

Table 1

Relational outcomes of arts program participation:
Development of self through interaction with others

OUTCOME	DEFINITION	LEARNER EXAMPLE	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
Identifying interests (e.g., what is fun/enjoyable/interesting) and finding new levels of self-understanding through community arts. 97%	Participants report new or changed understanding of who they are, their motivations, purpose, and interests as a result of or in connection to their participation in their arts program and relations with others in their arts program community.	"This was the first time to be in a space with people, getting past puberty into that older stage of comfort levels, figuring out am I someone that likes to be in the front lines or in the back lines when it comes to things that I'm passionate about."	• Opportunities for self-discovery through creative thinking • Safe space for introspection and expression • Arts programming that fosters emotional intelligence
Developing and refining skills relevant to problem solving and collaboration through interaction with others in community arts programs. 78%	Participants develop meaningful individual skills in the course of working closely with others in their arts program and/or arts practice (e.g., problem solving and collaboration skills).	"It made me want to understand people other than just judging, or being like, 'Oh, he's a mean person,' or 'She doesn't talk, she's just stuck up.' You really learn how to understand people. And also being on time, being respectful of the time of others."	• Opportunities to exercise responsibility, to be independent • Investment in youth development in addition to creative arts development
Cultivating one's sense of wellness. 33%	The program contributes to participants' overall sense of habitual wellness, including physical and mental health outcomes	"It was such an important way for me to get out of the house and go exert energy and put what I couldn't process [sic]. I think it was really healthy for me at the time."	• Support for the development and spread of healthy physical and mental routines

Percentages refer to the percentage of interviewees who cited each outcome. Learner examples may refer to more than one category of outcome. Quotations have been edited for clarity and concision.

Table 2

Relational outcomes of arts program participation: Establishing and strengthening social bonds

OUTCOME	SUB-OUTCOME	DEFINITION	LEARNER EXAMPLE	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
Experiencing arts family as an extension of one's home families AND/OR a source of emotional/psychological support (for confidence, acceptance, etc.) 82%	Experiencing overlap between one's home family and community arts family. 44%	Participants come to see their traditionally recognized family as integral to their arts community and vice versa so that their sense of "family" is extended to include program staff and peers.	"She always called me her sister. So, I have all the sisters. It's kind of like my mom adopted kids."	• Invitations to families to attend participant showcases • "Family"-oriented language • Performance as "gift" to families
	Community arts family offers additional family support. 73%	Participants come to view their arts programs as providing valued emotional and other resources, similar to those expected from a traditional family.	"A year, two years later, [the program is] feeling kind of like family. I couldn't wait to be in that space because I felt held in that space."	• Emphasis on "teamwork" language • Trust games and icebreakers
Forming enduring relationships with friends and mentors. 93%	Forming friendships that often continue into adulthood. 28%	Participants form meaningful, long-term friendships through their arts programs, often with individuals outside their prior social circles, enriched by shared experiences in the program.	"I'd met a friend at [the program]. She had taken me to another place where people sing and jam. And those people that I met there, they're some of my closest people now."	• Recruitment of and support for diverse participants and staff • Cross-cultural understanding activities • Collaborative art projects
	Forming connections and creative networks through shared interests, backgrounds, or environments. 52%	Participants form meaningful relationships in their programs through shared interests in the arts, including individual connections and networks built on common interests, backgrounds, or environments.	"I'd say the people that I met through the program, everyone had some kind of a connection to art whether it was because they had done it before or gone to an art school."	• Master teachers and live performances • Connections through professional events • Time to collaborate with others toward shared goals
	Receiving ongoing mentoring after direct participation in the program ends. 75%	Participants receive mentoring from their programs, including personal guidance, support for their arts practice, and career development. Ongoing mentorship may extend into adulthood.	"Especially, the program people—we have advisors that we would have to do check-ins with. All these people were super crucial to our experience."	• Ongoing mentorship efforts • Personal and arts career guidance • Formal mentorship curriculum
Building stronger community connections. 88%	Building stronger community connections. 88%	Participants make connections within arts organizations beyond friendships or mentorships, including building community, engaging with diverse perspectives, and forming networks through social media or other non-career-focused interactions.	"I was pushed out into the community, and I built a lot of relationships with people all over Oakland, all over the Bay Area, all over the country."	• Cross-sector interest groups • Shared experiences and field trips • Connections with other community arts programs

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Table 3

Relational outcomes of arts program participation:
Feeling safe, supported, and free to express oneself

OUTCOME	DEFINITION	LEARNER EXAMPLE	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
Experiencing physical safety and emotional support. 32%	Participants have access to a 'safe space' where they are able to receive social and emotional forms of support in a physical location away from their homes, neighborhoods, and/or other spaces in their everyday lives that perhaps feel less physically and/or emotionally safe.	"I was bullied a lot in middle school, so [program name] was the one escape that I had, the one place where I felt safe."	· Mental health, identity focus · Encouragement of free creative expression · Safe, inclusive space that allows students to decompress
Experiencing safety of expression and ability to communicate freely. 46%	Participants experience immediate, midterm, and long-term benefits associated with opportunities to explore and master various forms of personal expression, including some that may not be prevalent in their existing communities.	"I feel like [program name] definitely helped us to express ourselves more because I didn't have that safe space [before]... It was always a positive environment."	· Student council for feedback · Peer-led activities and mentoring · Positive critique sessions · Invitation to fully express one's self

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Table 4

Opportunity outcomes of arts program participation: Developing and sharing creative work

OUTCOME	DEFINITION	LEARNER EXAMPLE	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
Deepening one's understanding of artistic tools and principles (including technique). 94%	Community arts provide opportunities for participants to discover the intrinsic benefits of creative self-expression, while deepening their understanding of the tools/principles of the art form, as well as the ways of working in the arts, such as working toward a performance or showcase. Participants in community arts programs dive deeper into their artistry.	"We've had MC training with someone called Young Philly on how to do public speaking and getting the crowd engaged and things like that."	• Regular practice and feedback • Access to supplies and equipment • Opportunities to experiment and share
Collaborating, exhibiting, performing, and publishing work in a supportive environment. 85%	Programs support opportunities for emerging artists/musicians to work together, show, perform, or record and publish their work. This outcome emphasizes the significance of initiatives that support vibrant artistic communities - offering many and diverse opportunities; physical spaces for performances or display; and platforms for creative endeavors, expression, and performances.	"The program will, if there's members of the community that are in bands, they'll give them their first gig."	• Opportunities to showcase and perform work throughout sessions • Both low and higher-stakes opportunities to share work • Financial backing or other forms of support • "Matchmaking" of youth with complementary interests
Participating in transformative peak experiences. 59%	Participants have the opportunity to create core memories by presenting their own artwork, whether in exhibition or performance, and have the experience of being witnessed. These peak moments generate a sense of accomplishment, recognition, and motivation for youth to continue to challenge themselves and present themselves both artistically and personally.	"Carnegie Hall was the best from that time. I remember my parents coming. And I remember [my arts teacher] and her future husband coming, and she was there as my teacher, and it was a really special time."	• Public performances and exhibitions • Invitations to perform at a special event • Opportunities to travel for the purpose of performing or presenting

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Table 5

Opportunity outcomes of arts program participation:
Tapping into cultural and educational resources and civic life

OUTCOME	DEFINITION	LEARNER EXAMPLE	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
Experiencing culture within and beyond one's community and city. 58%	Opportunities to gain access to a broad artistic and cultural palette, resulting in participants deepening their understanding that they, too, can take advantage of cultural resources and navigate effectively in diverse environments. These might be relatively common cultural establishments such as a local museum or more prominent institutions.	"We would go to places that were kind of far that I normally, with my family, would not go. So, we went to MOCA, and the Getty [museums], and then we would go do these [photo] shoots. We would go to rural counties and places and do concerts and jams."	- Attendance at diverse cultural events - Trips and guest artists - Cultural education in curriculum
Receiving financial and other support to facilitate informal access to the arts and other enrichment. 58%	Community arts programs help connect young people with educational and enriching experiences in several ways, such as minimizing or eliminating financial barriers to participation, offering opportunities to engage in performances, and providing access to cultural establishments. Some arts programs help youth connect to financial and other resources and opportunities in the broader community.	"I got to do dance class at [the program] for free. And that was insane for me because when my sisters were born I had to quit dance because I couldn't afford it. And I love dancing and it made me really sad."	- Access to local resources and opportunities - Financial assistance and support for field trips and cultural events (e.g., bus passes, memberships, etc.)
Receiving financial and other support to pursue formal educational opportunities (e.g., fellowships, charter school applications, summer programs, undergrad, MFA, etc.). 48%	Community arts programs provide financial and other support for participants to further pursue educational opportunities, which may include but are not limited to continuing one's arts training through a university program or fellowship program.	"I can honestly say, without the program, not only during high school, but without the program during college, I wouldn't have graduated. They supported us so much, even while we were still in college."	- Continued support and investment when youth pursue educational opportunities - Help finding and securing funding to pursue formal educational opportunities
Participating in civic life. 36%	Through engagement with others in community arts programs, participants cultivate a feeling of social connectedness, which leads them to take up one another's causes and connect to a broader social and political world.	"I think it was a creative outlet to express ourselves and what we were going through... important social justice issues that a lot of people probably don't think middle schoolers could be thinking about, but we do. So, it's a theater arts program, but I can see it as something bigger than that."	- Discussions of social issues relevant to participants' lives - Open sharing about young people's interests

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Table 6

Opportunity outcomes of arts program participation: **Exploring and preparing for a career**

OUTCOME	DEFINITION	LEARNER EXAMPLE	PROGRAM COMPONENTS
Developing pre-professional and other broadly applicable skills (e.g., resume writing, networking skills, interview coaching, portfolio, audition, or presentation skills). 83%	Community arts programs offer support for developing pre-professional that are useful both in and outside of skills arts contexts.	“Writing, resume writing, professional development, networking skills, all that kind of stuff was what I did at the [program].”	• Development of life and career skills • Workshops and training sessions • Real-world practice and support
Exploring potential career pathways in the arts. 61%	By taking part in events (e.g., competitions, performances) and getting glimpses into different forms of art and creative professional pathways, individuals gain skills but also become aware of new career and/or future possibilities for themselves that they may not have considered before; by building new awareness of the possibilities for creative pathways, they become more cognizant of what they can do and what they might accomplish or achieve. These career possibilities may be directly or indirectly related to their arts practice in the community arts program.	“When I started on [the program], it exposed more options of what a career could be in [the] arts.”	• Career fairs and internships • Mentorship from industry professionals • Workshops and job search resources
Securing short-term employment within their community arts program. 46%	Community arts programs provide short-term career advancement opportunities either during participation or shortly after young people leave—for example, by hiring them to consult or give a workshop—demonstrating how program involvement may also serve as a gateway to professional growth and employment. In this way, young people continue to be involved with the arts program even after “aging out,” graduating, or otherwise moving on from the program or community.	“I think I’ll always be involved with [the program], and I think ever since I stopped dancing with them I’m still involved in terms of meeting with [staff name] and going to the studio. And for my gap year, she would pay me to just step foot in the studio and give a critique. And I would get a paycheck for that.”	• Opportunities for youth to become mentors at the program • Summer employment opportunities with program • Consultant work at program
Securing short-term employment through program-brokered connections (e.g., gigs, internships, summer work, professional introductions). 42%	Through connections in the professional creative community, community arts programs offer the opportunity to participate in internships, performances, and other professional experiences in arts-related endeavors. These experiences help young people gain applicable skills that make them competitive when applying to future training and job opportunities. Through internships and related on-the-job training experience, participants experience firsthand the inner workings of a professional creative work environment. They gain experience with organizational workflow, best practices in artistic presentation, and arts education.	“I think it was a creative outlet to express ourselves and what we were going through... important social justice issues that a lot of people probably don’t think middle schoolers could be thinking about, but we do. So, it’s a theater arts program, but I can see it as something bigger than that.”	• Internships, volunteering, and work experience • Job readiness training and assistance • Connections with local businesses
Pursuing a long(er)-term career in the arts (e.g., gallery owner, performer, working within an arts organization as teaching artist). 39%	Participants find long(er) term employment in the arts through experiences or connections from their program (e.g., student-to-staff in the organization, jobs discovered through nodes in their community arts network, finding a job as a teaching artist, professional artist, etc.)	“I think with me doing the internship and getting the back end of things is probably one of the more unique experiences compared to my peers.”	• Opportunities to meet artists and other creative professionals • A sense of options and possibilities
Pursuing a long(er)-term career in the non-arts workforce influenced by one’s arts experience). 13%	Participants describe lifelong career benefits or advancement in a non-arts field stemming from skills fostered through their community arts experiences.	“When it was time to start to apply to college, my Dance Teaching Artist asked me if I was considering going to college for dance... This one question, and the ability to do some career development as a teaching assistant and office helper, changed my life and led me down a path to become a professional dancer and then dance educator.”	• Networking events and collaboration • Feedback and support from peers • Platforms for sharing creative work