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Implementation Study Finds Common Outcomes in Art in Action Program

Study conducted by Stanford University's John W. Gardner Center

Menlo Park, CA--[Art in Action](#), a nonprofit dedicated to bringing comprehensive visual arts programs to schools everywhere, has released results from an [implementation study](#) conducted by [The John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities at the Stanford School of Education](#). The findings will guide Art in Action in its efforts to sustain and scale its programs in schools nationwide.

Through a series of hundreds of interviews and focus groups and lesson observations with students, teachers, parents and principals, the researchers sought to gain an understanding of the varied ways that the Art in Action program is implemented in schools.

The study found that while there is significant variation in how the program is implemented, there are specific outcomes that are common to all schools: the Art in Action program exposes students and their parents to art in a meaningful way; connects people within the entire school community to one another; and creates physical, temporal and intellectual spaces for art.

"The results of the study are important to us, our funders and other stakeholders as we expand our reach into classrooms across the nation," Executive Director Jeffrey Dollinger said.

"Knowing that the program produces common outcomes will allow Art in Action to develop goals, strategies and activities to help a wide variety of schools build a school-wide visual arts program. Our goal is to help schools embed art deeper into their curriculum and create a true culture of art in their community. "

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Founded in 1982, Art in Action, a 501(c)(3) organization, enriches the lives of kindergarten through 8th grade students each year in schools through an engaging, hands-on [curriculum](#) that teaches 21st century learning skills through art history, appreciation and practice. Art in Action is taught annually to 50,000 students in 1,800 classrooms from 22 states. Find Art in Action on [FaceBook](#) and [Twitter](#).

Selection of Quotes from Study Participants

“The parents are really active and they feel empowered by being in charge of the program...It provides a pathway or parents to get involved in their children’s education.” -- Principal

“Being able to go to a museum with my son and we’ll both see a name that we recognize...We’ll stand there and have a discussion about the piece of art that we studied last year...I now know artists I didn’t know before and just learning the history behind it...I’ve learned lots.” -- Parent

“Most kids have access to pencils and markers, but not chalk pastels, oil pastels, starch, clay, different kinds of paint. There are a lot of kids where this is the only time they get to touch and play with these types of things and know what they do.” -- Teacher

“I think it (Art in Action) gives them (students) confidence too when they’re a little older and go out into the world. They have the right to go to a museum. It’s something they know about, and it’s not something for other people. It’s something for them too.” --Parent

“Art class is the only time you can be creative and use your brain to imagine things.” -- 5th Grade Student

“I feel extremely proud of myself after finishing an art piece, because you never thought of doing that before, and they give you this assignment, but it is not an assignment, it’s more a creative pathway. It’s really fun. When you finish an art piece, you are like, ‘Whoa, I actually did that.’ Or when you finish something that you’re like ‘Meh, I could have done better,’ you know that next time if you want to do something like that you can go, ‘Ok I know that I need to fix that.’” -- 6th Grade Student

“Different ways of looking at art, different ways of looking at things is an incredibly useful life skill. It’s not about art.” -- Parent

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