



MEDIA ALERT— FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Art Therapy Shows Promise with Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

Recent Research Efforts Identify Treatments with Veterans, Children, and Adolescents

Alexandria, VA--- Research efforts with combat Veterans who have posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and children and adolescents who have been sexually abused are highlighted in the most recent issue of *Art Therapy: Journal of the American Art Therapy Association (Volume 23, No.4)*. According to journal editor, Lynn Kapitan, PhD, ATR-BC, the field of art therapy “is launching an effort to lay groundwork for clinical studies that identify art therapy treatment outcomes for posttraumatic stress disorder and related concerns.”

Stanford University researcher Kate Collie, PhD, ATR, and colleagues analyzed data on “best practices” in art therapy with combat-related PTSD, concluding that art therapy may be a treatment of choice with returning Veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan. In her summary, Collie notes, “although art therapy has been understudied with Veterans, it shows promise in the treatment of hard-to-treat symptoms combat-related PTSD, such as avoidance behaviors and emotional numbing, while also addressing the psychological situations that give rise to these symptoms.” The findings are part of a larger effort within the American Art Therapy Association and the art therapy community to develop evidenced-based treatments for Veterans, particularly those with PTSD.

South Carolina art therapist Terry Pifalo, ATR, MCAT, MEd, reports the results of a four-year study combining art therapy with cognitive-behavioral therapy to address PTSD in children and adolescents who have been sexually abused. Participants were evaluated with a standard trauma instrument before and after an 8-week group. The findings support the combined use of art therapy and cognitive-behavioral therapy as an effective intervention to reduce symptoms commonly associated with sexual abuse. Pifalo is an art therapist at the Dee Norton Lowcountry Children’s Center in Charleston, SC.

For information on these findings and full-length articles, please see <http://www.arttherapy.org/aaatj.html> on the American Art Therapy Association (AATA) website. The AATA was founded in 1969 and develops and promotes educational, professional, and ethical standards for the practice of art therapy. The AATA provides information to its members and the public regarding the field of art therapy through publications, a scholarly journal, and an annual conference.

For more information on this release, please contact Cathy A. Malchiodi, ATR-BC, AATA Professional Relations, at info@arttherapy.org, call 888-290-0878, or visit the AATA web site at www.arttherapy.org.

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