

# the Resilient Palette

BARNSTONE ART FOR KIDS E-NEWS

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## Barnstone Art For Kids

Sean Halloran

*Executive Director*

Lisa Katarynick

*Director of Programming*

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## Executive Director

Sean Halloran



Dear friends,

Spring has definitely sprung here at Barnstone, and our kids continue to “bloom” each week in our programs! As we have rounded the corner from the cold Winter, we can feel the excitement of extended sunlight, Spring school holidays, and lots of creative energy. Our brains are wired to respond and change with our environments. The changing seasons certainly have an impact on our brains, and it reminds me of some of the other positive things we do for our kids and their developing brains. As many of you know, our programs help build the skills of resilience for children who have experienced adversity in their young lives. We do this by providing positive, compensatory experiences that have a direct impact on our neurochemistry, and the impact from past trauma. Research has shown that having a mentor outside of the home, feeling a sense of belonging within a social group, and experiencing enjoyment from participation in community activities all have a positive impact. Our trauma-informed art programs also offer countless opportunities for success within the projects, provide visible evidence of achievement and improvement, and allow children to discuss their feelings in a safe and meaningful way. Barnstone Art for Kids is a wonderful and fertile ground for our blossoming kiddos, and our staff and volunteers are ready and able to provide the nurturance they need. As we step outside to tend to flower beds and gardens, and watch as the world bursts into color, let’s reflect on how our community tends to its most fragile members, and work together to protect and nurture them so they may grow up strong and healthy.

Yours in service,

*Sean*



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# Untangling Mental Health Diagnoses

By Corinne Yost, MSW candidate

Frequently, children diagnosed with ADHD (Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and ODD (Oppositional Defiant Disorder) are misdiagnosed based on perceived and misattributed behaviors that may result from traumatic stress. It is possible that a child can have either of these conduct disorders without a history of trauma. However, symptoms and behaviors associated with trauma and these conduct disorders often overlap, requiring a more thorough and dynamic assessment from a trained professional.

If a child has experienced chronic or repeated trauma, their nervous system adapts to stay in a protective survival-mode. The behaviors that result from this conditioned response can appear very much like ADHD and ODD. A child who is easily distracted or forgetful, could also be perceived as hypervigilance or being “on the lookout.” If they seem to be daydreaming or defiantly not listening, this may be the brain not internalizing stressors or trauma reminders. If a child exhibits impulsivity, this could be a subconscious quick getaway from a trigger. Lastly, if a young person is having “meltdowns” or is irritable, this could be a few things: consciously or subconsciously believing that everyone is out to get them, not having an opportunity to develop enough self-regulation skills, and the part of their brain that is responsible for thinking through problems will “turn off” when they start to feel upset.

Sometimes, children diagnosed with ADHD and ODD are thought of as “bad kids” because of their “bad behavior.” It is better to approach children with curiosity and try to notice patterns in when and why some of these conduct issues come up. Children also deserve unconditional support and kindness even when consequences are being delivered. When we keep in mind that many children experience adversity and it can impact their lives in different ways, we can better help them develop resilience, self-regulation, and better futures.

[www.claritycgc.org/when-traumatic-stress-looks-like-adhd-or-odd-digging-for-the-root-of-behavior/](http://www.claritycgc.org/when-traumatic-stress-looks-like-adhd-or-odd-digging-for-the-root-of-behavior/)



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*May is mental health and trauma awareness month*

Check our social media every Monday for our Mental Health Monday post!



**United Way**



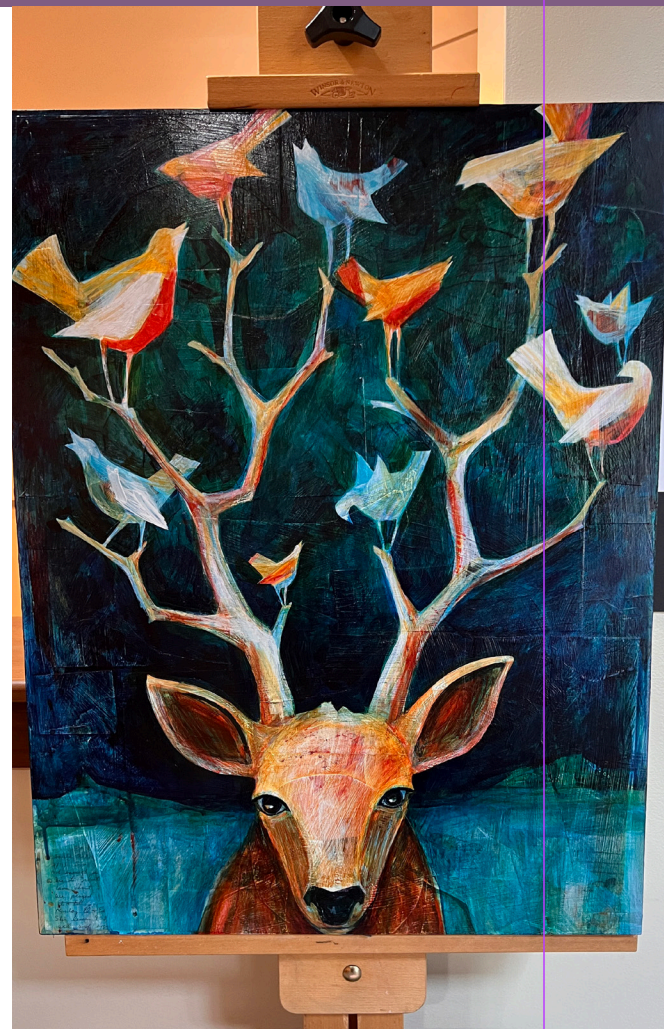
Does your employer host a United Way campaign? Are you moved by the work you see at Barnstone Art for Kids? Please consider participating in United Way’s Donor Choice program, and you can use our agency code: **55228**. Thank you for your consideration and support!



# Fundraising Highlights

## Barnstone LIVE! Art Spectacular 2023

Barnstone Live! Art Spectacular was another huge success! Our volunteers, artists, and donors came together after months of planning and lifted us above our fundraising goal! With nearly 30 artists making in-person works, and over 50 art donations from artists in our online auction, we couldn't lose! We are especially grateful to our Event Level Sponsor, artist [Merrill Weber](#), for her amazing support, and to our amazing artist and friend [Lisa Muller](#), whose original painting "Balance" was a huge hit for our raffle! Thanks to the whole community for valuing and supporting our work here at Barnstone Art for Kids!!





# Program Update

Barnstone Art for Kids is all a buzz this spring with new classes and community collaborations. In May the barn and playhouse will join creative forces in a collaboration with Charlestown Playhouse in Phoenixville. Over six weeks children of the playhouse who are starting kindergarten in the fall will explore their feelings and social and communication skills in an engaging creative way. Miss Lisa cannot wait to add colorful art with these little artists to their creative play spaces!

Barnstone Art for Kids is looking forward to kicking off our spring blocks of Power of Art and Emerging Voices! Kids are always eager to "get back at it" after spring break! It's always bittersweet starting the spring block knowing two of our classes will be graduating from the Barnstone Art For Kids programs. It leaves us and our mentors grateful for the times spent with the children and each other but also has us wondering...

Will the kids take what they have learned in class with them on their resilience journey? Do they have a better understanding on how to regulate their sometimes multiple feelings and make safe choices for themselves? Have they showed improvement since they started the program?

How do we know our efforts are working? Barnstone Art for Kids evaluates participants multiple times a year; using both mentor evaluations and parent surveys. Progress is evaluated on communication skills, social skills, problem solving, creativity and proficiency. Our results indicate that our families LOVE our programs, and our kids make improvements toward learning the skills of resilience.

After kids graduate they are invited to visit the barn once a month in our Beyond the Power and Teen Open Studio classes, This time gives the kids a chance to continue their art journey while reconnecting with their friends and mentors at the barn.

It's going to be a busy summer! Applications for summer workshops posted a few weeks ago and the classes filled up in two days! This summer kids ages 6-8 will enjoy "It's all About The Process!" based on the concept of process art. Process art is all about the experience children have while they are participating in art making. 9-11 year olds will challenge their creativity in "The Art of Recycle." Recycled art is an unusual but very creative art form that uses existing materials and recycles them to create works of art. Teens will explore where they are in their creative journey based on the concepts of mindfulness, experimentation, reflection, and personal growth. Here's to a fun, creative summer with these kids!



## What is Your Barnstone Story?

There are so many wonderful stories from all of our Barnstone friends! Whether you are a Mentor, a Parent, or a Volunteer who has been moved by your experience with Barnstone, we would love to hear your Barnstone Story! Was it a new friend that was made, a cool project that's still on the wall, or the happiness you saw in a child?

Please email ([info@barnstoneartforkids.org](mailto:info@barnstoneartforkids.org)) us your story (even a paragraph or two!) and we hope to share the good vibes with others! Thank you!

## Calendar

April - May 2023

### APRIL 16 – MAY 14

The Healthy Kids Running Series  
Charlestown Twp Park  
4:30 PM - 5:30 PM

### MAY 11

Effective Communication and Handling Parent & Child Anxiety  
So Much To Give Inclusive Cafe, Cedars PA  
6:00-7:30 AM

### MAY 17 – MAY 20

Dogwood Festival  
Reeve's Park-Phoenixville, PA  
Parade May 20, 1:00 PM

### JUNE 10

PAPA's Summer Basketball League Opening Day  
Games, food trucks, vendors and activities.  
Phoenixville Recreation Ctr.  
10:00 AM

### JUNE 20-AUGUST 2

Barnstone Art For Kids Summer Classes  
The Barn  
Phoenixville, AP

### JULY 30

Free Bubble Festival at "Summer Fest" & Fireworks  
VF Baptist, Collegeville, PA