



2025 IMPACT REPORT

AND A LOOK TOWARDS 2026

In Partnership With:
L.A. Care and Blue Shield Promise
Community Resource Center, West L.A.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE VISION:

ART AS CLINICAL INTERVENTION

In 2025, A Beautiful You (ABY) launched a pilot series of low-barrier creative wellness interventions – Soundtrack to Self and Paint with Pride – designed for unhoused and substance-impacted populations.

The pilot tested a core hypothesis: that trauma-informed art and music programming, when delivered without institutional barriers, can catalyze immediate emotional regulation and foster a genuine sense of belonging. Rather than try to “fix” participants, ABY centered dignity, agency, and presence as the primary conditions for healing.

KEY PILOT FINDINGS

Immediate Regulation: Participants experienced a consistent emotional lift following a single 45-minute intervention, with peak sessions seeing an average +1.28 point increase in mood (on a 5-point scale).

Sustained Demand: Across all sessions, 94% of participants expressed a clear intent to return. The most common feedback was a request for “more time.”

Participant Voice: Qualitative responses reflected a deep sense of connection and safety:

- “I feel heard and seen.”
- “This is ACTUALLY healing.”
- “I feel like I belong here.”

THE STRATEGY: PRIORITIZING TRUST OVER INTAKE

Engaging populations impacted by housing instability and substance use requires a fundamentally different approach. Many individuals disengage from traditional services not due to lack of motivation, but due to repeated experiences of surveillance, stigma, and procedural harm.

ABY therefore employed a “Trust-First” methodology.

For the 2025 pilot, anonymity and psychological safety were prioritized over immediate longitudinal data collection. This design choice removed the primary barrier to participation and allowed individuals to engage without fear of exposure or judgment.

This was not an absence of rigor – it was intentional clinical design.

The results validate this approach.

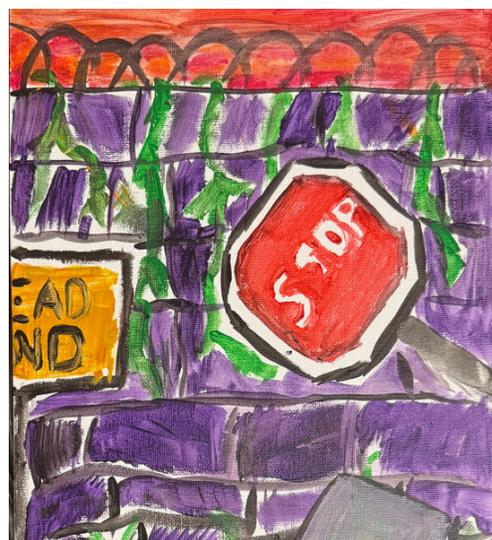
Despite being widely characterized as “hard to reach,” participants engaged at exceptionally high levels:

- 101 total class attendees
- 92 completed evaluations
- 91% evaluation response rate

This level of engagement demonstrates both the feasibility and necessity of creative, dignity-centered interventions. It confirms that when trust is established, participation follows.

91%

Evaluation Response Rate
(92 of 101 participants)



PILOT IMPACT: QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

To assess immediate emotional impact, participants rated their emotional state on a 5-point Likert scale upon arrival and again upon departure. This simple pre/post design allowed ABY to measure real-time emotional regulation following a single intervention.

KEY QUANTITATIVE OUTCOMES

Peak Session Increase
+1.28

The December 4th Soundtrack to Self session demonstrated an average +1.28 point increase in self-reported mood.

Aggregate Impact
+0.71

Across all November and December pilot sessions, participants experienced an average +0.71 point increase.

Statistical Significance
 $p < .01$

Pre- and post-session scores demonstrated a statistically significant improvement in emotional state ($p < .01$).

Effect Size
 $d = .55$

The observed change represents a moderate effect, indicating that the intervention produced meaningful emotional regulation rather than marginal fluctuation.

In populations experiencing chronic stress, instability, and trauma exposure, even short-term regulation gains of this magnitude are clinically relevant. These results indicate that creative engagement functions as an active regulatory intervention, not passive distraction.

Mood was assessed using a self-reported 5-point Likert scale (1 = Very Low, 5 = Very High) administered immediately before and after each 45-minute session. Aggregate results reflect responses from $n = 92$ participants across November-December 2025 pilot sessions. Statistical significance was assessed using paired pre/post comparison.

BEYOND THE NUMBERS:

While quantitative data confirms measurable emotional shifts, qualitative feedback reveals *how* and *why* the intervention worked.

Participants consistently described the sessions as spaces of safety, dignity, and restoration – experiences notably absent from many traditional service environments.

Recurring Qualitative Themes

Belonging & Safety

“I feel like I’m not alone.”

- Mohamed, Age 38

“I feel like I belong here.”

- Luke, Age 29

Emotional Release & Relief

“I feel refreshed.”

- Meagan, Age 43

“I feel peaceful.”

- Salanti, Age 52

Self-Recognition

“Relief. I get to air out my truth.”

- Johan, Age 26

“I felt reconnected to innocence.”

- Fern, Age 47



PARTICIPANT EXPERIENCES



When asked how the experience could be improved, the most frequent response was a simple and consistent request:

More Time.

This feedback – combined with near-universal intent to return – directly informed the development of ABY's next phase of programming.

Q6. My experience could have been improved if...
If i had more time

Q6. My experience could have been improved if...
if it wuz longer

Q6. My experience could have been improved if...
More Time

Q6. My experience could have been improved if...
longer time 😊

LIMITATIONS & EVOLUTION

FROM SNAPSHOT OUTCOMES TO LONGITUDINAL EVIDENCE

The 2025 pilot was intentionally designed as a low-barrier, trust-first intervention. Anonymous participation and brief engagement windows maximized psychological safety and evaluation response rates, allowing ABY to assess immediate emotional regulation following a single session.

While this approach successfully demonstrated proof of concept, it also introduced a clear limitation.

Because participation was anonymous and session-based, the pilot could not:

- Track individual outcomes over time
- Measure sustained changes in resilience or perceived social support.
- Examine the cumulative impact of repeated participation

These limitations do not detract from the pilot's success. Instead, they clarify the next necessary step.

A DELIBERATE PIVOT TOWARD DEPTH AND DURATION

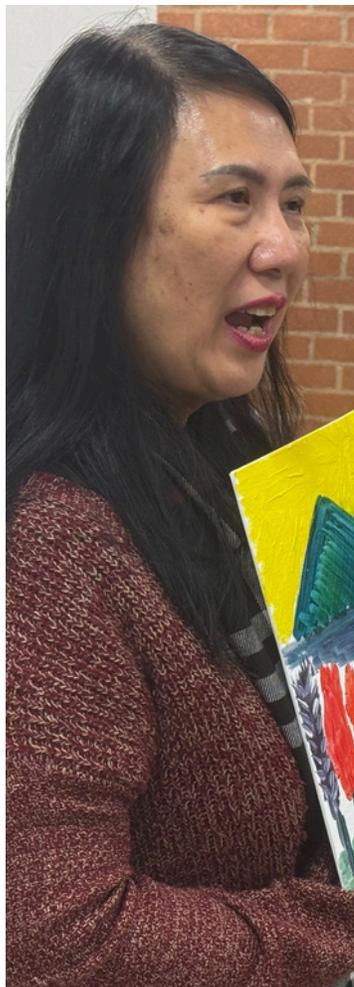
Building on the qualitative and quantitative strengths of the 2025 pilot, ABY is transitioning to a **cohort-based residency model** designed to support longitudinal evaluation: **Displays of Dignity**.

This shift allows ABY to retain the relational safety of creative engagement while implementing validated, contextually adapted assessment tools capable of documenting sustained impact.



EXPANDED MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

Beginning with the launch of *Displays of Dignity*, ABY will employ a mixed-methods evaluation strategy that combines standardized scales with structured qualitative analysis:



Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS)

Adapted to reflect support systems most relevant to housing-unstable and substance-impacted participants, including peer community, recovery networks, and case management relationships.

Brief Resilience Scale (BRS)

Used to assess participants' capacity to recover from stress over time, a key indicator of stabilization and long-term, wellbeing. This internationally recognized tool has been adapted to meet the needs of our community.

Expressive Growth Rubric

A standardized framework used to translate creative expression, reflection, and narrative shifts into measurable indicators of emotional integration and agency.

Together, these tools allow ABY to quantify emotional regulation, resilience, and community integration without flattening the lived experiences of participants into purely clinical metrics

WHY THIS MATTERS

Creative interventions are often evaluated solely through anecdote. ABY's approach demonstrates that dignity-centered, arts-based programming can be both human and measurable.

The evolution from anonymous pilot sessions to a structured residency model reflects ABY's commitment to accountability, learning, and scalability – not a departure from its values, but a deepening of them.

DISPLAYS OF DIGNITY

Displays of Dignity is a 15-week creative wellness residency designed to support housing-unstable and substance-impacted individuals in moving from crisis stabilization toward sustained emotional regulation, resilience, and community connection.

Building on the demonstrated success of ABY's 2025 pilot sessions, this program shifts from brief, single-session engagement to a cohort based model that allows for deeper relational trust, longitudinal evaluation, and measurable personal growth.



PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Each cohort consists of 20 participants who engage in weekly, facilitated creative sessions over a 15-week period. Sessions integrate reading, music, visual art, writing, and reflective dialogue within a trauma-informed, non-coercive environment.

The residency follows a four-phase developmental arc aligned with trauma recovery and identity reconstruction:

1. **Release:** Establishing emotional safety, regulation, and expressive freedom.
2. **Reflection:** Supporting meaning-making, narrative integration, and self-awareness.
3. **Reconstruction:** Strengthening agency, intentionality, and internal resilience.
4. **Display:** Community witnessing through voluntary showcase, affirming dignity and belonging.

This structure was directly informed by participant feedback from the pilot phase, particularly the consistent request for more time and deeper engagement.

FINANCING & SCALABILITY

INVESTMENT SNAPSHOT

Displays of Dignity is designed as a high-impact, cost-efficient intervention that produces measurable outcomes while maintaining psychological safety and creative integrity.

- Total Cost per Cohort: \$14,000
- Participants per Cohort: 20
- Cost per Participant: ~\$700



This cost includes:

- Trauma-informed facilitation
- Professional-grade art and creative materials
- Evaluation administration and analysis (MSPSS, BRS, Expressive Growth Rubric)
- Program coordination and documentation
- Community showcase and participant honoraria

FUNDING REQUEST

ABY is seeking seed funding partners to support the 2026 launch of Displays of Dignity. Funding may be structured to support:

- A full cohort (\$14,000)
- Partial cohort sponsorship
- Multi-cohort implementation across partner sites

Early investment will allow ABY to refine delivery, strengthen evaluation, and build a replicable model ready for broader deployment.

SCALABILITY & REPLICATION

Displays of Dignity is intentionally designed for replication across community-based settings, including shelters, recovery centers, and transitional housing programs.

The cohort-based model allows ABY to:

- Maintain consistent facilitation and evaluation standards.
- Track outcomes across sites and cohorts
- Adapt creative modalities to local context without compromising core outcomes.

As additional cohorts are funded, ABY will aggregate outcome data to inform program refinement, cost efficiencies, and future scale.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

At approximately **\$700 per participant**, *Displays of Dignity* offers a cost-effective alternative to higher-cost interventions that often struggle to sustain engagement among housing-unstable and substance-impacted populations.

By prioritizing dignity, creativity, and voluntary participation, ABY increases the likelihood of sustained engagement – a critical factor in long-term stabilization and recovery.

This investment does not fund compliance. It funds capacity, connection, and measurable human change.

