



Art 180

Backgrounder

The creative nature of children is discouraged and misguided in the certain communities and at

Art 180 we strive to change that.

Last Revised 04/23/2018

Background

At Art 180 we target a popular demographic of children amongst the nonprofits in Richmond, but our incorporation of art differentiates us from the rest. We cater to the needs of youth subjected to low-income, single-parent households, poor academic performance, intellectual or physical disability, LGBTQ identity, and foster care. The neighborhoods of inner-Richmond city children are surrounded by creative beings and canvased buildings, but their unfavorable living conditions distract their abilities to see inspiration and express themselves. Out-numbered by environmental disadvantages, children rely on us for temporary removal from their challenging circumstances. We facilitate 12-week long programs that aim to enhance participants self-love through art construction. The resulting art work is added to the public showcase at the end of each series. A rotation of activities, programs, and partnerships provide Art 180 with access to new and returning participants.

Current Situation

Our focus is to change the environment and its influences on the youth. Children in these communities are at risk of that misguidance and underrepresentation of the juvenile incarceration system. Our Youth Self-Advocacy Through Art program gives incarcerated children a voice by promoting leadership and advocacy skills to produce constructive conversational content.



Virginia had the highest average juvenile law enforcement referrals in the country in 2015 (Pauly).

- **There are 1,563 juveniles incarcerated in Virginia (188 per 100k, higher than national average) (Hall).**

Event coordinator Gina Lyles spoke to ABC 8 News on her thoughts about the issue of mass incarceration of youth. “A lot of that money could be invested into making sure these youths have mentors, peer mentors, more community centers, rebuilding our community centers, putting that money into more programs in schools,” (Cole).

- **It costs over \$171,000 to incarcerate one child per year versus the \$14,000 spent to educate one child at Richmond Public Schools (Hall).**

The plan is for recently closed juvenile centers to be transformed to rehabilitation centers for the betterment of youth rather than punishment. Furthering these efforts, Director of Virginia’s Department of Juvenile Justice “aims to decrease the number of total youth beds by 70%,”

(Pauly). Art 180 is working in partnership with The Six Points Innovation Center in Highland Park, administering an after-school program for teens to pursue their expressive self-discovery as opposed to the alternative of engaging in their risky community.

- **Black to white juvenile population ratio is 5:1 (506 to 93).**



Future Implications

Juveniles were granted the opportunity to use virtual reality projects to tell their stories for our “My Reality” exhibit. We also plan to use direct recordings of the inmates to present real issues to Virginia lawmakers. We are hosting The Really BIG Show on April 28, 2018 in celebration of the art work created at the various sites by their programs participants. This grand showcase will be held at The Science Museum of Virginia and will be open to the public. Community partners and young people that created the content of the show will be gathered together in honor of their accomplishments. There has been no discussion of inmate’s allowance to attend the event.

About Us

Summer 1998 we began serving as an outlet for the creative minds of at risk children. We believe that our work with young people will turn lives and communities around 180 degrees. The programs and activities offered inflict change on its participants outlooks on life and their future.

Links and References

114 West Marshall Street, Richmond, Virginia 23220

804-233-4180

<https://www.art180.org/about-us/faq>

<http://www.storefrontrichmond.org/6pic/>

Sources

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Retrieved February 12, 2018, from <http://ideastations.org/radio/news/state-grapples-juvenile-justice-student-discipline>

Cole, C. (2017, January 04). Art 180 pushes lawmakers to fund restorative justice programs instead of youth prisons. Retrieved February 12, 2018, from <http://wric.com/2017/01/04/art-180-pushes-lawmakers-to-fund-restorative-justice-programs-instead-of-youth-prisons/>

Hall, M., Malik Hall Arguably the laziest person on Earth. Top posts by Malik Hall 1 Virginia State Crime Commission Discusses Marijuana Decriminalization, Takes Public Comment 2 Ohbliv Stays Prolific with New Alter Ego DarkTwaine 3 Opinion: Time to Legalize Medical Marijuana to Help Virginia's Chronically Ill 4 Catching up with Richmond rapper Peter \$un on

his latest album, his move to LA, & future projects 5 EDM artist Buku leaves Richmond fans in a trance after Broadberry show, Honosky, S., M, O., Griffith, A., Goetzinger, A., & Donegan, J. (2017, October 09). ART 180 Gives Public a Glimpse Inside the Lives of Incarcerated Youth with Virtual Reality Exhibit. Retrieved February 12, 2018, from <https://rvamag.com/art/art-180-gives-the-public-a-glimpse-inside-the-lives-of-incarcerated-youth-with-virtual-reality-exhibit.html>

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