

Young Artists

Bring Awareness to Children's Mental Health



Half of all lifetime mental illnesses occur by age 14 and the face of mental health gets younger. Few kids or families talk about mental health, but the #HTxMentalHealth Children's Art Contest, established by Mental Health America of Greater Houston and the Nick Finnegan Counseling Center, opens the door for children, parents, and communities to begin conversations about mental health.

A report by the Mental Health Needs

Council of Harris County indicates that in Harris County, an estimated 152,000 children have mental illness and 91,414 are likely to have a serious emotional disturbance.

"Children's mental health problems are real, common and treatable, and there must be a greater effort for early recognition of mental health needs of children and adolescents and greater awareness of early signs and symptoms," said Susan Fordice, president and CEO

of Mental Health America of Greater Houston.

"Studies show that about one in five children have a diagnosable mental health problem, and nearly two-thirds of them get little or no help. Untreated mental health problems can disrupt children's functioning at home, school and in the community, leaving them at increased risk of school failure, contact with the criminal justice system, dependence on social services, and even suicide."

Masterpieces

Every Child is an Artist...

- Pablo Picasso



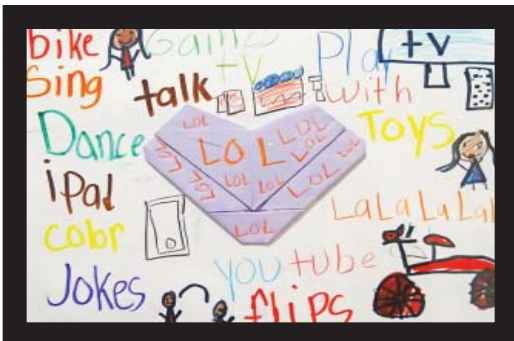
Pastel Schway, Christa McAuliffe,
"Say No To Eating Disorders"



Artemis J. Ayala, Woodrow Wilson
Montessori, "A Glance Into the
Eyes of a HANGRY Kitty"



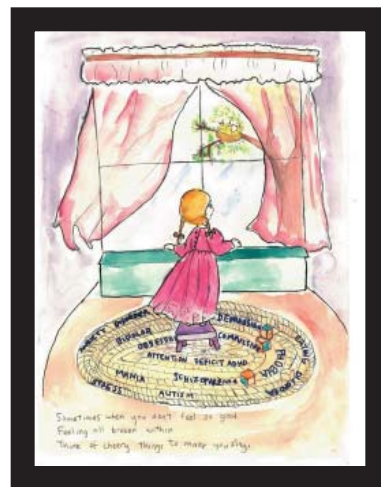
Armani Obasi, Williams Elementary,
"Leaving the Negative Behind"



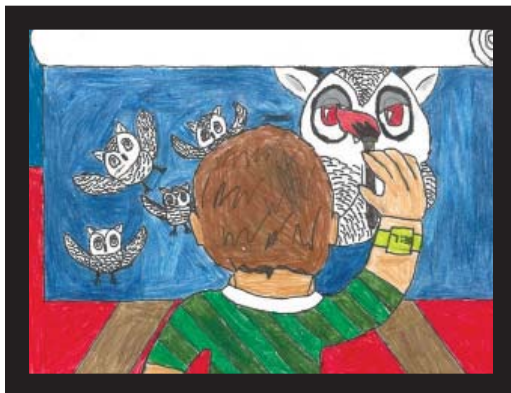
Akilah Lopez, St. Mary's School,
"An Open Heart"



Geovani Obasi, Reading Jr. High School,
"The Bright Side of Things"



Poem Schway, School: Christa
McAuliffe, "Cheery Things"



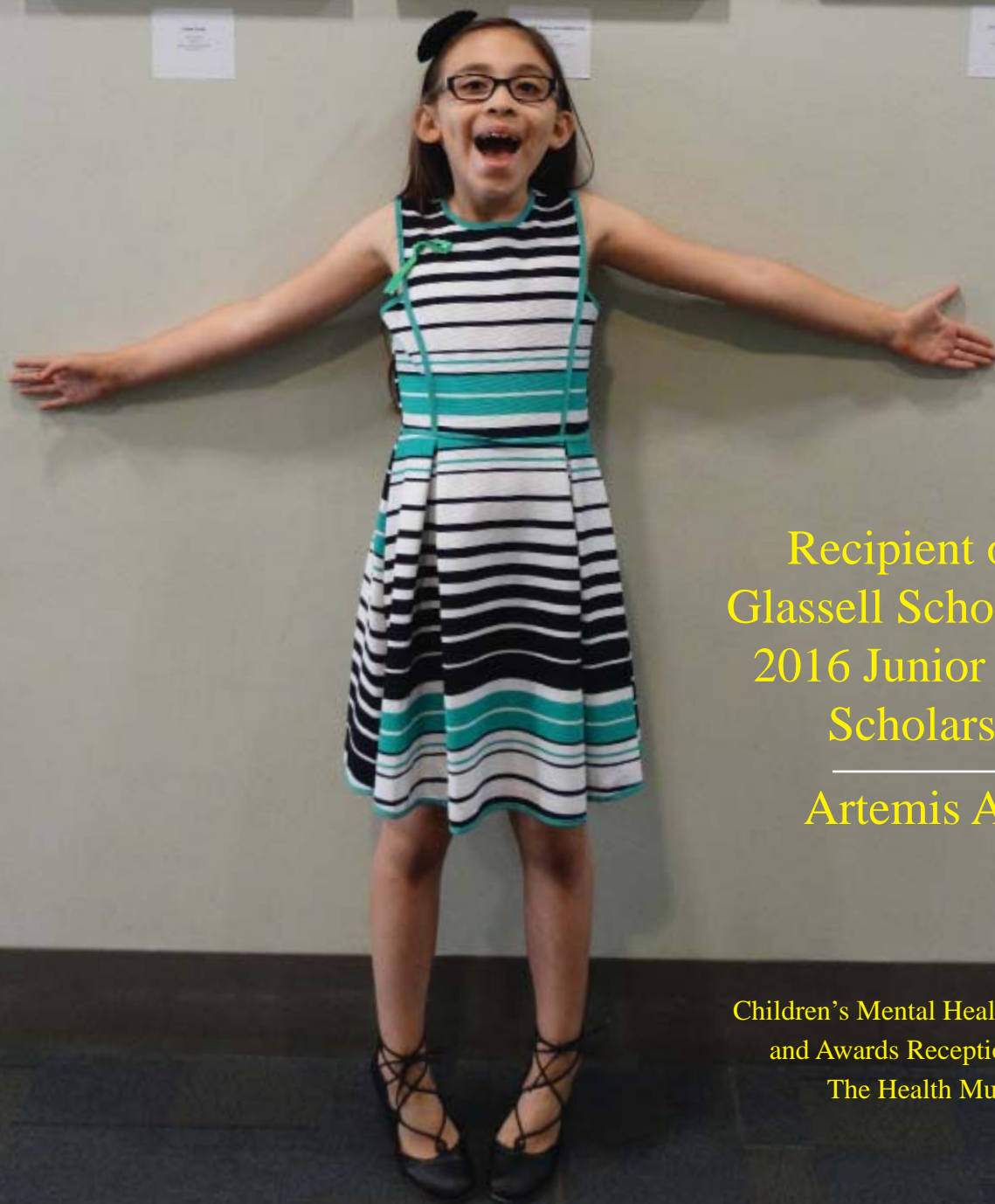
Christopher Cordova, Park Place Elementary,
"The Boy Who Drew"



Victoria Ortega, Park Place Elementary,
"Cookies and Kisses"

Theme: "How I Take Care of My Thoughts and Feelings"

View the Digital Gallery of Children's Art: www.htxmentalhealth.weebly.com



Recipient of the
Glassell School of Art
2016 Junior School
Scholarship

Artemis Ayala

Children's Mental Health Art Gallery
and Awards Reception Held At
The Health Museum

City Council Recognizes Importance of Children's Mental Health

On May 3rd, MHA of Greater Houston and Nick Finnegan Counseling Center (NFCC) attended the Houston City Council meeting for the official reading of the proclamation declaring May 1-7, Greater Houston Children's Mental Health Week by Mayor Pro-Tem Ellen Cohen.

Pictured: Audrey Omenson, LPC-S, Clinical Director at NFCC, Paige Roane, LMFT-Associate, Community Relations Specialist at NFCC, Mayor Pro-Tem Ellen Cohen, Mary Magness Hand, Executive Director at NFCC and Traci Patterson, Director of Communications at MHA of Greater Houston.



“Since children’s vocabulary and life experiences aren’t as developed as those of adults, art is one way for them to express their emotions,” said Nick Finnegan Counseling Center’s Clinical Director, Audrey Omenson. “We must start considering emotional and mental health equally important as physical health for children; it is crucial to their development.”

This year’s #HTxMentalHealth Children’s Art Contest theme, “How I Take Care of My Thoughts and Feelings,” offered children ages 5 – 14 an opportunity to create and submit original art based on their understanding of mental health. The contest also provided parents and other adults who encounter or work with children information on mental health

and an occasion to begin the conversation about mental health with children.

Mental Health America of Greater Houston, established in 1954 by philanthropist Ima Hogg, is the area’s longest serving mental health education and advocacy organization focused on shaping the mental health of people and communities in the areas of children and education, integrated health care, chronic illnesses, women, suicide prevention, veterans and aging. www.mhahouston.org

Nick Finnegan Counseling Center (NFCC) is a unique, non-profit providing personalized service and excellence in counseling at affordable rates for everyone regardless of finances or age. The Center provides the Houston community

with mental health therapy, premarital counseling, support groups and free parent talks at schools. NFCC is sustained by a combination of fundraisers, grants, donations and client fees. Nick Finnegan Counseling Center: making change possible.

Mental Health America of Greater Houston and Nick Finnegan Counseling Center gratefully acknowledge the generosity and participation of our partners in the second annual #HTxMentalHealth Children’s Art Contest.



To get involved or for more information on the Children's Art Contest, contact Traci Patterson, Director of Communications at tpatterson@mhahouston.org.