



Intergenerational Poverty and Art Therapy

Student #2

ART 455: Art Therapy Senior Seminar

December 1, 2022

Converse University

The background features a large, light beige circle with a white border, centered on a white background. Inside this circle, there are several more concentric circles in shades of beige and white, creating a layered effect.

Research Question:

Is art therapy an intervention to evolve social development skills for youth living in an intergenerational poverty cycle?

Risk Factors

Intergenerational
Poverty

Alcoholism

Addiction

At-Risk Youth

Environment

Populations

- Youth at risk
- Inner City Children and Neighborhoods
- People with Addiction(s)



Figure 2

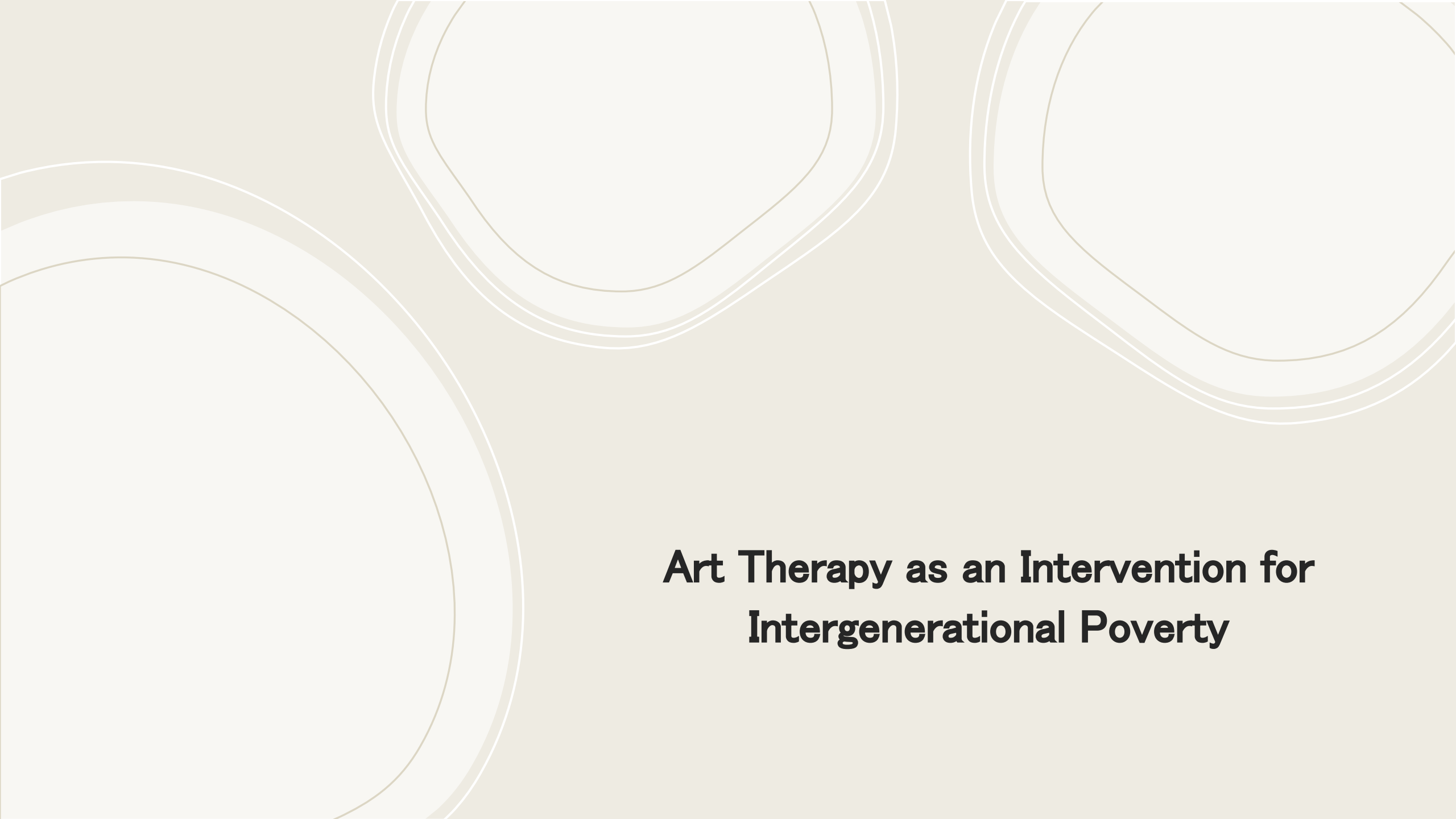
Statistics

- Heise (2011), “ 39% of the 3.5 million Americans who are homeless are children” (p. 325).
- Leung (2018), “approximately 8.3 million children under 18 years of age lived with at least one parent who abused illicit drugs or alcohol during the past 1 year” (p. 1344).
- Tilahaun (2021), “In 2018, the U.S. The Census Bureau estimated the official poverty rate at 11.8% and among children that rate was estimated to be 16.2% (United States Census Bureau, 2019b).”

- Tilahun (2021) “50% of Americans will have experienced a year in poverty by age 65” (p.209).
- Owens (2017) “72% of Black children, compared to only 40% of White children, who grew up in the poorest quarter of neighborhoods remain in these types of neighborhoods as adults” (p. 401).



Figure 3



**Art Therapy as an Intervention for
Intergenerational Poverty**

Open Studio Process

Dr. Pat Allen PhD, ATR



Figure 4

What is an Open Studio Process ?

- Wallace-DiGarbo (2006) “The process focused on the empowerment of youth participants as active agents of art-making and community-building” (p. 120).
- Block (2005) “Art therapy in a social action context combines art and therapy with a commitment to social responsibility” (p. 37).
- “Participants are safe to explore and reveal truths in their own time and in their unique way. Adolescents have a desire to let the world know how screwed up they find it”(p. 37).



- “It is a space where it is okay to get paint on the walls and floor. It is a safe, open place to be creative (Figure 1)” (p. 33).
- “Our strategy is to expose at-risk youth to an artistic process that can serve both as an outlet for feelings (positive and negative) and as a means for self-expression” (p. 33).
- Goldner (2018) “Art therapy has drawn attention to the role of creativity and self-expression in fostering age-related adolescent developmental achievements” (p. 26).

Art Therapy Connection

- Judy Sutherland (2010)“Art Therapy Connection (ATC) was co-founded by the first author as a nonprofit organization that was created to meet the mental health needs of these students and to encourage them to stay in school” (p.69).



- An art directive approach in the ATC program is, “students are encouraged to express their emotions on a wall covered in paper in each of the art therapy rooms” (p. 71).
- These walls being covered in work the students have a safe space to show what has been troubling them in their current situations (Sutherland, 2010).
- When creating these walls students “are required to follow four basic rules when drawing on the wall, especially because the wall is not entirely private” (p. 71).



Figure 7

- The rules are “(a) do not sign your name on or write anyone else’s name, (b) no swear or cuss words, (c) be respectful of other students work, and (d) no gang signs or symbols” (p. 71).
- Having the wall for the youth, ATC therapist believe it was a great way for students to “minimize and even prevent troublesome behaviors” which they participated in before the program (Sutherland, 2010).

- Another art directive approach which encourages students socially is “Draw a Road” Draw a Road is where students are to complete a drawing of a road which can best represent oneself “if you were that road”.
- After completing the drawing of the road youth participated in discussions with a reflection (Sutherland, 2010).

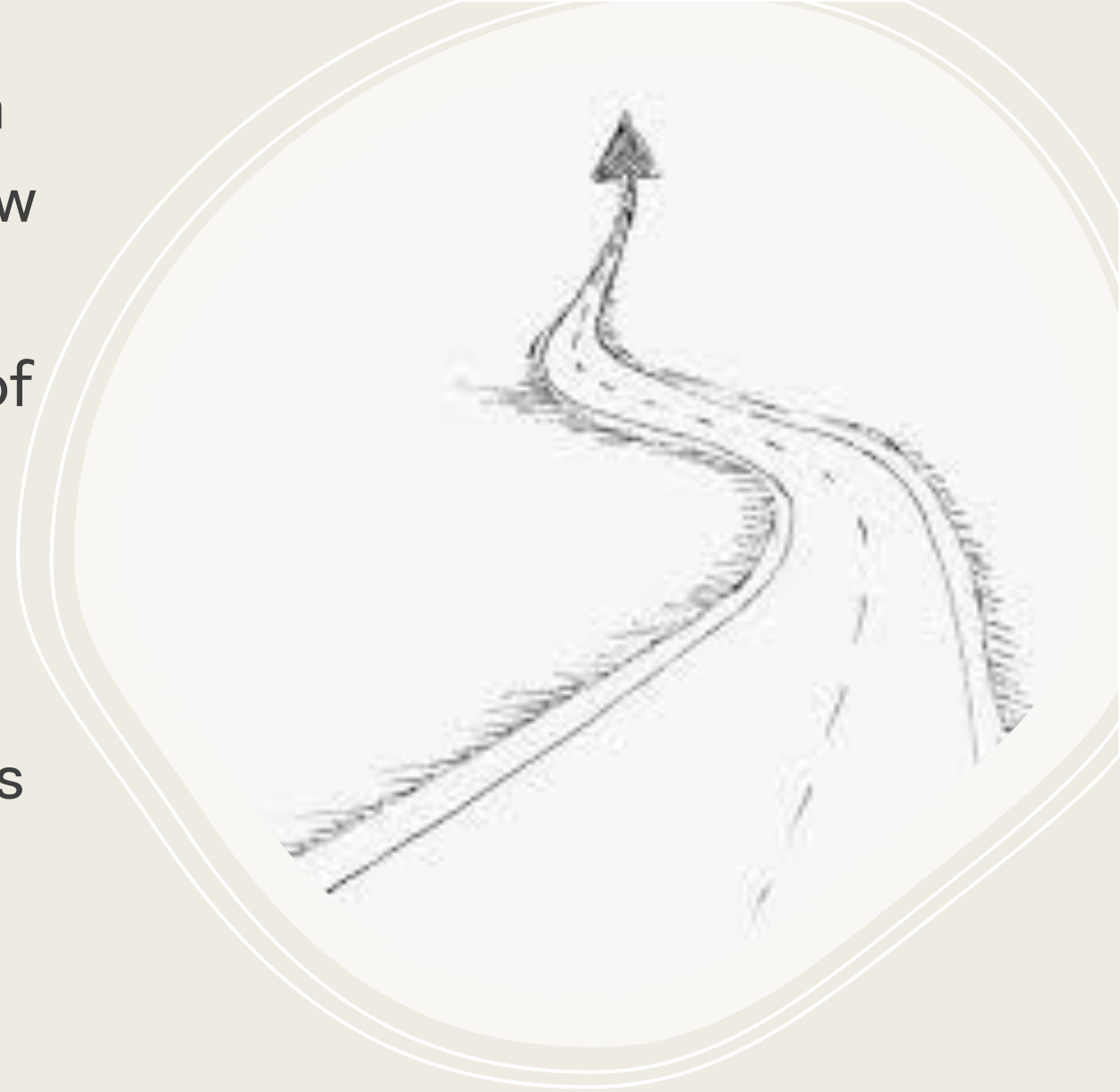


Figure 8

- These questions were “where is this road coming from?”, “where is this road going?”, “how will you get there?”, “who is going with you?”, “how long will it take”, and “what will you find when you get there” (p. 72).
- Having participated in this experiential, the youth are able to understand their own self-worth, community engage with one another, understand the metaphorical outlook on their drawings, and provide “social skills” for themselves which will help them develop to look toward the future (Sutherland, 2010).

Open Studio Project Inc.

- “In 1991, the Open Studio Project (OSP) began with the intention to make art and to be of service. Three Chicago-area art therapists, all of whom were also exhibiting artists, created the OSP”
- “Our strategy is to expose at-risk youth to an artistic process that can serve both as an outlet for feelings (positive and negative) and as a means for self-expression”



Open Studio Project Inc.

- “Once a week for 9 to 12 weeks, the selected youth are given the chance to express themselves in an atmosphere free of criticism or comment, thus freeing each of them to use the materials to develop their own images and insights.”



Intervention Methods

Figure 10

- Heise (2011) “Art can help young people make sense of their experiences and be an effective form of communication” (p.324)
- “These social and cultural practices often are the focus of community-based programs, with attention to the relationship between art and daily life”(p.326)
- Lindo (2020) “The focus is not an evaluation of the artistic product, but rather, an emphasis on the therapeutic process, meaning-making, and self-expression of the client” (p.367)

- Losinksi (2016) “About using the visual arts in counseling with at-risk youth to increase resilience, improve school engagement, and reduce dropout rates” (p.27).
- “This art-in therapy approach has been advocated for use with children and adolescents because it is believed to allow them to explore certain thoughts and feelings without consequences (Rubin,1984)”(p.28).

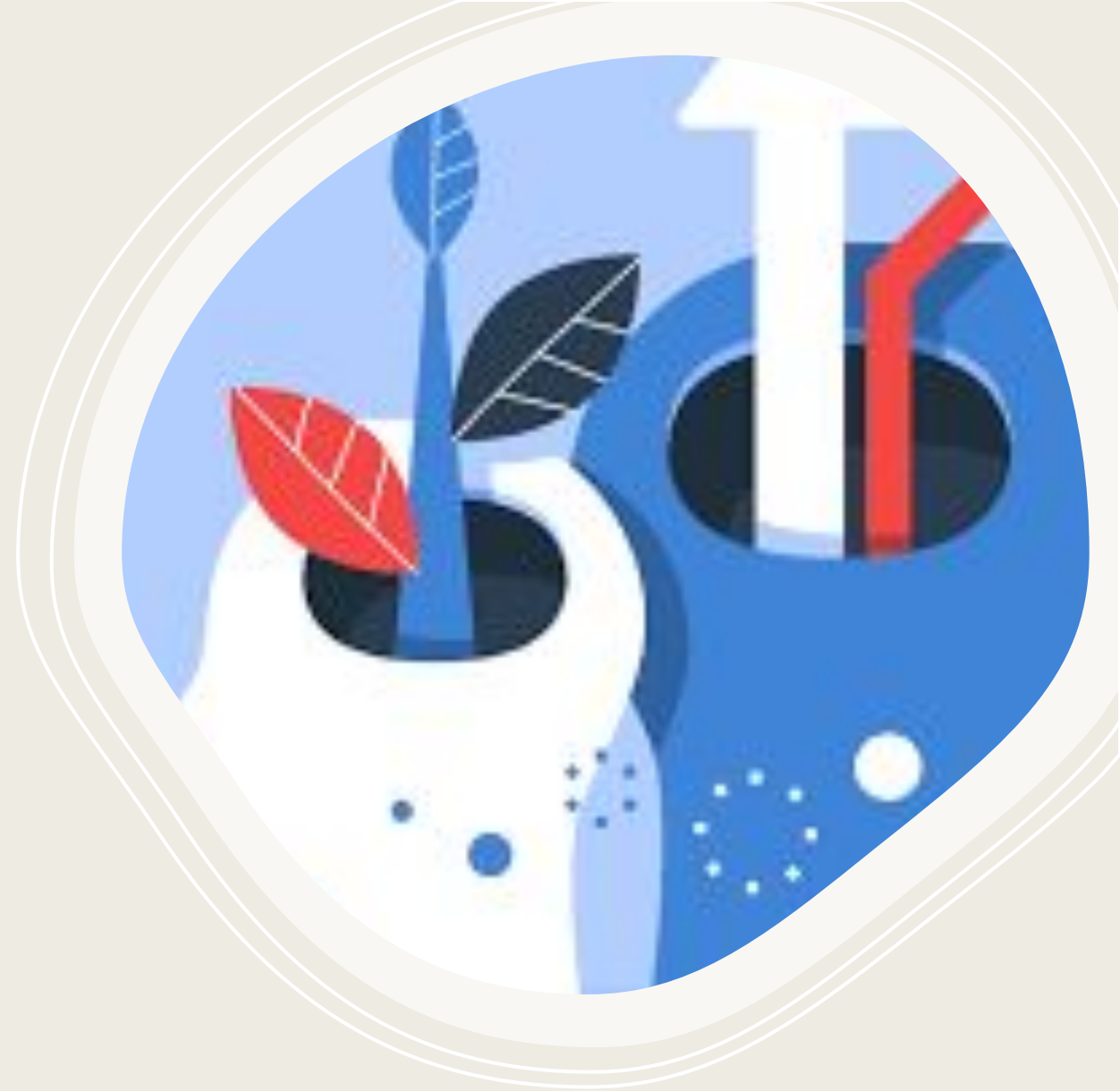


Figure 11

Social Development Skills



Figure 12

- Leung (2018) “[children] develop self-regulatory skills, become more aware of their emotions, and learn to express their emotions in healthy ways” (p.1345)
- Smith (2013) “Improving school readiness skills would be one way to decrease the academic achievement gap. Narrowing the academic achievement gap, in turn, would eventually equalize employment opportunities and promote upward social mobility for low-income families” (p.66)
- Skattebol (2019) “Out-of-school activities provide young people with opportunities to mix with others who may have different horizons and system knowledge” (p.77)

Why topic was Chosen/Career Goals

- Want to go to grad school to get my Masters in Social Work, with a concentration of studying about children and families below the poverty line.
- One day I hope to open my own non profit organization which specifically helps children end the intergenerational poverty cycle.
- The organization will have art therapy groups for children and other community building enhancement programs.



Capstone Image



Pieces of Glass and Hope

”This piece is a sculptural piece which embodies the effects of alcoholism from an intergenerational poverty cycle. Intergenerational poverty is a cycle which remains consistent throughout one’s life. Addictions such as alcoholism, as well as drugs can affect the way anyone lives their life, but especially for those suffering from intergenerational poverty. This sculpture embodies a tree which symbolizes the effects of alcoholism, and how it breaks the family tree within the intergenerational poverty cycle.

Pieces of metal were welded together to create the base of the sculpture, while cheap bottles of liquor which embody the type of alcohol one may buy in a lower socio-economic status were implemented as the leaves of a tree. Having the bottles as a leaf of the tree and glass and other liquids pouring along the base gives off the impression and illusion of the traumatic effects of alcoholism within the intergenerational poverty cycle”.

**Work in
Progress**







Questions?

Thank you!

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Image References

Figure 1: <https://fineartshippers.com/affordable-art-supplies-at-davinci-artist-supply/>

Figure 2: <https://www.istockphoto.com/vector/crowd-of-people-seamless-pattern-gm1301077856-393218290>

Figure 3: <https://nieer.org/2014/04/03/children-and-poverty-the-role-of-preschool>

Figure 4: <https://www.openstudioproject.org/programs/for-children/>

Figure 5: <https://www.healing-power-of-art.org/open-studio-form-group-art-therapy/>

Figure 6: <https://www.guidestar.org/profile/47-0909636>

Figure 7: <https://primamateriainstitute.com/2017/05/22/art-supplies>

Figure 8: <https://www.pngitem.com/middle/TwxiRRJ-road-drawing-png-transparent-png/>

Figure 9: <https://www.openstudioproject.org>

Figure 10: <https://westvalleycounseling.org/blog/art-therapy-with-children-and-teens/>

Figure 11: <https://healthyhispanicliving.com/lifestyle/self-advocacy/20-self-improvement-tips-that-will-change-your-life/>

Figure 12: <https://www.unmgcy.org/youth-entity-platforms>