open*, 13(7), e070184–e070184. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2022-070184>
2. International Social Prescribing Collaborative (ISPC). (June 2024). *Social Prescribing Around the World*. <https://socialprescribingacademy.org.uk/resources/social-prescribing-around-the-world/>



What is Social Prescribing? Video

This educational video provides a description of how social prescribing works in England.



Source: Transformation Partners in Health and Care. (2018, May 21). *What is social prescribing?* [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/O9azfXNcqD8?si=7ZSjV_hOGlpRMSG



The Connection Cure Video

Learn about the prescriptive power of movement, nature, art, service, and belonging.



Source: Hotz, J. (2024, March 14). *The Connection Cure: The prescriptive power of movement, nature, art, service, and belonging* [Video]. YouTube. <https://youtu.be/a3U5NkJ0uqs?si=ogBBXSYQ9jEK7zHq>

The background of the slide features a photograph of a family—a man, a woman, and a young girl—interacting with a healthcare professional, likely a doctor or nurse, in a clinical setting. The man is holding the girl, who is holding a large stuffed animal. The healthcare professional is seated at a desk, looking at the family. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal filter. In the top-left corner, there is a large, solid orange circle.

Program Pathway

Programs resembling Arts on Prescription or Social Prescribing may already exist within organizations or agencies you work with or know of, operating as **referral-based** systems without being explicitly labeled under these terms, though they share the same foundational concept. Each system can have variations, but at a high level, the common foundation can include an identifier, connector, and service provider who supports the participants (e.g., patients, clients, etc.)

Identifier

A health care provider who assesses a participant's wellbeing and identifies a need to try a social prescription and initiates a referral.



Connector

A non-clinical professional, who may also be the identifier in some cases, is knowledgeable about non-clinical support services and works with the referred participant in order to connect them with resources based on the participant's schedule, location, etc. to a service provider. This role of the connector is commonly known as a "link worker" in the U.K. system and is an essential component for care navigation.



Service Provider

An organization or agency that provides programs or services such as basic needs, social clubs, or arts-based activities in the form of one-time occurrences or a series of weeks-long programs.



For the United States, the role of identifiers can consist of health care professionals who offer clinical services while connectors can consist of social care providers who offer non-clinical services.¹ Service providers usually have dedicated staff who oversee the program implementation and services while keeping connectors informed about the participants' progress. Collaboration among identifiers, connectors, and service providers is essential to maintaining a holistic, person-centered, and community-based approach to health and wellbeing.² This chart provides examples of roles within each category and it is intended as a flexible reference rather than a definitive or exhaustive list.

IDENTIFIERS	CONNECTORS	SERVICE PROVIDERS
• Primary Care Doctors • Nurses • Mental Health Professionals • Allied Health Professionals	• Link Workers • Social Workers • Case Managers • Community Health Workers • Public Health Professionals • Care Navigators	• Arts & Culture Organizations • Community-Based Organizations • Non-Profit Organizations • Libraries • Parks & Recreation • Hospitals & Clinics • Social Service Agencies

Source:

1. Golden, T.L., Bantham, A., Mason, K., Sonke, J., Swaback, K., Kuge, M.N., Lokuta, A.M., Caven, J., Shan, M., Clinesmith, R., Keene, K., Manhas, N. (2023). *Arts on Prescription: A Field Guide for US Communities*. Mass Cultural Council / University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine.
<https://www.tashagolden.com/fieldguide>
2. Muhl, C., Mulligan, K., Bayoumi, I., Ashcroft, R., & Godfrey, C. (2023). Establishing internationally accepted conceptual and operational definitions of social prescribing through expert consensus: a Delphi study. *BMJ Open*, 13(7), e070184–e070184. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2022-070184>

Funding Sources

In England, financial models for social prescribing are well-established, supported by the National Health Service (NHS) through dedicated funding for link workers and community-based interventions, including arts-on-prescription programs. These initiatives are integrated into primary care, with funding streams aligned to improve health and reduce healthcare costs.

In contrast, the United States lacks a unified healthcare system, making it challenging to establish consistent funding for such initiatives. England's single-payer system and longstanding emphasis on preventive care have made integrating and funding these programs significantly easier.



Funding Sources

To implement arts on prescription programs, the U.S. would need to broaden the scope of social health by embedding such interventions into Medicaid and Medicare reimbursements, incentivizing private insurers, and creating grant opportunities for community-based organizations. There are 3 financing models that have advanced in both countries to support social prescribing:¹

1.

Traditional healthcare and social service funding for referrals to social services related to food access and housing

2.

Flexible funding mechanisms such as value-based payment for care through accountable care organizations

3.

Direct funding by state arts councils, private business ventures, and philanthropy including healthcare allocations like Medicaid and Medicare

Most Americans favor government funding of the arts and culture to address mental health (81%) and healthcare (78%) issue.²

Source:

1. Sandhu S., Alderwick H., Gottlieb L.M. (2022). Financing approaches to social prescribing programs in England and the United States. *The Milbank Quarterly*, 100(2). <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0009.12562>
2. Americans for the Arts. (2024 December). *Americans speak out about the arts: An in-depth look at perceptions and attitudes about arts & culture in America in 2023*. <https://www.americansforthearts.org/news-room/press-releases/americans-speak-out-about-the-arts-in-2023>

Financing Models of Social Prescribing in England and the United States (2022)

FINANCING MODEL	ENGLAND	UNITED STATES
Traditional healthcare and social service funding	Health and social services were financed and delivered in silos despite some policy initiatives to encourage closer integration.	
Flexible funding models	The development of new models of integrated health and social care sometimes included pooling funds for health and social services to deliver a range of local services. Such models could include social prescribing.	The shift from volume-based to value-based payment incentivized new models of care delivery to improve population health and reduce costs. Such models could include social prescribing.
Direct financing mechanisms for social prescribing	The NHS committed to a national rollout of social prescribing by funding a new “link worker” role for newly formed primary care networks. Funding was supplemented with some government support and guidance on training, implementation, and measurement.	The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services supported an Accountable Health Communities model to systematically test social prescribing across 28 sites nationally, and state governments used Medicaid dollars and contracts with managed care organizations to explicitly fund or require social prescribing.

Source: Sandhu S., Alderwick H., Gottlieb L.M. (2022). Financing approaches to social prescribing programs in England and the United States. *The Milbank Quarterly*, 100(2). <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-0009.12562>

Initiative Mapping

Below are some initiatives that involve cross-sector collaborations in community and/or clinical settings that incorporate arts-based activities. Click on the logos to learn more.

Stanford | ARTS



Art Pharmacy 



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT for the ARTS
arts.gov/creativeforces
CREATIVE FORCES



Frequently Asked Questions

WHY? Why do we need arts and health programs, especially if I already engage in the arts on my own?

Arts and health programs are essential because they provide structured, accessible opportunities for individuals to engage in creative activities that support their wellbeing, regardless of their personal circumstances. While engaging in the arts independently is valuable, not everyone feels empowered to prioritize creative expression as a form of self-care. For some, receiving an arts prescription from a trusted healthcare provider validates its role in their healing process, giving them permission to incorporate it into their routine. Community-based organizations and arts and culture groups can also play a vital role by contributing their staff expertise and program offerings. These programs also help bridge gaps in access, ensuring that everyone—regardless of financial situation—has the opportunity to benefit from arts and culture as a means of improving their health and quality of life.





HOW? How will it be possible to start a comprehensive arts and health program?

Starting a comprehensive arts and health program requires a multifaceted approach, as there is no single solution due to the complexities of the U.S. healthcare system. The key steps involve raising awareness about the benefits of arts in health, expanding research to build evidence for its effectiveness, and fostering collaborations between healthcare providers, creative workers, and community organizations. It is also essential to identify and connect existing resources while exploring innovative funding strategies and ways to create viable and efficient systems. Many organizations have successfully implemented arts and health programs through diverse models and funding sources, demonstrating that with strategic partnerships and advocacy, sustainable programs can be developed and expanded.

WHO? Which professions are needed to work in this field?

The interdisciplinary field of arts and health requires a diverse range of professionals who can contribute their expertise to enhance wellbeing through creative engagement. This includes healthcare providers, creative arts therapists, researchers, artists, social care workers, administrators, funders, artists, culture bearers, creative workers, community organizers, and more. Given the long-standing role of arts and culture in human history, there is ample opportunity for various professions to collaborate and apply their skills in ways that support healing, health, and overall quality of life for individuals and communities.

Resources

For more extensive and current list of
resources, please visit:

caforthearts.org/arts-health-initiative

Arts & Health Webinar Series



Launched in 2024 and sponsored by The Music Man Foundation, this series featured amazing leaders from organizations that are paving the way for arts and social health initiatives.

Topics included:

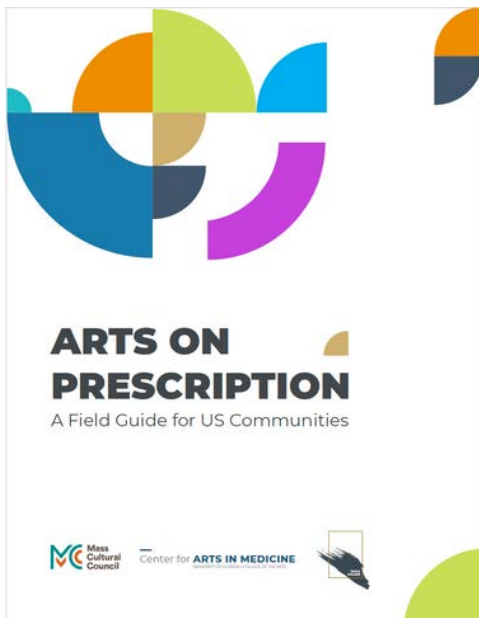
- Health Benefits for Arts Engagement
- Strategies for Innovative Funding and Partnerships
- Exploring Workforce Development
- Advocacy and Public Policy

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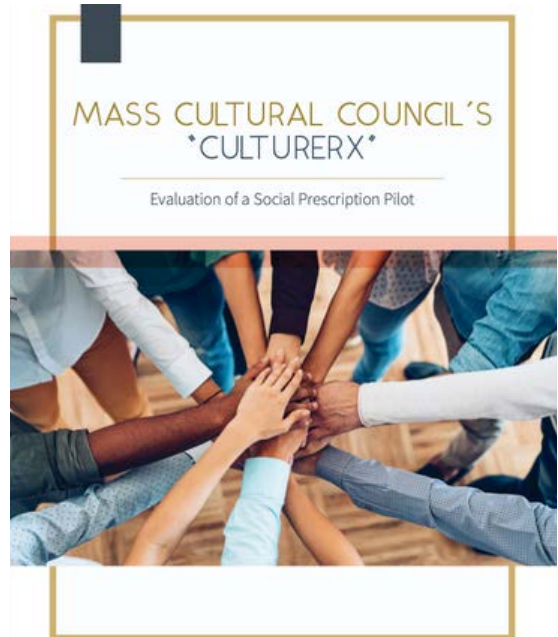


[YouTube Playlist](#)

Reports & Toolkits



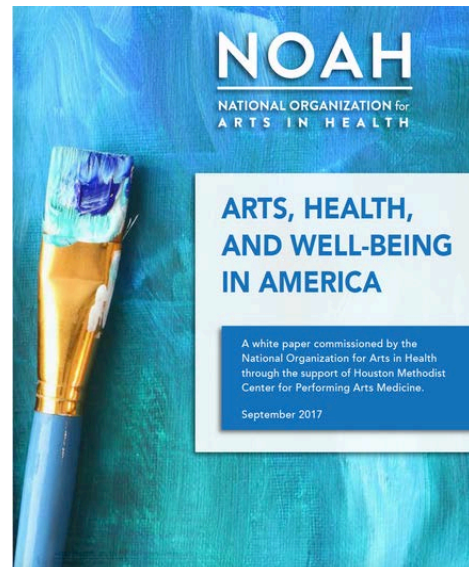
Arts on Prescription
Field Guide (2023).



Mass Cultural Council's Culture Rx
Pilot Evaluation (2022).

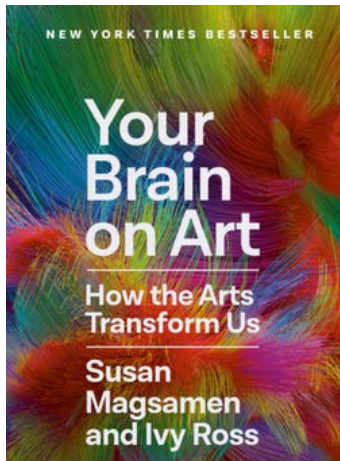


A Toolkit on How to Implement
Social Prescribing (2022).

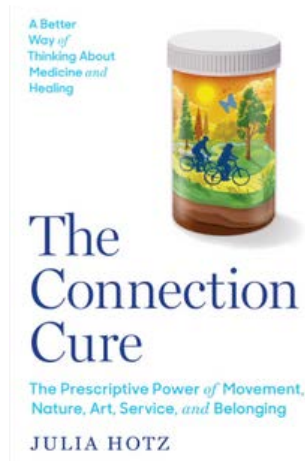


Arts, Health, and Well-being
in America White Paper (2017).

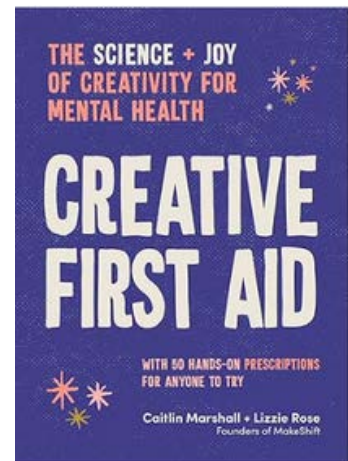
Books



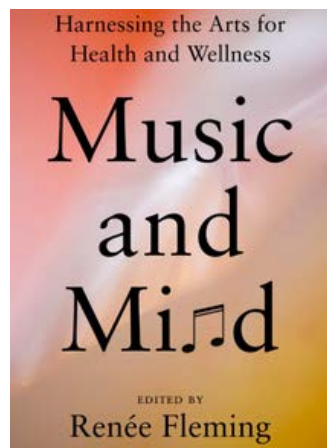
"Your Brain on Art"
(2023).



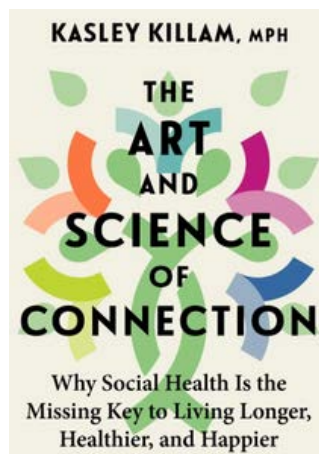
"The Connection Cure"
(2024).



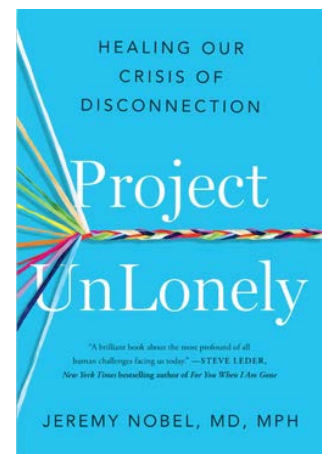
"Creative First Aid"
(2024).



"Music and Mind"
(2024).



"The Art and Science of Connection" (2024).



"Project UnLonely"
(2023).

Podcasts



Arts & Culture Summit - Arts & Health Panel (2024)



The Health Promotion Practice Podcast: Exploring an Evidence-Based Framework for the Use of Arts and Culture in Public Health S04E10 (7/10/2024)

Research



What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review

Fancourt, Daisy & Finn, Saoirse. (2019). What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? A scoping review. World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe. <https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/329834>. License: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO



The impact of arts on prescription on individual health and wellbeing: a systematic review with meta-analysis

Jensen, A., Holt, N., Honda, S., & Bungay, H. (2024). The impact of arts on prescription on individual health and wellbeing: a systematic review with meta-analysis. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 12, 1412306-. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2024.1412306>



An evidence-based framework for the use of arts and culture in public health

Golden, T. L., Sonke, J., & Rodriguez, A. K. (2024). An Evidence-Based Framework for the Use of Arts and Culture in Public Health. *Health Promotion Practice*, 15248399241228831–15248399241228831. <https://doi.org/10.1177/15248399241228831>

For more peer-reviewed articles, please visit the open-source research database by the University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine [here](#).

Research Labs

Below are some of the labs and organizations examining how the arts influence health and wellbeing with evidence-based research.
Click on the logos to learn more.



Press & Media Coverage

Arts and culture in health and wellbeing have been featured in many media publications.

Click on the article titles to read more.



The intersection of art and health: How art can help promote well-being

SELF

Why a little trip to a museum or concert can be so good for your mental health



Do this once a month and extend your life by up to 10 years. No gym required



Consuming arts and culture is good for health and wellbeing, research finds



How arts in the Sacramento region can improve our health



Mass Cultural Council and Art Pharmacy launch program to prescribe arts and culture for mental health



California Arts Advocates make case for artists as 'second responders' to pandemic

Press & Media Coverage

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[The arts span every facet of life – the White House just hosted a summit about it](#)



[How a blend of science and art is improving neurological health](#)



[Investing in arts and culture for healthy communities](#)

The New York Times

[When the prescription is for a dance class, not a pill](#)



[A pathbreaking initiative to integrate arts into community wellness and support artists to gain health training](#)

Bloomberg
Philanthropies

[Arts on prescription: Embracing a new culture of health with “social prescribing”](#)



[Arts and crafts improves mental health, finds new study](#)

Glossary

Arts on Prescription (AoP) - refers to any program in which health and social care providers are enabled to prescribe arts, culture, or nature experiences to patients or clients in order to support their health and wellbeing. While the words 'culture' and 'nature' do not show up in the term, they are fully implied with each mention.

Golden, T.L., Bantham, A., Mason, K., Sonke, J., Swaback, K., Kuge, M.N., Lokuta, A.M., Caven, J., Shan, M., Clinesmith, R., Keene, K., Manhas, N. (2023). *Arts on Prescription: A Field Guide for US Communities*. Mass Cultural Council / University of Florida Center for Arts in Medicine. <https://www.tashagolden.com/fieldguide>

Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) - non-profits serving those most in need and filling the gaps in traditional healthcare services—are an essential part of the nation's public health system. Their work protects and saves lives in neighborhoods across the country every day.

CDC Foundation. *Community-Based Organizations*. <https://www.cdcfoundation.org/community-based-organizations>

Creative Arts Therapies (CATs) - therapeutic interventions that use artistic endeavors or mediums, such as music, poetry, dance, and drama, to facilitate communication and emotional expression, enhance self-awareness, and foster health and change.

American Psychological Association. *APA Dictionary of Psychology*. <https://dictionary.apa.org/creative-arts-therapy>

Health - a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

World Health Organization. *Health and Well-Being*. <https://www.who.int/data/gho/data/major-themes/health-and-well-being>

Glossary

Public Health - the science of protecting and improving the health of people and their communities. This work is achieved by promoting healthy lifestyles, researching disease and injury prevention, and detecting, preventing and responding to infectious diseases.

CDC foundation. *What is Public Health?* <https://www.cdcfoundation.org/what-public-health>

Social Prescribing (SP) - means for trusted individuals in clinical and community settings to identify that a person has non-medical, health-related social needs and to subsequently connect them to non-clinical supports and services within the community by co-producing a social prescription - a non-medical prescription, to improve health and well-being and to strengthen community connections.

Muhl, C., Mulligan, K., Bayoumi, I., Ashcroft, R., & Godfrey, C. (2023). Establishing internationally accepted conceptual and operational definitions of social prescribing through expert consensus: a Delphi study. *BMJ Open*, 13(7), e070184–e070184. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjopen-2022-070184>

Wellbeing - a positive state experienced by individuals and societies. Similar to health, it is a resource for daily life and is determined by social, economic and environmental conditions. Wellbeing encompasses quality of life and the ability of people and societies to contribute to the world with a sense of meaning and purpose.

World Health Organization. *Promoting Well-Being*. <https://www.who.int/activities/promoting-well-being>



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