



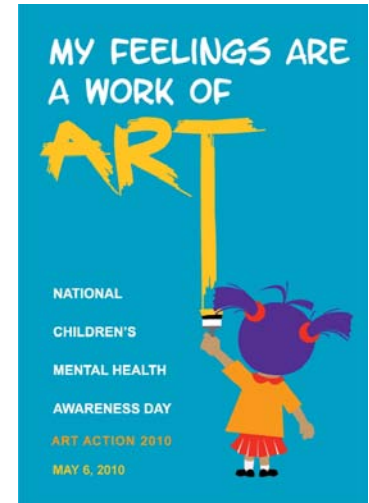
**NATIONAL CHILDREN'S
MENTAL HEALTH
AWARENESS DAY**
MAY 6, 2010



What is the Awareness Day Art Action?

The Awareness Day Art Action is a child-centered activity designed to take place on Thursday, May 6, 2010, in observance of National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day. Using the theme "My Feelings are a Work of Art," communities across the country will lead young children in preschool through 3rd grade in art activities, such as painting or drawing, to initiate conversations between adults and young children about having and expressing feelings.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and its collaborating partner for the Awareness Day Art Action, the American Art Therapy Association (AATA), will provide tip sheets and other materials to assist parents, teachers and caregivers in helping children to create art about feelings and conduct age-appropriate conversations with young children about the nature, range, and expression of feelings using art as a tool for dialog.



Why get involved?

Young children in prekindergarten programs are expelled at more than three times the rates of students in grades k-12, while preschoolers in child care centers are expelled at over 13 times the rate.¹ This data illustrates the need to address young children's social-emotional health. By encouraging children ages 3 to 8 to create artwork that expresses their feelings, the Awareness Day Art Action can help to foster discussion about young children's social-emotional health. Through fun art activities the positive development of young children is promoted, while creating awareness of the many entities working to enrich the total well-being of young children.

On Thursday, May 6, 2010, Awareness Day activities in communities across the country, including the Nation's capital, will be promoting the fact that positive mental health is essential to a child's healthy development. By joining with parents, educators, caregivers, and others across the country to help young people give a voice to their feelings through art and words, Awareness Day Art Action participants help to demonstrate the wide and diverse network of support for children's mental health and provide the young children in their homes, schools, and communities with tools to encourage their social and emotional development.

Where do I start?

Please visit the AATA Web site at <http://www.arttherapy.org/chmad.asp> to register for the Awareness Day Art Action to ensure that you receive the materials, resources, and support necessary to participate in this activity, then start planning your Art Action. Consider partnership development opportunities with

¹ Gilliam, W. (2005). Prekindergartners left behind: Expulsion rates in state prekindergarten systems. Foundation for Child Development, Policy Brief 3. Gilliam, W. S., & Shahar, G. (2006). Prekindergarten expulsion and suspension: Rates and predictors in one state. *Infants and Young Children*, 19, 228-245.



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organizations that serve young children, such as art teachers, day care centers, elementary schools, nursery schools, and local organizations.

If you are a SAMHSA-funded community or an affiliate of an Awareness Day collaborating organization, reach out to the **Caring for Every Child's Mental Health Campaign** Technical Assistance Providers by e-mailing AwarenessDay2010@vancomm.com for ideas on event implementation, partnership, media strategy, and promotional tools, including Art Action icons and other graphics that will help brand and support your community's activity.

Technical assistance is also available from the AATA by contacting Children's Info at info@arttherapy.org.

When can I get more information about the Awareness Day Art Action?

Visit the AATA Web site at <http://www.arttherapy.org/chmad.asp> for information and to register.

The Awareness Day Web page is forthcoming at www.samhsa.gov/children and will provide you with information and tools to facilitate the Art Action in your community.

Prior to the launch of the Web page, please send an e-mail to AwarenessDay2010@vancomm.com for further information and promotional tools.



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Key Activities for “My Feelings Are a Work of Art”

When?	Action
<p>January 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill out the participant form at http://www.americanarttherapyassociation.org/chmadpartform.asp to receive resources, materials, and information to conduct the Art Action, “My Feelings are a Work of Art.” • Discuss the benefits and opportunities for youth and families that you serve by participating in the Awareness Day Art Action. <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a flier or other informational outreach tool about your Art Action event that you can distribute to staff, parents, guardians, caregivers, and potential partners in your community. • Whether you want to research other early childhood providers, preschools, elementary schools, and child care centers who may be interested in partnering with you, or participate in the Art Action alone.
<p>February 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin looking for the Post NOW messages that provide data about the current state of children’s mental health to inform your Art Action and your potential research into local partnerships. • Continue to check the AATA Web site for updates regarding the resources, materials, and information available to conduct “My Feelings Are a Work of Art.”
<p>March 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin planning for the Awareness Day Art Action event that will take place on May 6. This may consist of hosting a meeting within your organization to discuss ideas on how to make the Art Action appropriate for the youth and families that your organization serves. • Continue to check the AATA Web site for updates regarding the resources, materials, and information available to conduct “My Feelings Are a Work of Art.” <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking with staff, parents, guardians, and other caregivers to provide them with information regarding the Art Action, its purpose, and details for the event on May 6. • Having t-shirts printed for youth with the Art Action logo that is provided by



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	<p>the Caring for Every Child’s Mental Health Campaign (the Campaign), or creating your own t-shirts for youth to wear while they create their artwork.</p>
1 Month Before Awareness Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to check the AATA Web site for updates regarding the resources, materials, and information available to conduct “My Feelings are a Work of Art.” <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing your Art Action plan with the community by developing a list of local media outlets and contacts that may be interested in covering your activity. Hosting another informational meeting with staff, parents, guardians, other potential participants, and partners to provide information about Art Action.
2 Weeks Before Awareness Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to check the AATA Web site for updates regarding the resources, materials, and information available to conduct “My Feelings Are a Work of Art.” <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sending reminders to staff, parents, guardians, and other caregivers about the Art Action taking place on May 6 to provide everyone with the final event details. Checking the AATA Web site for media materials to use for your media outreach. Developing and sending press advisories to the media regarding your Art Action event.
1 Week Before Awareness Day	<p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continuing your media outreach regarding your Art Action event. Reminding parents, guardians, and other caregivers that the children and youth will be participating in an art project on May 6 for the Art Action, so they should dress appropriately.
On Awareness Day—May 6, 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host your “My Feelings Are a Work of Art” event. Take pictures of the children and youth creating their artwork to share after the event.
After Awareness Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send pictures of your event and artwork to the Campaign Team at AwarenessDay2010@vancomm.com. <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Posting pictures of your Art Action event and artwork on your organization’s Web site, Facebook, MySpace, or Flickr pages.



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