

Art Therapy

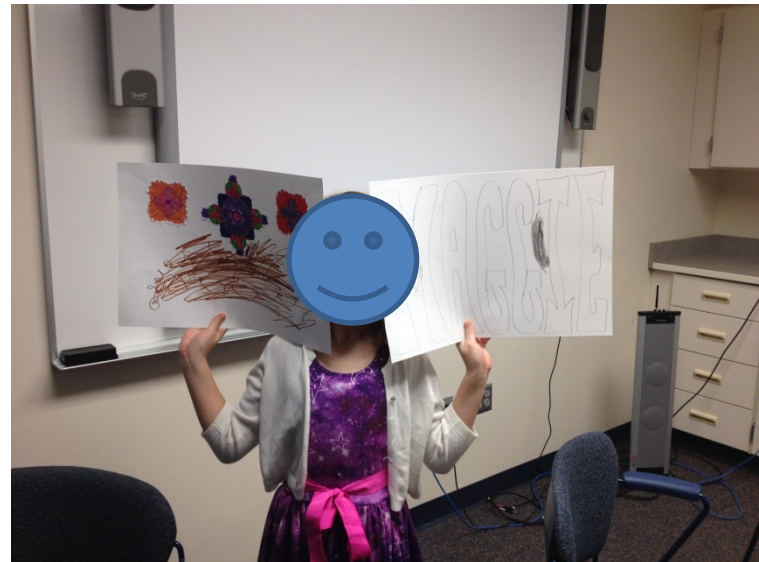
Julie Rolling, LPC

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Education

Background

- *Therapist
- *Art Teacher
- *Parent



What is Art Therapy?

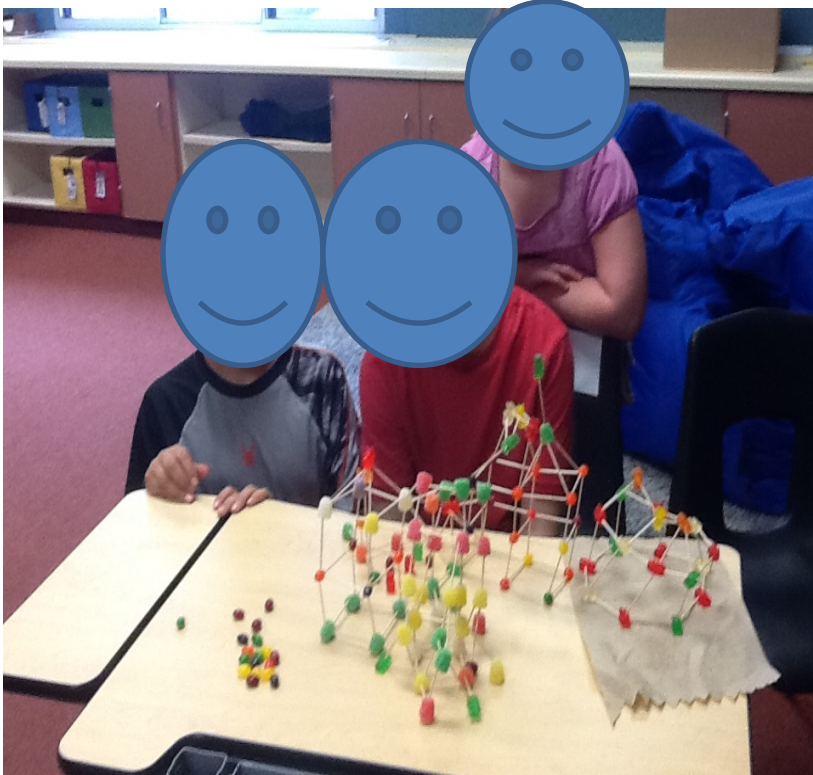
- A psychotherapy where art is used in various ways focusing on the process, not the product
- A non threatening venue for children to tackle and address issues in a creative way
- Children often can't verbally express themselves but can do so visually and creatively
- Art is meditative and calming (mandalas)
- **Group art therapy** offers a safe environment for students to have challenging conversations and to connect with one another on a different level in a different way

Art Therapy Group

- Piloting 1st AT group at OHA
- Once a week
- 50 minutes
- Anyone in SPED
- 3-5 students on average
- **Goal: To increase self regulation and mood stability leading to a greater degree of academic engagement**
- Group is structured – but pliable. (10/40/10)
- Art is taught and projects are presented - often the group plan is changed
- Create a safe space (no bystanders promotes confidentiality and safety) to work on and teach skills
 - Self Regulation & Awareness
 - Mood Stability
 - Social & Interpersonal Skills

Art Therapy Projects

3D Sculptures



Graffiti



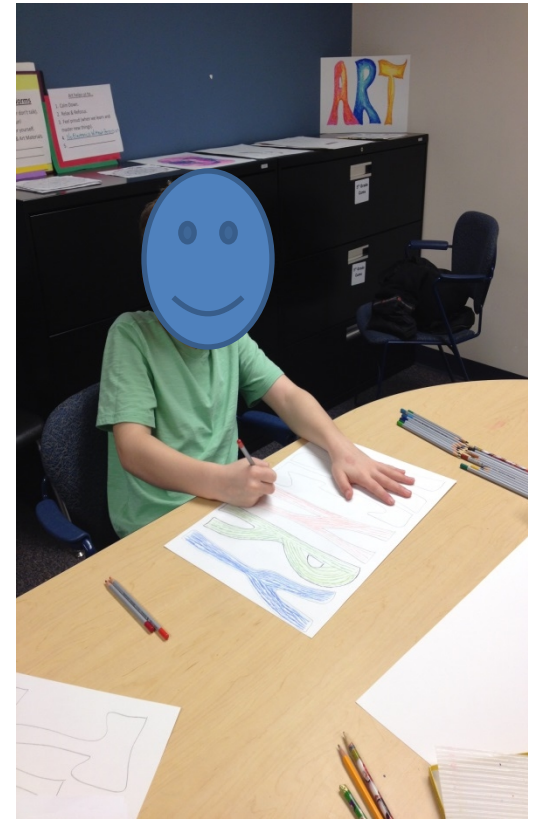
* Working on art projects during group allows the students to be able to open up and talk while doing something physical or kinesthetic, so they don't feel so under a microscope and can free associate with each other, while I use my therapy skills to guide the discussion.*

Skills Work During Group

1. Telling others business. (DWI and Parents Dating/Step Parents). **Skills: Increasing sense of security and feelings of acceptance. Increasing internal motivation.**
2. What it means when I am quiet. (Not angry, just unsure of what to say). **Skills: Increasing self awareness and awareness of others. Being able to understand how others perceive you and positively impact those perceptions. Understanding how your behaviors affect others.**
3. Life is hard. Bad things happen to good kids. (Frustration with having to work through things – oil pastels and blending). **Skills: Increasing work endurance and persistence. Learning to ask for help (without blowing up or shutting down). Trusting others.**

Comments from Staff

1. “I learned more about * in 45 minutes than I have in the last three months”.
2. “It is amazing how the kids open up”.
3. “The students really look forward to group.” (Despite having to talk about and work through hard topics).



Art Therapy & Children with Behavior Problems

Art therapy works well with kids with behavior problems because **they feel respected and feel that they have positive personal power.**

The model I use teaches them to use power in a respectful way, like making different/better choices than others, saying what's on their mind, verbalizing how they are feeling and then making choices about how they share and participate. They are met with non-judgmental responses and encouragement to question their own reactions and beliefs.

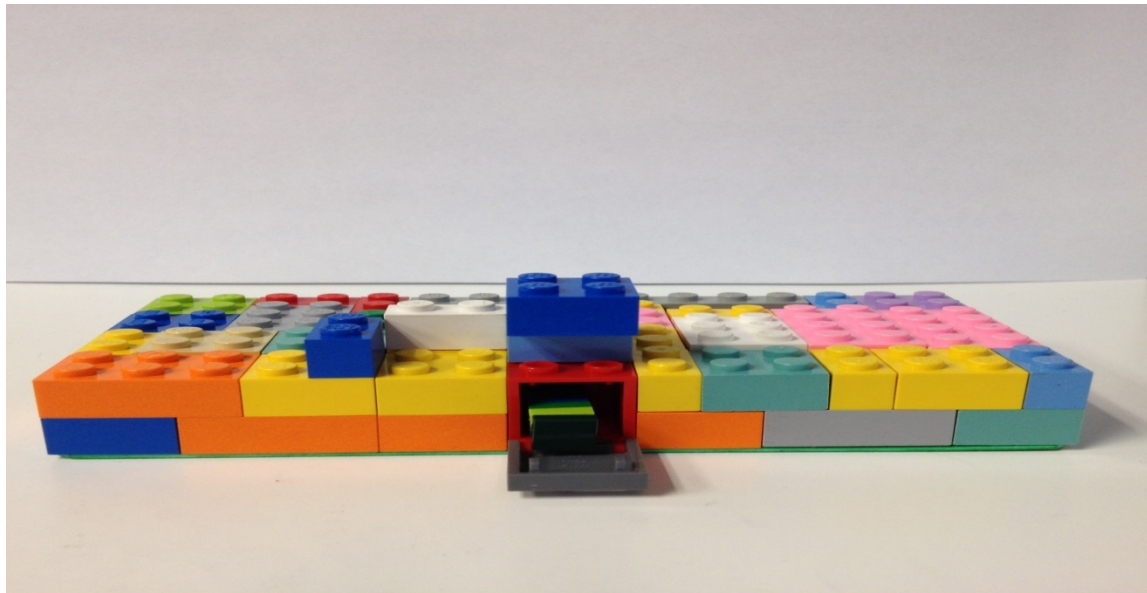
Example: “Art is sexy”. Response, “What is it about Art that makes it sexy?” followed by prompting of deeper thoughts instead of saying "we don't say sexy" which would give the message that they had done something wrong and are not in control. Out of this comment came a lengthy discussion about parents dating, step parents and what a “normal family” looks like.

This approach helps them to feel more in control and important, which positively impacts their self esteem and interactions with others. My role is to help the students find their power in a positive way while in a group/social setting.

Ultimate Goals

Students gain new skills to try out in the classroom, at home and in the community.

Students feel the power of being heard and respected which should translate into less disruption of the classroom.



Thank You!