

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

(202) 225-2011

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Delaware Valley Art Therapy Association
18 Chestnut Road
Newtown Square, PA 19073

To the Members of the Delaware Valley Art Therapy Association:

It is an honor to recognize your efforts as you come together to celebrate the 5th Annual National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day at the Please Touch Museum as part of a nationwide Art Action. Your work today is vital to fulfilling the goal of Awareness day – to increase basic awareness of the importance positive mental health has on a child's healthy development, with the key message that "positive mental health is essential to a child's healthy development from birth."

I have always had a profound appreciation for the arts. I am certain they play a critical role in allowing us to view our world from a different perspective and to develop into better people and citizens. Especially in times of uncertainty, the arts provide an outlet for individuals to express their innermost feelings and emotions. Particularly for young people, the arts provide an outlet for relaying an issue, feeling, or thought which may be more honest than verbalizing. A single work of art has the unique ability to bridge the generation gap – to initiate conversations between adults and young children about expressing feelings.

As a member of the House Committee on Education and Labor and the Congressional Arts Caucus, I am an avid supporter of arts education and believe in the positive impact the arts can have in all of us. Today, an estimated 4.5 to 6.3 million children and youth in the United States face mental health challenges. Now, more than ever, we must work together to provide our young people with nurturing environments that help them to realize their fullest potential.

For those present today who dedicate their lives to art therapy, I commend you for your invaluable work. In schools, nursing homes, detention centers, or hospitals, you are helping so many of our community's most vulnerable residents to express themselves and cope with the problems and concerns they face on a daily basis. You are instilling in each individual you work with the belief that their "Feelings are a Work of Art".

I commend the Delaware Valley Art Therapy Association for the work you have done, and continue to do to promote the development and public awareness of your field throughout Pennsylvania, Southern New Jersey, and Delaware.

Warmly,



Joe Sestak
Member of Congress

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