



THE CLARE ROSE
CENTER *for* CREATIVE
YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

what is **CREATIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT?**

Creative Youth Development (CYD) is **deep arts learning rooted in long-term multi-generational relationships** with artist mentors. CYD **uses the arts as a platform for personal, community, and social change** to create a more just society.

CYD provides safe, relationship-centered **spaces of belonging** where young people build strong peer and adult relationships, engage in artistic skill building and creative practice, and receive a variety of support services and resources both directly during programming hours and expansively through ongoing engagement in the caring community of a CYD organization or program.

CYD is **culturally relevant, responsive to youth's wants and needs, and co-designed with the youth** participants. CYD engages intergenerational partnership and learning so that youth voice is centered in program design and adults are accountable to the young people they serve.

CYD **outcomes are anchored in Positive Youth Development**, not just artistic development. In addition to arts learning, CYD organizations provide young people with **holistic services** such as mental health counseling, academic support, college & career readiness, civic engagement, and workforce development.

CYD is based in the community, primarily happens during after school hours and on weekends, tends to be culturally reflective of the young people involved, and serves them through the age of 24.



what does CYD LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?

(1) Youth are engaged in **Safe and Healthy Spaces**

- Young people reach out to and lean on teaching artist mentors and organizational staff for support around their emotional and general well-being
- Young people empathize with each other around shared experiences, and lift their own and other's spirits through the joy of creating art
- Teaching artists and staff complete professional development in healing-centered or trauma-informed care
- Teaching artists and staff check in with young people and connect them to supports and resources they may need
- Teaching artists and staff work on their own mental and emotional well-being as part of their development as artists and mentors
- Young people feel safe to express their emotions and life experiences through their artwork

(2) Programs focus on **Positive Relationship-Building**

- Youth, staff, and teaching artists listen deeply to one another's stories, build personal connections, and provide feedback on creative works
- Young people develop bonds with each other and mentors that reach beyond a program or creative experience and often last a lifetime
- Teaching artists and staff have one-on-one conversations with young people and take time to build trust before asking them to produce something
- Young people are confident in asking for what they need and sharing honestly about what's going on for them

(3) Programs are **Artistically Rigorous** and **Set High Expectations** of youth participants

- Teaching artists are professional, practicing artists
- Program curriculum teaches young people the skills, craft, and historical and cultural context of specific art forms
- There is explicit attention to and naming of artists' ways of thinking
- Teaching artists engage youth in ongoing, dynamic individual and group reflection on their artistic processes and products - with an emphasis on *how* their work gets made, more so than *what* the end product is
- Young people spend significant time practicing and creating their art
- Young people have opportunities to share their work with public audiences
- Programs provide high-quality equipment, materials, and software for young people to use and learn on

what does CYD LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?

(4) Programs are **Asset-Based** and help youth to build upon their inherent strengths and talents

- Programs center youth's individuality, intersectionality, and diversity as assets that add value to CYD programs and communities
- Youth are encouraged to chart their own path for growth as artists and people, with the support and guidance of adult mentors
- Organizational leaders are flexible, and willing to shift organizational structures to support young people and staff as they respond to emerging opportunities and needs
- Young people feel confident and safe to push staff to adapt their practice to be more relevant, and staff are willing and open to hearing that feedback and making a responsive change
- Teaching artists are adaptable and able to tailor activities to young people's learning needs and styles, and can respond to emergent needs expressed in the moment
- Youth are positioned and amplified to share their expertise with community members

(5) Programs are **Youth-Driven** and honor student voice

- Youth voice is centered in program design, ensuring that CYD is not created or taught by adults for or to young people, but is instead responsive to what youth want and need
- Programs use check-in questions, shared rituals, and common practices that invite young people to share what they are bringing into the space on any given day
- Young people and teaching artists talk openly and vulnerably about what's happening in the world and how it's affecting them
- Young people are encouraged and empowered to create artwork that articulates what the world authentically looks and feels like to them, as well as create a vision for what they dream is possible
- Teaching artists approach mentorship as an exchange, and are continually learning from young people

(6) Program approaches and outcomes are **Holistic**, recognizing a range of youth needs and often integrating with other service providers to create a coordinated community response to those needs

- Mental health professionals are employed on-site to provide support and care that youth are more likely to access within the trusted CYD community, where mental health needs are destigmatized
- Formalized academic support, like tutoring and guidance in applying for and transitioning to college is provided by CYD organizations
- Workforce development opportunities are available at CYD organizations, such as paid youth leadership roles in different areas of the organization, including opportunities in teaching artistry, communications, marketing, operations and admin, and more
- Career pathways and connections are made by CYD organizations and community partners to create opportunities for young people entering the workforce

how does CYD MEASURE IMPACT?

Creative Youth Development impact is measured through:

- Young people's artistic growth and achievement
- Young people's sense of identity, belief in the future, self-regulation, and self-efficacy
- Young people's social, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral competence

Artistic growth and achievement can be demonstrated through **culminating events, capstone projects, performances, gallery exhibitions, portfolio presentations**, and other experiences that make space for young people to share their work with community audiences and make their creative learning and artistic development visible.

Positive youth development outcomes like sense of identity, social emotional learning, belief in the future, and self-efficacy can be measured both formally and informally through **surveys, interviews, program participant feedback, conversations**, and other forms of communication. Many CYD organizations in San Diego use the PEAR Holistic Student Assessment.

While CYD is rooted in the arts and creative practice, its **outcomes and impact are far deeper than technical achievement in a given arts or creative discipline.**

Creative Youth Development taps into the "spark" that the arts provide to young people, and serve as a vehicle for their whole-person development. When youth are engaged with their "spark," and have adults who support them, they often do better in school, develop important life skills, and feel more positive about the future.

CYD's impact is focused on ensuring that young people have the skills, tools, resiliencies, and relationships they need to thrive.



References:

Creative Youth Development National Action Blueprint, authored by Denise Montgomery
Ten Dimensions of Powerful Arts Education Practice, authored by Lauren Stevenson & Sarah Crowell
Research about Developmental Relationships and Sparks, by The Search Institute
Positive Youth Development frameworks from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control
Creative Youth Development definitions and approaches from The Clare Rose Center for CYD