

Texas Mental Health Creative Arts Contest Opens November 1: Children and Adults Invited to Share Their Mental Health Journey through Art

Starting Nov. 1, Texas students and adults of all ages are invited to submit original work that touches on their relationship with mental health.

Austin, Texas — [Texas System of Care](#) (TxSOC) announced submissions will open on November 1, 2024, for the annual [Texas Mental Health Creative Arts Contest](#) in collaboration with The University of Texas at Austin's Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health (TIEMH) and the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. Texas students and adults of all ages are eligible to participate. Submissions close on March 1, 2025.

This year's contest introduces a new theme: 'What does mental health and well-being mean to you? Hurt. Healing. Hope.' In addition to the original categories—Traditional Artwork, Writing, and Photography—participants can now submit entries in two new categories: Digital Artwork and Multimedia.

“Our new theme and categories offer the opportunity to widen our reach among artists looking to use their creative talents to raise awareness on mental health and well-being,” said Sarah Fiorenza, project director for TxSOC. “We’re excited to see how everyone creates art that captures their unique challenges and successes in their mental health journey.”

Participants may enter one of four age groups: elementary school, middle school, high school and adult. Lidi B., whose work “[The Listening Chair](#)” earned an honorable mention in the adult writing category, used her experience as a teacher for incarcerated youth to highlight the importance of supporting the mental well-being of others.

“I would often listen to my students and support their mental health by providing healthy options and being an intentionally positive teacher in their lives. These students had difficulty introspecting their issues,” Lidi shared. “By playing my part with the other adults in their lives, we created that predictable and healthy social structure these students needed for their mental health progress. That is why I will continue to advocate for mental health awareness and the impact it has on my community, as I've seen firsthand how life-changing it is.”

Visit gallery.txsystemofcare.org/about for information about rules, submitting artwork, past winners and more. Please reach out to Kendall Jones (kendall.jones@austin.utexas.edu) for press inquiries.

About Texas System of Care

The Texas System of Care is a statewide initiative that aims to improve mental health outcomes for children, youth and their families by implementing the [system of care framework](#). The Texas Health and Human Services Commission leads the Texas System of Care, with implementation supported by the Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health and in collaboration with families, youth, advocates, providers and child-serving state agencies.