The Battle Within: Preventing Military Suicides

The Effects of Arts Therapy

Nation Conference of State Legislatures

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Federal Legislative Priorities

In the 116th Congress, Americans for the Arts has expanded its role and taken action on an increased range of issues than in previous years. Federal affairs is truly embracing "Arts and..." by encouraging Congress to consider the vital role of the arts in areas where the arts have formerly not been a focus such as juvenile justice, the economy, transit projects, and military health. Click here to learn the latest status of each bill and to take action by contacting your members of Congress to support these bills.

**Increased Arts & Arts Education Funding**
- Interior Appropriations Bill
  - House Interior appropriations bill includes a $12.5 million increase in funding, to $187.5 million, for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA).

**Increased Arts Health Programs for Veterans, Servicemembers, and Trauma Victims**
- Defense Department Appropriations Bill
  - Bill includes language to increase support for creative arts therapies for treating Defense Department servicemembers with traumatic brain injuries and psychological health conditions.
- Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill
  - Bill includes language that would dedicate $5 million in funding for creative arts therapies in treating veterans with traumatic brain injuries and psychological health conditions through the VA Office of Patient Care and Cultural Transformation through their Whole Health initiative.
- RISE from Trauma Act, H.R. 3770
  - Bipartisan legislation to improve the identification and support of children and families who experience trauma. It includes support for local and state arts agencies and adds a new trauma program grantmaking category to the NEA's authorizing language.

**Support for Arts & Juvenile Justice Programs**
- Justice Department Appropriations Bill
  - Calls on the Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention to include arts-based juvenile justice programs among its strategies.

**Support for the Creative Economy**
- **The CREATE Act**, H.R. 159, S. 650
  - Through minor adjustments to existing federal programs, the legislation takes steps to better invest in our country's workforce and creative industries, while empowering the entrepreneurial spirit of artists and encouraging their role as contributors to the small business community.
Arts Therapy in the VA and DoD

Provides a $6 million increase to Education Department arts education grant program – the largest increase ever!

Defense Department Appropriations Bill
Bill includes language to increase support for creative arts therapies for treating Defense Department servicemembers with traumatic brain injuries and psychological health conditions.

Veterans Affairs Appropriations Bill
Bill includes language that would dedicate $5 million in funding for creative arts therapies in treating veterans with traumatic brain injuries and psychological health conditions through the VA’s Office of Patient Care and Cultural Transformation through their Whole Health initiative.

RISE from Trauma Act, S.1770
Bipartisan legislation to improve the identification and support of children and families who experience trauma. It includes support for local and state arts agencies and adds a new trauma program grantmaking category to the NEA’s authorizing language.
www.ArtsAcrossTheMilitary.org
Military leaders say we need every weapon in our arsenal to meet the many challenges we face today. However, one of the most powerful tools we have...the arts – is often under-utilized and not well understood within the military and the healthcare system.

Arts, Health and Well-Being across the Military Continuum, 2013
The Challenge

- More than 2.5 million U.S. troops deployed since 2001
- Historically unprecedented—extended and multiple deployments, exposure to nontraditional combat and shortened time at home between deployments.
- More than 48,000 US wounded
- More returning home with physical and psychological traumas
- Significant impacts on families and healthcare providers

- 22 million veterans in the US today (1% of US population)
- Veterans report difficulty returning to civilian life—in 2012, 10% of homeless citizens were veterans (HUD)
- Civilians not connected with the military want to help but don’t know how

Collectively, these challenges require more than medical treatment to resolve
Arts in Defense Health

THE NATIONAL INTREPID CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

an instrument of hope, healing, discovery and learning
National Intrepid Center of Excellence: Collaborative, Patient-Centered Evaluation and Assessment

4 weeks of intensive diagnostics and treatment planning
NICoE
Healing Arts Program

- Group Art Therapy Sessions
- Individual Art Therapy Sessions
- Family Art Therapy Sessions
- Spouse Expressive Art Groups
- Expressive Writing Groups
- Creative Writing Workshops
- Music/Music Therapy Sessions

National Endowment for the Arts
arts.gov

AMERICANS for the ARTS

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NICoE Healing Arts Program
Melissa S. Walker, MA, ATR

The Injury

Split Self
Arts in Veterans Health
Changing the Conversation for Veterans Health and Well-being

VA-OPCC Office of Patient Centered Care

THE SAN FRANCISCO VA PSYCHOSOCIAL REHABILITATION AND RECOVERY CENTER

COMMUNITY INTEGRATION THROUGH CREATIVITY
Projects have advanced Veterans’ skills in theater, digital media, music, visual arts and dance with the help of established professional artist/contractors in the community.


Director Max Reynoard and Jonathan Wei, founder of the “The Telling Project” help veterans bring their stories to life for their performance at the Mission Cultural Center Theater.
The Arts & Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) research: evidence based/peer reviewed


- A structured writing program was associated with improved diagnostic status and lower levels of intrusive symptoms, depression and state anxiety, while a trend was noted for the reduction of avoidance symptoms, for patients with PTSD. (Van Emmerik, A. A. P., Kamphuis, J. H., & Emmelkamp, P. M. G. (2008). Treating Acute Stress Disorder and Posttraumatic Stress Disorder with Cognitive Behavioral Therapy or Structured Writing Therapy: A Randomized Controlled Trial. Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics, 77(2), 93–100. http://doi.org/10.1159/000112886)
Beyond healing...
Arts and Veteran-run organizations

Veteran Artist Program

The Telling Project
It’s time to speak. It’s time to listen.
The Arts are the Solution!

www.AmericansfortheArts.org/Research
Discussion & Questions
Thank You!

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