

PREPARED BY:
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#### Overview

The Children's Gallery Chicago proudly introduces "Voices of Summer: Youth Art & Zine Lab," our inaugural summer pilot designed to empower young voices, cultivate creative expression, and amplify artistic confidence through visual art and creative writing. This pilot is being launched to establish proof-of-concept for our innovative model, demonstrating the profound impact of integrating arts education and storytelling to build essential social-emotional skills, foster community engagement, and provide meaningful platforms for youth expression.

### **Dates & Location**

- Program Duration: August 4-15, 2025
  - o Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-1 p.m
- Final Exhibition & Zine Launch: August 16, 2025
  - Time TBD
- **Venue:** Community art space; culminating pop-up exhibition at a professional gallery or museum.

# **Participants**

- Number of Youth: 30
- Ages: 10-14
- Demographic: Students from the south-west side of Chicago neighborhoods are facing potential cuts to after-school program.
   TCGC will prioritize equitable access for youth traditionally lacking robust arts opportunities within these neighborhoods.

# (Tentative) Daily Schedule

- 9:00–9:30 a.m.: Morning Creative Warm-up (collaborative sketching, storytelling exercises)
- 9:30-11:00 a.m.: Visual Art Studio (painting, mixed media, zine art)
- 11:00–12:30 p.m.: Creative Writing Lab (poetry, short stories, narratives)
- 12:30-1:00 p.m.: Reflection Circle and Free Sketch







## **Program Goals**

- Foster self-expression, literacy, and critical-thinking skills through artistic practice.
- Equip youth with the confidence and skill to share their personal stories publicly.
- Build strong peer and mentor relationships, promoting socialemotional learning.
- Showcase youth talent and amplify their voices in professional community spaces.

# **Culminating Event**

- A professionally curated one-night exhibition featuring youth-created visual art and writing.
- Launch of a collaborative youth-produced zine distributed to families, donors, local businesses, and community leaders.

# Staffing & Capacity Building

- **Teaching Artists:** 2–3 skilled educators specializing in visual arts and creative writing.
- Support Staff: Program coordinator and volunteers
- Capacity Building: Formation of founding board committees, volunteer training, and securing seed grants and donations.

# **Evaluation & Impact Measurement**

- Pre- and post-program surveys to measure growth in confidence, creative skills, and social-emotional development.
- Portfolios showcasing each student's artwork and writing progression.
- Feedback collection from students, parents, teaching artists, and community partners.