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Anima Arts

MOVE. GROW. CONNECT.

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ABOUT US

Anima Arts is a community-based organization supporting the health and wellness of children and their families through arts-based movement education.

At Anima Arts we believe that healthy and meaningful movement is central to our well-being. Arts-based movement provides the opportunity to move into health and purposefully connect to the world around us. With our facilitators guiding play and self-expression through movement, our bodies, mind, and spirit move together for learning, healing, and transformation.

Anima Arts provides arts education and support in the spaces families and children play, grow and learn. Our programs promote creativity, knowledge, interoception, intrinsic motivation, and self and collective efficacy. We support families' healthy relationships and contribute to a larger culture of health in our local community. We believe in the power of arts in public health to build equity, social connection, empathy, wellness, and joy for those that experience it.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Health Equity
- Community Strength
- Art as a Social Determinant of Health
- Evidence-Based Research & Practices
- Co-Learning
- Collaboration
- Cultural Humility
- Creativity
- Joy

WHO WE SERVE

We serve Northern Colorado families and children in early childhood (ages 2-10) in preschools, elementary schools, community centers, spaces of worship, community health events, libraries, art spaces, and more. We work from the spirit and power of equity. We seek to serve and are guided by the needs expressed by families and children experiencing forms of social and economic injustice, exclusion, and oppression.

OUR PROGRAMS

Children's Curriculum

Our classes are student-centered, engaging, interactive, adaptive, and access multiple intelligences and modalities.

In educational spaces, we offer arts integration, in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through the art of creative movement. Students engage in a creative process that connects physical exploration with curricular content and meets evolving objectives in both. Our programming considers critical thinking, embracing the unknown, and creating and understanding through various media. We offer a repetitive and familiar structure to create safety for the child to focus on the content. Our classes include a welcome, warm-up, gross/fine motor skill development, exploration of a concept, investigation, reflection, collaboration, somatic and/or mindfulness activities, and closing.

Our programs can serve as a discrete subject, exist as a unit within expressive content such as art or physical education, or integrate into academic curricula such as math, science, literature to support and serve as another vehicle for its learning. We use principles from constructivism, attachment theory, family empowerment model, social cognitive theory, critical pedagogy, play as a form of research, UDL, self-determination theory, and family-centered practices. Our programs celebrate the way children experience the world; through curiosity, exploration, and play.

We include a broad range of cultural representation in music, imagery with positive expression of diverse populations and environments, and a broad range of activities as inspiration for movement examples. We believe that arts inherently hold the power of inclusivity, and we strive to be a supportive environment to every person that engages in Anima Arts activities.

OUR CURRICULUM INCLUDES

Dance	Stories	Critical Thinking	Props
Music	Physical Theatre	Yoga	Partnering
Creativity	Sciences	Acrobatics	Collaboration
Imaginary Play	Fitness	Circus Arts	Sensory Tools
Visual Art	Literacy	Improvisation	Technology
Crafts	Somatics	Nature	Body-Mind Centering

OUR LEARNING UNITS AND THEMES

We offer thoughtfully designed and researched units in subjects including:

Movement Concepts (e.g. body parts, self space/group space, locomotor/static, shapes, pathways, tempo, rhythm, directions, pathways, weight, effort, flow, relationship, concept words, kinesphere)

Health (e.g. body systems, hydration, nutrition, physical differences, birth and growth, death and aging, injury, self-care, sleep, safe touch and consent, emotions)

Natural World (e.g. elements of the earth, seasons, landscapes, outer space, animal, birth and growth, weather, transformation)

Social-Emotional (e.g. emotions in body, physical difference, self space/group space, safe touch and consent, relationships, self-regulation, empathy building, interconnection)

Literature and Art (e.g. painting, drawing, sculpture, music, instruments, color, magic, storytelling, film, alphabet, and phonics)

Literacy (e.g. letters and phonics, numbers, colors, movement, emotional, anatomical)

Adventure & Exploration (e.g. camping, things that go, outerspace, superheroes, circus, cooking, sports, transformation)

STEM (e.g. robotics, technology, coding, engineering, math, physics, biology)

Build Your Own (e.g. any lessons above or create your own)

PROGRAMMING UNIQUE TO YOU

We'd love to build a program that is just right for you!

We strive to contribute to the goals, needs, and objectives of the families, children, and organizations we work with. Our curriculum is adaptive and evolving to best contribute to the children in your life. Do you have a subject, health goal, curiosity? We'll create a lesson plan just for you.

Please help us learn more about your needs with our [**Anima Arts Community Questionnaire**](#).

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

Our **Family Movement Classes** seek to support positive relationships between children and their caregivers, increase physical awareness and child development knowledge, and promote relational play and exploration through movement at home and within the larger community. Our favorite art and learning happen in intergenerational spaces, contributing to a lineage of communities creating strength and support by engaging generations together.

Our **Nourish Community Events** bring together families and community members with a shared goal of supporting children's well-being. Community members may include pediatric occupational/physical therapists, physical education specialists, dance/movement/somatic therapists, dual language learner specialists, culturally responsive teachers, and public health educators. The events may also include sharing meals, home goods, and health resources. Local families & communities determine the objectives, resources, and needs for these events, with priority given to those experiencing oppression or injustice.

Our **Educator and Childcare Workshops & Exchanges** are centered on creating more opportunities for learning through movement in a child's home, school, and community. Consultation is offered in creating developmentally appropriate, engaging, creative curricula and activities for each environment. Co-learning and exchange are central to these events.

While we focus on early childhood, Anima Arts is available for movement classes and programming for teens, in special education, pre/postnatal families, parents, caregivers, and more.

We value your experience, insights, and support. If available, please complete this short questionnaire to learn more about our community needs.

[Anima Arts Community Questionnaire](#)

OUR DEFICITS

We recognize current deficits as a new program in our representation, equality, and power-sharing. Currently, our programming is only being offered in English with leadership and direction from a white cis female and not representing our entire community. We strongly believe in the strengths of our community and humbly hope to contribute in the spirit of co-learning and cultural humility. We make a conscious effort to build programming and work in equal partnership with the full range of the children and families we aim to serve. We welcome and ask those from experiences different than our own to partner with us, provide guidance, and become part of your program.

PARTNERING WITH ANIMA

Would you like to bring Anima Arts into your community?

Are you an organization with shared values?

Are you a parent/educator experiencing a need we can support?

We'd love to hear from and work with you.

Contact us: animaartsorg@gmail.com or 970-391-1482

Anima Arts is available to come into your space for specialized programming to meet your children and families' unique needs. We recommend a minimum of three consecutive events, with our programming typically designed for developing long-term partnerships and curriculum offered weekly over several months. Single workshops are also available.

WE WORK WITH

Preschools

Recreational Centers

After School Programs

Art Organizations

Libraries

Health Care Organizations

Museums

Spaces of Worship

Fitness Centers

Public Health Departments

Community Organizations

Summer Day Camps

Health Events

Family/Parent Support Groups

Social Service Organizations

Intergenerational Spaces

K-5th Schools

Family Centers

INVESTMENT

Anima offers services on a contract basis with investment determined by frequency, duration, number of participants, and the partnering organization. We provide independent classes with sliding scale options to meet the broad socio-economic needs of our community. We kindly ask that you do so if you have the resources to invest more in our programming. Any surplus of funds will go directly to offering free or low-cost programming to members of our community.

SUPPORTING ANIMA'S MISSION

If you believe in the work that Anima is doing, all donations to our organization will go directly to offering to program to children and families that would not otherwise be able to afford or access our classes, support systems, or resources. Presently you can donate to Anima Arts at venmo.com/animaarts

OUR FOUNDER/DIRECTOR

Mimi Ferrie is a movement educator, performer, community leader, producer, and arts and health advocate. With twenty consecutive years in movement education for children and families, she brings her passion and expertise in dance, movement, and the arts to the organizations she partners with. She has taught in multiple schools, libraries, community centers, churches, and art spaces, reaching thousands of students over her tenure. She served as the program director for Mountain Contemporary Dance Arts for seven years, implementing an artistry-focused program for movers ages two-adult in the licensed childcare facility Mountain Kids Louisville. She has worked with students with a broad range of movement experiences and cultural, physical, and neurological diversity in classroom and family settings. Mimi is a graduate of the University of Colorado Boulder dance program and has continued her education in child development, arts education, and public health with institutions including the Colorado School of Public Health, CU Denver, Luna Dance Institute, and the National Dance Education Organization. She has recently served on the 2021-2022 revision committee for the Colorado Academic Dance Standards for the Colorado Department of Education. Mimi is the Executive Director of Wild Heart Dance, Co-Director of New Breed Dance Company, and mama to her two young children.

PROFESSIONAL/VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

SURJ Boulder County Families	University of Colorado Boulder	YMCA of Boulder County
Fort Collins Children's Theatre	Longmont Recreation Center	Dance Dimensions
Openstage Theatre Company	Denver Center for the Performing Arts	Impact Dance
Interweave Dance Theatre	Boulder Jazz Dance Workshop	3rd Law Dance Theatre
Dance Connection	Va de Vire Society	Boulder Body Wear
Boulder County Public Libraries	Manhattan Middle School	New Vista High School
Grace Studios School of Dance	Boulder Ballet	Kinesis Dance
Louder Than Words Dance Theatre	Colorado Conservatory of Dance	SVVSD
Peekaboo Sole Productions	First Unitarian Society of Denver	Centennial State Ballet
Opera Fort Collins	Colorado State University	Parlando School of Music
Dairy Arts Center	Boulder Fringe Festival	Haan Dances

ANIMA ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tara Rynders: Director/Founder of The Clinic & Creative Caregivers

Lisa Morgan: CSU Dance Faculty, BRAINY & Moving Through Parkinson's Coordinator

THE ARTS IN PUBLIC HEALTH

"Throughout human history, the arts have been used to accomplish the very things public health is currently challenged to do: support well-being, create social connection, spark and sustain movements, communicate across difference, and transform systems and cultures. Both the arts and culture and public health sectors work to create stronger, healthier, more equitable communities."

"Arts and culture can expose root issues, incorporate and amplify the voices and concerns of those who have been underrepresented, and change our very interpretation and configuration of a given health reality—bringing new and necessary dimensions into focus."

"A focus on culture—specifically, a focus on developing a cross-cutting, health-promoting culture—will increase the pace at which critical population health issues are being addressed."

[Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration](#)

"Within prevention and promotion, findings showed how the arts can:

- affect the social determinants of health
- support child development
- encourage health-promoting behaviours
- help to prevent ill health
- support caregiving"

[What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being? WHO](#)

"Evidence was found of a beneficial relationship between arts engagement, health and wellbeing across the life course."

"Arts engagement can mitigate the social determinants of health by influencing perinatal mental health and child cognitive development; shaping educational and employment opportunities and compensating for work-related stress; building individual resilience and enhancing communities."

[The arts and the social determinants of health: findings from an inquiry conducted by the United Kingdom All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing](#)

Anima Arts aims to contribute to the following Healthy People 2030 Objectives

1. Increase the proportion of child care centers where children aged 3 to 5 years do at least 60 minutes of physical activity a day
2. Increase the proportion of children and adolescents who communicate positively with their parents
3. Increase the proportion of children who participate in high-quality early childhood education programs
4. Increase the proportion of children and adolescents who show resilience to challenges and stress
5. Increase the proportion of schools with policies and practices that promote health and safety
6. Increase the proportion of children who do enough aerobic physical activity
7. Reduce the proportion of children and adolescents with obesity

DANCE ARTS IN EDUCATION & FAMILIES

"Education in the art of dance engages the artistic processes of creating, performing and critical analysis. These processes require students to read symbol systems, use critical thinking skills, excel in nonverbal reasoning and communication, exchange ideas, work cooperatively and collaboratively with others, and interact within a multicultural society. More comprehensively, education in the art of dance develops kinesthetic and spatial learning as well as intra- and interpersonal knowledge of self and others."

"Arts research shows that students who study dance are more:

- Self-motivated, disciplined and focused in their everyday lives.
- Expressive in their communication of emotions, thoughts and feelings.
- Creative and imaginative.
- Able to critically analyze their own work and the work of others."

"Dance can have a positive impact on student achievement, teacher satisfaction, and school culture. Examples of the positive impact of dance education in schools include;

- Increases reading and STEM test scores
- Offers neurological benefits, including persistence at task, memory retention, and making cognitive connections
- Develops social and emotional coping skills, including tolerance, focus, and engagement
- Supports integrated teaching practices
- Boosts teacher and school moral"

[National Dance Education In the United States. NDEO](#)

"We carry the promise of connection from birth, but the skills are not given, they must be modeled, taught, and earned(...) A growing number of dance activists and educators believe that Dance is a powerful vehicle for growing and nurturing relationships. Dancing together requires the kind of intersubjectivity – the shared cognitions and felt emotions between people – that can build interpersonal trust and understanding (...) Because dance instruction packs layer after layer of meaning and imagery with very few words(...)it promotes an immediacy of experience that can create sudden insight, opening previously shut channels of communication and avenues of understanding.

[Engaging Families in Dance: An Investigation of Moving Parents and Children Together](#)

"Creative dance and movement is already being used as a therapeutic technique in a wide range of interventional processes. But it can also be used as a preventive tool for both reducing socio-emotional risks and maximizing developmental and mental health for (...) children in early ages." [Using Creative Dance for expressing emotions in preschool children](#)

"Isadora Effect: the propositions that motor development plays a primal role in brain development, and the first understanding of symbolic meaning among young children occurs from an understanding of movement and gesture. Anecdotal evidence for the past few decades has demonstrated that dance education and the early use of symbolic movement greatly enhance cognitive development in young children."

[Dance and early childhood cognition: The Isadora Effect](#)

Anima Arts Logic Model

RESOURCES

Families	Children	Artists	Social Service Organizations
K-5 Schools	ECE Spaces	Community Centers	Spaces of Worship
Volunteers	Advisory Council	Facilitators	Local Public Health Dept.
Libraries	Media Platforms	Funders	Local Government

ACTIVITIES

Early Childhood Creative Movement Classes
"Families Moving Together" Classes
Arts and Health "Nourish" Family Events (e.g. art, food, goods, education, resources)
Professional Development Movement Workshops for Educators, Caregivers & Communities

OUTPUTS

Creative Engagement	Play	Activation of Imagination
Social Interaction	Physical Activity	Emotional Evocation
Cognitive Stimulation	Sensory Activation	Engagement with Health Themes

OUTCOMES

Physiological (enhanced alignment immune, muscular, cardiovascular, neurological, sensory function)
Psychological (enhanced self/collective efficacy, intrinsic motivation, emotional regulation, reduced stress)
Social (enhanced support, improved network & accessibility, trust, social behaviors & communication)
Behavioral (increased adoption of healthy behaviors, exercise, knowledge & skill development)
Multi-Sector Collaboration & Partnership

IMPACT

Child & Family Health Prevention, Promotion, Management, Treatment
Increased Health Equity & Community Capacity
Public Health Innovation & Transformation

Anima Arts Resources

THE RESOURCES BELOW SERVE AS GUIDES FOR OUR BEST PRACTICES

ART IN PUBLIC HEALTH

[WHO Evidence of Arts In Improving Health and Well-Being](#)
[The Arts and the Social Determinants of Health](#)
[Creating Healthy Communities through Cross-Sector Collaboration](#)
[Creating Healthy Communities: Arts + Public Health in America](#)
[Arts and Culture In Public: An Evidence-Based Framework](#)

ORGANIZATIONS & INITIATIVES

[National Organization for Arts in Health](#)
[LUNA Dance Institute](#)
[National Dance Educators Organization](#)
[Dance Educator's Laboratory](#)
[National Child Traumatic Stress Network](#)
[Body-Mind Centering](#)
[National Center for UDL \(Universal Design for Learning\)](#)
[Healthy People 2030](#)
[Community Tool Box](#)
[WHO Guidelines on Physical Activity for Children](#)

EDUCATIONAL GUIDELINES

[National Core Arts Standards](#), Colorado Department of Education (Revised Dance Academic Standards, [Comprehensive Health Standards](#), Revised Essential Skills), [Social Justice Standards \(Learning for Justice/Teaching Tolerance\)](#), [CASEL Social and Emotional Learning Competencies](#), [HighScope Key Developmental Indicators](#), [Creative Curriculum Objectives for Development and Learning](#), [Head Start Early Learning Objectives](#), [National Physical Education Standards](#), [CDC Healthy Schools: National Health Education Standards](#), [Colorado Early Learning & Development Guidelines](#)