

Submissions open for the 2024 Texas Mental Health Creative Arts Contest

Starting Dec. 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 that submissions are opening on December 1, 2023, for the annual [Texas Mental Health Creative Arts Contest](#) in collaboration with UT 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 will close on March 1, 2024.

The contest seeks to raise awareness of mental health experiences and challenge the stigma of mental health by having open discussions with the Texas community. Last year, the contest received over 650 submissions.

Participants may enter by submitting original artwork, writing or photography that reflects the theme: "Why Does Mental Health Matter to You?"

"Despite the rise in mental health issues within our community, this topic continues to be overlooked," said [Sherry Rumsey](#), MEd, LPC, project director for TxSOC. "Our art contest serves as a reminder to Texans that their mental health is important and they're not alone. We're excited to see everyone's unique perspectives and experiences reflected in their work."

Participants may enter one of four age groups: elementary school, middle school, high school and adult. Caden N., whose work "[Don't Live in a Bubble](#)" earned first place in the elementary photography category, highlighted the importance of self-acceptance and not allowing others to define who you are as a person.

"I have Tourette's, but it doesn't make up the full me," Caden shared. "We are all so much more than the things others don't like about us. Don't live in the bubble that others put you in."

Winners will receive special prizes and exposure for their work, including having their art recognized in public galleries and published on contest holders' official websites.

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.