

SYNERGY SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS THE HEALING POWER OF THE ARTS



YRC Youth Artwork Samples (Top L to R: ceramic mug, paper masks decorated with acrylic paint; bottom L to R: acrylic, colored pencil, painting, and ceramic octopus)

By Corky McCaffrey

George Braque, the founder of the Cubist art movement, said, “Art is a wound turned into light.” The art therapists at Synergy Services see that healing every day in the art studio at Synergy’s Youth Resiliency Center.

The Youth Resiliency Center is a drop-in resource center for young people between the ages of 12 and 19. Many of the teens who utilize the Center are homeless. At this moment, while you are reading this article, there are at least 2,000 “unattached” teens in Kansas City with no idea where they will sleep tonight. They are living on the streets, sleeping in cars, couch surfing with friends. They do not have a safe place to live. Many of these youth have fled abuse or neglect. They may have been kicked out. They have nowhere to go. That hopelessness and rootless existence is what Synergy works to change.

During a visit to the Youth Resiliency Center, youth are able to shower, do their laundry, eat, visit the on-site medical and dental clinics, talk with counselors, use the computer lab, music room or recording studio and engage in the healing power of self-expression in the art studio. The studio is an open, airy, safe space filled with natural light and endless possibility. Youth

artists choose to work in a variety of media available to them — watercolor, tempera or acrylic paints, clay, collage, crayons. The teens display talents not often found in artists with little to no formal art education. Many of them could be considered outsider artists, turning their inner turmoil and unfortunate circumstances into masterpieces.

If you’d like to visit the studio and support this work, Synergy’s annual Art Soup event provides the perfect opportunity. The event brings together art enthusiasts to support Synergy’s art and music programs, since all resources available at the Youth Resiliency Center are provided at no charge.

You are invited to help Synergy turn wounds into light at the fourth annual Art Soup on Feb. 25, 2018, 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at Synergy Services’ Youth Resiliency Center, 2001 NE Parvin Road. Art Soup participants enjoy cocktails, sample soup from some of Kansas City’s finest restaurants and take home a pottery bowl crafted by a youth participating in the programs offered at the Center. Contact Anne Harper at (816) 505-4785 for reservations or visit ‘Events’ on our website: www.synergyservices.org.