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Another Voice/Mental health

Another Voice: Creative arts therapy must be preserved and supported in New York

Emily Davenport 13 mins ago 0



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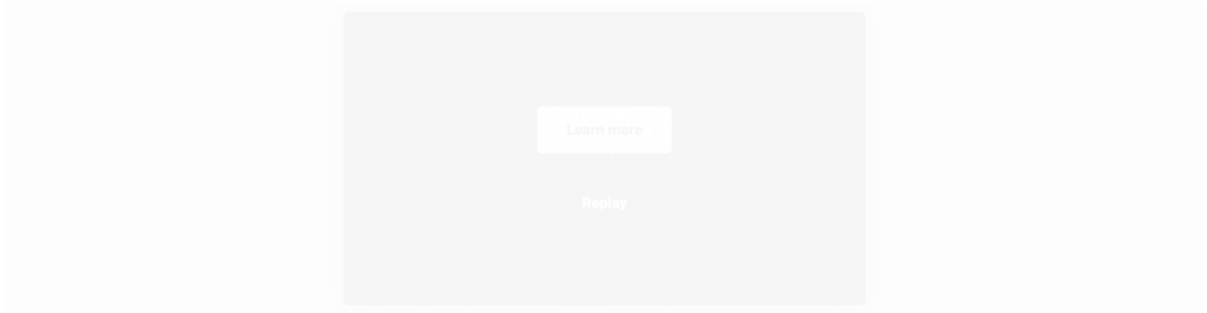
As a mom, and Licensed Creative Arts Therapist, I need Gov. Kathy Hochul's help. Despite the release of Mattel's newest Art Therapy Barbie, Art Therapists like me are being excluded from mental health bills and initiatives.

Creative art therapy is not experimental therapy. As an arts therapist, I am licensed to practice psychotherapy. To qualify for my license, I had to complete a masters degree, and thousands of hours of graduate and postgraduate supervised clinical experience.

Here's what I've learned along the way; clients can never fail, but therapy can. That's why New Yorkers need alternatives. As we all know, conventional "talk" therapy doesn't work for everyone. There's no one-size-fits-all when it comes to treating mental health.

Creative Arts Therapists like me serve children, teens and adults who've found traditional psychotherapy ineffective. These therapies are a lifeline for underserved New Yorkers.

Licensed Creative Arts Therapists offer effective alternatives to traditional psychotherapy rooted in art, dance, drama, music and poetry.



However, we don't just simply draw or play music in therapy sessions. We carefully craft arts-based interventions rooted in a deep understanding of the psychological, emotional, physical, and cognitive healing processes. We pair creative arts interventions with verbal therapies and psychoeducation.

New York's children and families deserve accessible mental health care. As it stands, Creative Arts Therapy is only for the select few who can afford it. Adding Creative Arts Therapists to the Medicaid provider list, and signing the mental health expansion bill currently in committee can fix that.

Not every therapist holds expertise in creative arts therapy. I've witnessed many well-meaning therapists (not trained in creative arts therapy) botch attempts at integrating creative interventions at their clients expense, leaving them re-traumatized. But 2,1000 Licensed Creative Arts Therapists like myself are ready to offer effective arts-based mental health care to New Yorkers.

If New York expands coverage, Licensed Creative Arts Therapists will provide affordable mental health to thousands of New York's children and families.

A JetBlue advertisement for nonstop flights from New York City to San Antonio. The ad features the JetBlue logo, the text "Nonstop flights from New York City to San Antonio", the price "Starting at \$104 one way", a "Book Now" button, and the San Antonio International Airport logo. The copyright notice "© 2024 JetBlue Airways" is visible at the bottom right.

We're not just doodling and dancing around; we're helping New York's children, teens and adults express what words can't quite capture.

Emily Davenport, ATR-BC, LCAT, is founder and clinical director, Davenport Creative Arts Therapy, PLLC.