



Art Therapy Information Overview

Art Therapy is an integrative mental health profession that enriches the lives of individuals, families, and communities through active artmaking, creative process, applied psychological theory, and human experience within a psychotherapeutic relationship.

Art therapy is a mental health profession that uses the art making process to improve the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of individuals of all ages. It is founded in the theory that the art making process is healing, helping the creator resolve internal and external conflicts, develop interpersonal skills, manage behavior, reduce stress, and increase self-esteem and self-awareness.

Art therapists are master-level clinicians who work with people of all ages across a broad spectrum of practice. Guided by ethical standards and scope of practice, their education and supervised training prepares them for culturally proficient work with diverse populations in a variety of settings. Honoring individuals' values and beliefs, they work with people who are challenged with medical and mental health problems, as well as individuals seeking emotional, creative, and spiritual growth.



– [American Art Therapy Association](#) (AATA) ¹

Art Therapy Education and Credentials

Master's Degree

AATA Educational Programs Approval Board or Accreditation Council for Art Therapy Education*

60+ credits
900 hours practicum

In the US, most Art Therapists are licensed as LPCs, LMFTs, LAT or LCAT depending on state regulations.

*certified by Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP)

National Credential Board

[Art Therapy Credentials Board](#) (ATCB) –
Founded in 1993

Registered Art Therapist (ATR)

1,000 direct hours post masters
100 hours supervision

Board Certified (ATR-BC)

Examination & Continuing Education

- There are approximately 7,000 Credentialed Professional Art Therapists practicing in the US. ²
- Art Therapists are trained identically like other therapists in developmental and psychological theory, abnormal psychology, counseling skills for individual and group therapy as well as theories of art, diverse art modalities and the meaning and assessment of images.
- Art Therapy is used with individuals, groups and families. It can be the primary mode of therapy, or an adjunctive one used in coordination with other treatment modalities.
- Art Therapy is used to assess, diagnosis, and treat people of all ages and ethnic groups. It is seen in Hospitals (Psychiatric and Medical), Schools, Juvenile Detention Centers, Safe Houses, Veterans Hospitals and Facilities, Rehabilitation Centers, Family Programs, Prisons, Forensic Institutions, Eating Disorder Centers, Shelters, Community Projects, Geriatric and Senior Facilities, Community Agencies and in Private Practice.



Art Therapy Information Overview

Art Therapy in Colorado

The [Colorado Art Therapy Association](#) (CO-ATA) originated in 1978 and is a non-profit affiliate state chapter of the [American Art Therapy Association](#) (AATA), the US association for the Art Therapy profession established in 1969.

Colorado has 160 Art Therapists in various agencies, organizations and in private practice.²

Naropa University in Boulder has a Nationally Accredited Graduate Art Therapy Program. Naropa University has approximately 45 Art Therapy graduate students studying art therapy.

Populations served include children, adolescents, adults and seniors. Art therapists work in every sector of mental health across Colorado with a diverse range of clients in settings and serve at Psychiatric Units, Medical and Educational facilities as well as Community Mental Health Centers.

- Children's Hospital Colorado
- National Jewish Hospital
- The Eating Disorder Center of Denver
- Mental Health Center of Denver
- The Denver Hospice
- Assisted Living and Senior Centers
- Jefferson Center for Mental Health
- The Mariposa Center Denver
- Colorado Heritage Adoption Camps
- Denver Mental Health Collective
- Marcus Institute – CU Anschutz Campus
- Naropa University
- The Blue Bench
- In Private Practice

