



Creative Wellbeing Data Dashboard

Youth (August 2026)

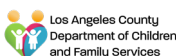
Photo Credit: A student shares ceramic versions of favorite family foods created during a grief and loss workshop. Photo courtesy of Center for Empowerment of Families.

LA County
ARTS & CULTURE

LOS ANGELES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
hope, recovery, wellbeing.



ARTS HEALING JUSTICE NETWORK



LA COUNTY
artsed COLLECTIVE



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
JUSTICE CARE OPPORTUNITIES
DEPARTMENT

Creative Wellbeing is a strategic collaboration between the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture, Office of Child, Youth, and Family Wellbeing, Department of Mental Health, Department of Children and Family Services, and the Arts for Healing and Justice Network as part of the LA County Arts Education Collective to advance the goals of Arts for All Children, Youth, & Families: Los Angeles County's New Regional Blueprint for Arts Education.

Creative Wellbeing is supported by LA County Justice Care and Opportunities Department and the LA County Department of Mental Health. This project is funded in part by L.A. Care Health Plan and will benefit residents of L.A. County that were directly affected by the 2025 Los Angeles County Wildfires.

Creative Wellbeing is an approach for nurturing communities of wellness, especially for systems-impacted youth, those at-risk of becoming systems-impacted, and the adults who support them. The model offers culturally responsive, healing-centered strategies to promote positive cognitive, social, and emotional development and to increase mental health protective factors like emotional coping skills, social connectedness, and community supports. During the 2025-26 fiscal year, a variety of in-person arts instruction was implemented across school sites, residential care centers, and age levels. All programming is centered on utilizing the arts as a vehicle to implement healing-informed strategies that promote resiliency and positive social-emotional development.

July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

1,659
sessions

14,358
youth served

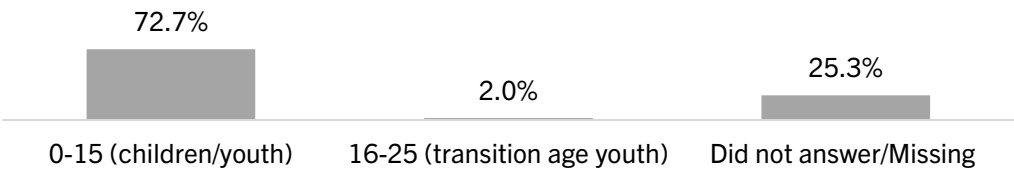
**Counts are likely duplicated as youth could participate in multiple activities.*

In total, 1,659 sessions were hosted with youth and 14,358 youth received services through Creative Wellbeing art activities, workshops, and presentations embedded into partners’ special events. A survey was distributed to young people receiving direct services and at some special events to explore their experiences and preliminary impacts of Creative Wellbeing. A total of 198 youth completed the survey during the 2025-26 fiscal year. The results of this survey are summarized in the pages that follow.

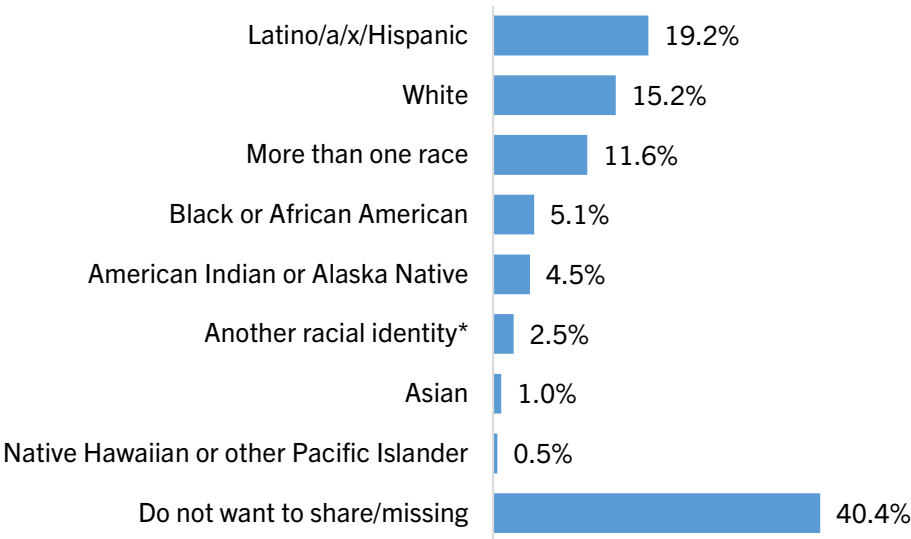
Demographic Data

Age Group

On average, youth respondents were 11 years old with a range of 7 years old to 18 years old.

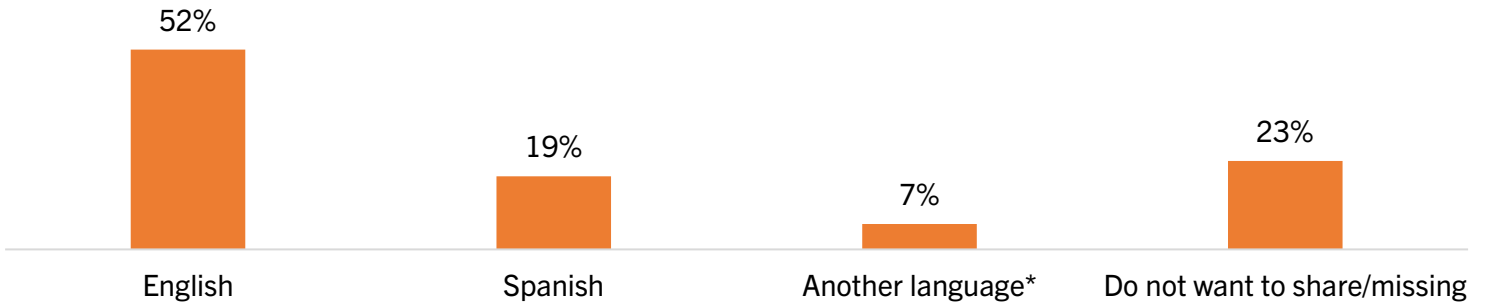


How would you describe your race/ethnicity?



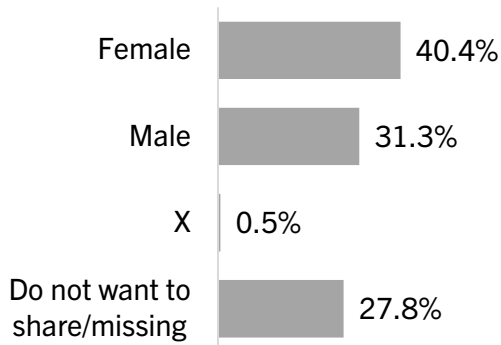
*Other racial identities included: American (n=1) and not specified (n=3).

What language do you most often speak at home?

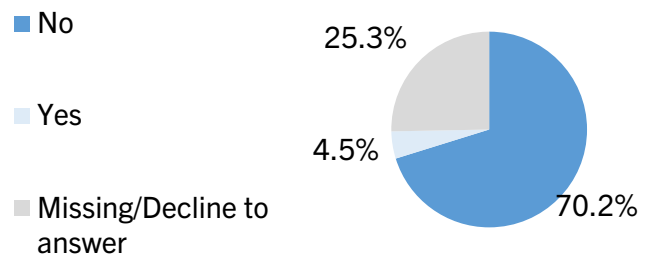


*Another language included: Armenian (n=6), Vietnamese (n=2), Chinese (n=1), Hindi (n=1), Tagalog (n=1), and not specified (n=2).

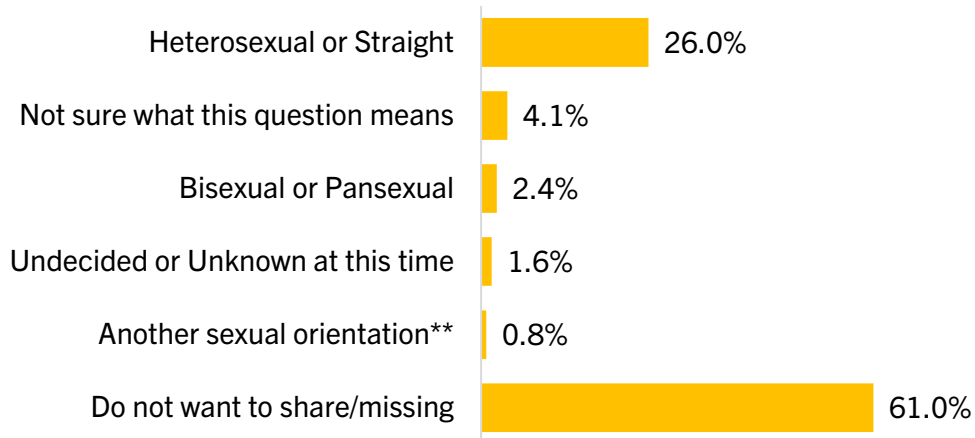
What sex were you assigned at birth?



Do you identify as a person with a disability?



What is your sexual orientation?*



*Question was not asked to youth who were 12 years old or younger.

**Another sexual orientation included: not specified (n=1).

“

I loved it because they were very nice and did not rush me or anyone”

—Youth Program Participant

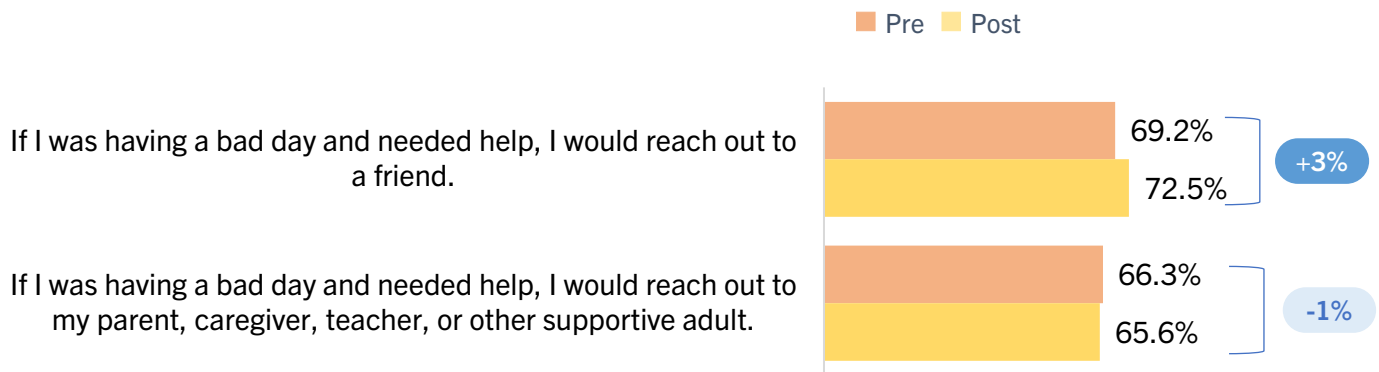
“

I feel more calm doing the art program.”

—Youth Program Participant

Outcome Data

Mental Health Stigma Reduction and Increased Ability to Ask for Help/Support

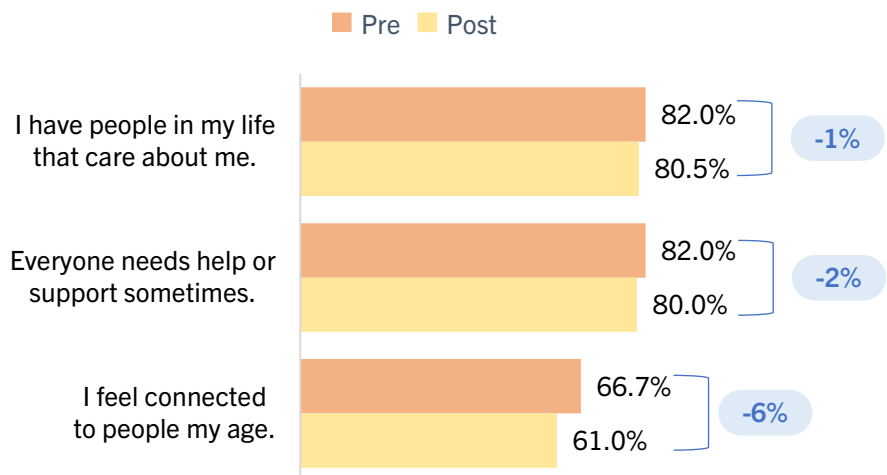


Increased Protective Factor: Social Support

“

I had a very fun time in this class and learning new skills in art.”

—Youth Program Participant

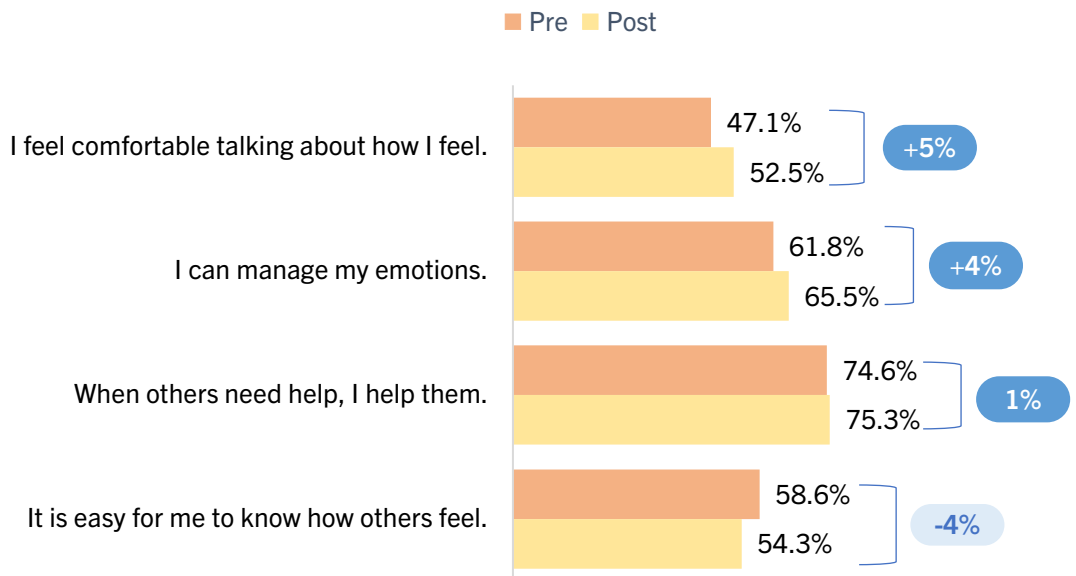


Increased Protective Factor: Social-Emotional Competence of Children

“

I really like doing art because it is really relaxing to me.”

—Youth Program Participant



What We Are Learning. Youth reported improvements across many outcomes after participating in a Creative Wellbeing activity. The greatest gains were in social-emotional competence, with more youth agreeing that they understand how others feel and are able to manage their emotions following participation. Youth also reported an increased willingness to reach out to a friend during difficult times. Not all outcomes improved, however. Youth's reported connection to a trusted adult remained unchanged at 66%, suggesting that participation did not strengthen relationships with adult figures. Additionally, several measures of social support declined slightly after participation, including feeling connected to peers, having people in their lives who care about them, and believing that everyone needs help or support at times. These findings may warrant additional exploration to better understand the factors influencing these responses. Open-ended feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Many youth described the program as fun and engaging and highlighted the opportunity to express themselves creatively. Participants specifically mentioned enjoying activities such as dancing, working with clay, and designing hats and T-shirts. Overall, the findings suggest that Creative Wellbeing is contributing to reduced mental health stigma and strengthening several key protective factors for youth, particularly in the areas of emotional awareness, emotion regulation, and peer support.

How We Are Improving: In the latter half of the FY 2025-26, the evaluation team made updates to the survey. One of the updates included reducing the response scale from a five-point Likert scale (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree) to a three-point scale with the options of “No,” “Unsure” and “Yes.” Simplifying the scale reduces cognitive load by making it easier for participants to confidently select an option rather than distinguishing between subtle differences such as “Agree” versus “Strongly Agree.” It also improves readability, particularly for participants completing the survey on a mobile device. The other update was removing the gift card incentive and encouraging staff to provide a small gift, such as stickers, pencils/pens, notebooks, art supplies, or fidget supplies, to thank youth for completing the survey. Additionally, most demographic items had a large percentage of youth who declined to answer or left these questions blank. Non-response rates on surveys with youth can occur for a variety of reasons including questions feeling intrusive, having limited time to complete the demographic questions, lacking interest in the topic, or experiencing survey fatigue. To mitigate these challenges, demographic questions are located at the end of the survey to help avoid stereotype threat and all demographic questions are optional. Lastly, the survey was designed for participants aged eight and older, making it inaccessible to younger participants, some of whom were as young as six years old. On average, youth who completed the survey were 11 years old and 9% of youth who completed the survey were younger than eight years old. In the future, implementing an alternative method to gather feedback from youth under eight years old, such as an interactive focus group, could be a more appropriate method to gather input.