RESTART studio

Annual Report
Program Year 2026

July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

Harnessing the power of art therapy to help underserved youth understand their feelings and behaviors and realize their potential.

Foundation For Scalable Innovations

Letter from the Executive Director

As we close restART studio's fifth year of service, I find myself reflecting not only on how much we have grown, but on how much stronger our organization has become.

As I look back on the year, what stands out to me most is not any single number or accomplishment. It is the feeling that our organization has entered a new stage of growth.

For the past several years, so much of our work has been about building: our clinical program, building financial sustainability, building awareness of art therapy, and building the systems needed to serve young people in an accessible and meaningful way. This year, I began to see those pieces coming together in a different way. We are becoming a stronger, more connected organization with an expanding role in our community.

One of the things I am most excited about is how much our work has begun to extend beyond the therapy room. We strengthened relationships with youth programs, restorative justice partners, and other arts and community organizations throughout Longmont. We brought therapeutic artmaking into spaces where young people already gather, while continuing to deepen the clinical work at the heart of restART studio.

Our team grew stronger, too. Welcoming our first cohort of art therapy practicum and internship students was an especially meaningful milestone. It has been exciting to see restART become not only a place where young people receive care, but also a place where emerging art therapists can learn, develop their clinical voices, and grow into this work.

Perhaps most importantly, this year strengthened my confidence in where restART is headed. The relationships we have built, the team we are developing, and the community's response to our work have created a foundation that feels ready for the next chapter. We ended the year still growing and with more opportunities in front of us than ever.

As we enter our sixth year, I am especially excited about expanding our reach even further across Boulder County. We are preparing to grow our presence in Boulder while continuing to strengthen our work in Longmont, create more community-based groups and workshops, increase clinical capacity, and build partnerships that make creative mental health support easier for young people to access. That next chapter is already beginning to take shape.

I feel incredibly grateful for the people who have helped restART reach this point. To our therapists and interns, Board, community partners, donors,

families, and the young people who continue to trust us with their stories and creativity: we couldn't have done it without you.

Five years in, I feel both proud of what we have built and genuinely energized by how much possibility still lies ahead.

With gratitude,

Amanda Balmores, MA, LPC, LAC, ATR-BC®
Executive Director & Clinical Supervisor



MISSION AND VISION

Our Mission

restART studio's mission is to harness the power of art therapy to help underserved youth understand their feelings and behaviors and realize their potential.

Our Vision

We envision a future where all young people, regardless of background, financial circumstance, or system involvement, have access to creative and compassionate mental health support.

We believe youth experiencing trauma, mental health challenges, substance use, or involvement with the justice system deserve opportunities for healing, connection, and restoration rather than simply punishment.

Through art therapy, we create spaces where young people can express what may be difficult to put into words, strengthen their understanding of themselves, build healthier ways of coping, and recognize their own capacity for growth.

Our Values

- Access & Equity
  We work to reduce financial, geographic, and systemic barriers to mental health care.

- Restoration Over Punishment
  We believe young people are more than their mistakes and that healing, accountability, and growth are possible when youth receive meaningful support.

- Creative Expression
  We recognize artmaking as a powerful therapeutic language that can help youth communicate, process experiences, and discover new possibilities.

- Youth-Centered Care
  We honor each young person's identity, strengths, voice, and individual path.

- Connection & Community
  Healing happens through relationships. We strive to create spaces where youth feel seen, supported, and connected to something larger than themselves.

- Trauma-Informed & Relational-Based Practice
  Our work prioritizes safety, trust, collaboration, choice, and empowerment.



YEAR IN REVIEW

Strengthening Prevention, Growing our Team

Program Year 2026 was a year of meaningful growth for restART studio. We focused on strengthening prevention and early-intervention services for underserved youth while continuing our commitment to justice-involved youth. At the same time, we grew our clinical team, strengthened referral partnerships, and created more opportunities for young people to access therapeutic and wellness-based art experiences.

This year, we:

- Provided prevention-based individual art therapy. We provided 1:1 art therapy for underserved youth experiencing mental health challenges, trauma, grief, family stress, identity concerns, and other

emotional and behavioral needs, helping young people access support before challenges escalate into crisis or justice-system involvement.

- Continued restorative art therapy for justice-involved youth. Through our longstanding partnership with the City of Longmont's REWiND program, we provided 1:1 art therapy that gave young people space to process experiences, strengthen coping skills, understand the factors influencing their behavior, and move toward healing and growth.
- Provided group-based art therapy and wellness programming. We offered clinical small-group art therapy for youth focused on themes such as identity, self-worth, coping, belonging, and connection. We also provided a free weekly art wellness group at the Longmont Youth Center's *Zone*, bringing accessible creative mental wellness programming into a familiar community setting.
- Strengthened referral and community partnerships. We continued building relationships with schools, diversion programs, mental health providers, youth-serving organizations, and other community partners to help connect underserved youth and families with support.
- Grew and strengthened our clinical team. Art therapy practicum and internship students joined our established clinical team, increasing our capacity to serve youth while receiving supervision, consultation, and professional development as emerging art therapists.
- Brought free artmaking into the community. We participated in Firehouse Art Center's Annual Longmont ArtWalk and several Downtown Longmont Summer Art & Music Series events, inviting people of all ages to create together and experience the connection and wellness that can happen through artmaking.

By year-end, restART had a larger clinical team, stronger prevention-based programming, deeper referral relationships, and increased capacity to serve underserved and justice-involved youth. That foundation positions us for our next chapter: extending our reach further throughout Boulder County in Program Year 2027.



Key Accomplishments

- Strengthened Prevention & Early-Intervention: Prevention-based services grew significantly in Program Year 2026, becoming the largest portion of our individual therapy caseload. Individual therapy reach grew throughout the year, from **34 unduplicated youth served in Q1 to 52 in Q4**. At our busiest point, **41 youth were receiving individual therapy in a single week**. The majority of youth accessed care through Medicaid and other insurance, helping make early mental health support accessible before challenges escalate into crisis or justice-system involvement.
- Grew Our Clinical Team & Training Program: Our clinical team continued to grow and strengthen, with contracted art therapists Jessica Wasieleski and Dakotah Acosta earning their LPC and ATR credentials. We also expanded our clinical training program, welcoming practicum student Lydia Russell, practicum and internship students Zoe Hatch and Rhonda Sterkel, and internship student Megan Lloyd.
- Strengthened Referral Pathways: We strengthened relationships with Longmont Youth Center, BRITE Collaborative, mental health providers,

and youth-serving organizations, while being added to St. Vrain Valley School District's resource and referral list. These connections created stronger pathways for underserved youth and families to learn about and access our services.

- Expanded Group Programming & Community Engagement: We provided **small-group clinical art therapy** at restART and **free weekly art wellness programming at the Longmont Youth Center**, while bringing free artmaking into the broader community through **Longmont ArtWalk, Downtown Longmont Summer Art & Music Series events, two BRITE Collaborative events, and the Colorado Art Therapy Association Conference**. These opportunities expanded access to creative experiences while building community connection and awareness of art therapy.
- Strengthened Organizational & Financial Sustainability: We continued building a more sustainable organization through diversified revenue from **Medicaid and insurance reimbursement, individual and community giving, and grants**. We ended Program Year 2026 with approximately **$28,300 in operating reserves**, meeting our goal of maintaining at least two months of operating reserves and creating a stronger foundation for continued growth.

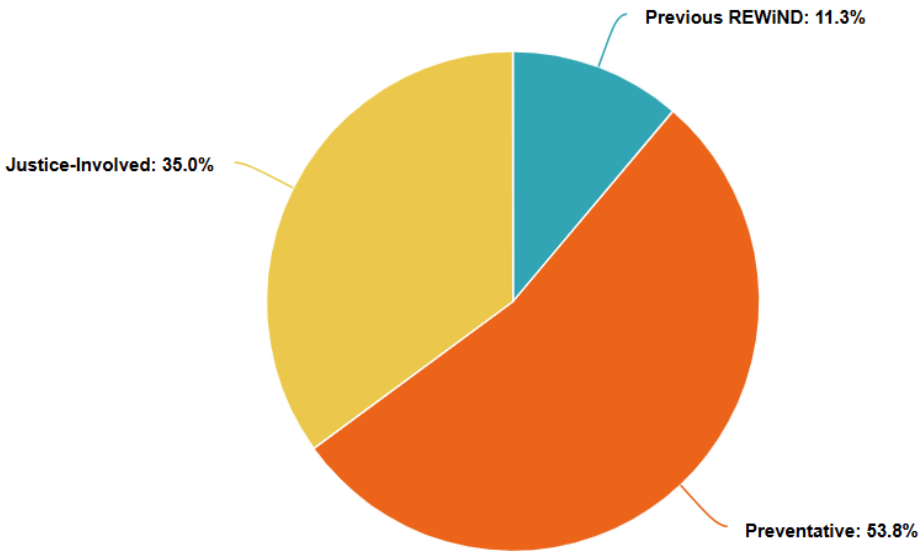
Youth Impact

Since opening in 2021, restART studio has served 152 youth with individual art therapy. Across the youth we have served to date:

  - Age: Youth served ranged from 8 to 25 years old, with an average age of 14.5
  - 70.4% cis-gender female, 21.7% cis-gender male, 4.6% nonbinary, 3.3% transgender
  - 45.9% Latine, 42.6% White, 10.1% Multiracial/Mixed Race, 1.3% Black
  - 21.7% Identify as LGBTQIA+

Throughout Program Year 2026, we provided individual clinical art therapy to 66 youth through both in-person and virtual sessions. Clients included prevention-based referrals, justice-involved youth, and youth who chose to continue therapy after completing REWiND.

Of the 66 youth we reached in Program Year 2026, their participation was spread across the following referral pathways, as shown in the pie chart below:



Youth Outcomes: Behind every number is a young person

A painting made during a hard conversation.

A lump of clay squeezed while finding the words.

A collage about identity still taking shape.

A piece of art that says something they were not ready to say out loud.

Youth participating in restART's individual art therapy services have reported meaningful changes in their ability to understand themselves, communicate their experiences, and respond to challenges.

Youth who've completed individual therapy with us to date reported:

- 100% increased ability to express thoughts and feelings
- 98% improved emotion identification
- 96% improved problem-solving
- 94% increased self-worth
- 89% gained healthy coping skills

Youth rated the helpfulness of restART's art therapy an average of 4.7 out of 5, compared with an average of 3.5 out of 5 for other treatment modalities they had previously experienced, including talk therapy and psychoeducation groups.

Additional outcomes included increased self-awareness, greater awareness of substance use, and strong perceptions of art therapy as a helpful treatment experience.

WHAT YOUTH ARE SAYING ABOUT RESTART STUDIO

"After going to art therapy I view myself in a more reflective and positive light. When I did art with my art therapist I focused on expression, growth, and understanding my feelings and issues rather than beating myself up for my mistake."

"Art therapy helped me express my emotions without having to say what I felt every time. It makes therapy a lot less of a place to work hard but instead a place to help better my inner turmoil."

"I felt like I had a lot to say and process about my past issues before my therapy began. Now, I feel content and have noticed my growth from discussing my past and the hard emotions it came with."

"restART studio gave me someone to open up to and be honest with and allowed me to learn new coping skills and unleash my artistic abilities."

LEARNING & ADAPTATION

Finding the right format for groups

We continued experimenting with how, when, and where group programming is offered.

One important lesson was the value of working within spaces where young people already have established relationships. Our weekly programming at the Longmont Youth Center demonstrated the potential of bringing accessible creative wellness opportunities directly into trusted youth spaces.

We will carry these lessons into future group and community programming.

Diversifying our Funding

The grant funding landscape continues to be increasingly competitive, making diversified and sustainable revenue more important than ever for small nonprofits like restART studio.

Program Year 2026 demonstrated the strength of restART's increasingly diversified funding model. Medicaid and insurance reimbursement, individual

giving, business and family giving funds, and grants all contributed to sustaining our work.

This balance allows us to remain responsive and financially resilient even as individual funding opportunities change.

Building Infrastructure for Growth

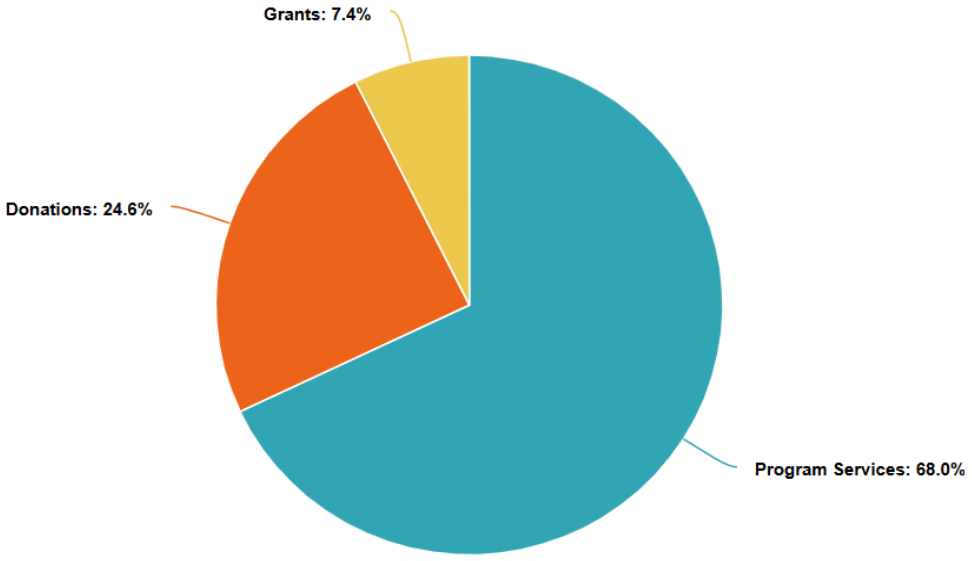
As our team and clinical program grew, so did the need for stronger systems behind the scenes. We continued strengthening data tracking, long-term outcome evaluation, financial oversight, and organizational systems to support responsible growth.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Building Sustainability Alongside Access

Revenue Overview

Program Year 2026 reflected continued organizational growth and an increasingly diversified funding model. Total Program Year 2026 revenue was ~$164,109, supported by three primary funding sources:



Clinical reimbursement has become an important part of restART's sustainability. Medicaid and insurance allow us to provide ongoing clinical services to underserved youth while reducing reliance on grants alone.

Philanthropic support remains essential. Donations and grants help make possible the parts of our mission that insurance does not fully support, including free community programming, outreach, art materials, reduced-fee services, training, and organizational growth.

Expenses and Financial Health

- Annual Operating Budget: ~$164,150
- Total Expenses: ~$165,177
- Year-End Operating Reserves: ~$28,300

Statement of Financial Health

We are proud to report that restART studio remains in strong financial health. Program Year 2026 reflected essentially break-even operations, with expenses and revenue closely aligned. We continue to carry no debt or liabilities and maintain consistent revenue from clinical services, with Medicaid and insurance reimbursement providing a reliable foundation for financial stability. Program Year 2026 ended with approximately two months of operating expenses held in reserves.

Our diversified funding model, built on clinical revenue, individual and community support, and grants, continues to sustain our mission and strengthen our ability to navigate changes in the funding landscape. In the year ahead, we aim to maintain this foundation while working toward a three-month operating reserve to support long-term stability and responsible growth.



COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Thank You to Our 48 Amazing Community Supporters

Program Year 2026 brought ~**$40,358 in individual and business donations**, representing nearly one-quarter of our annual revenue.

But support came in many forms beyond financial gifts.

People donated art supplies.
They referred young people to us.
They introduced us to potential partners.
They shared our work.
They invited us into community spaces.
They showed up.

To every person who helped make Program Year 2026 possible, **thank you**.

With gratitude to our community supporters:

LOOKING AHEAD

Program Year 2027: Extending Our Reach

Program Year 2026 strengthened our foundation. Program Year 2027 is about building from it.

With a larger clinical team, stronger prevention-based programming, growing referral relationships, and more experience bringing creative wellness into community settings, restART is ready to extend our reach further throughout Boulder County.

- Expand into Boulder
  Establish in-person art therapy services in Boulder while continuing to strengthen our clinical programming in Longmont.
- Grow Community-Based Programming
  Create more groups, workshops, open studio experiences, and art wellness opportunities in partnership with organizations throughout Boulder County.
- Build More Community Referral Partnerships
  Deepen relationships with schools, youth programs, mental health providers, restorative justice organizations, housing communities, arts organizations, and other partners that can help connect underserved youth with support.
- Increase Clinical Capacity
  Continue developing a strong team of clinicians and emerging art therapists so that more young people can access care.
- Strengthen Program Evaluation
  Improve how we measure, understand, and communicate the impact of our services over time.

Ways To Be a Part of What's Next

Our next chapter is about taking what we have built and making it accessible to more young people, in more communities, throughout Boulder County.

- Give. Help make art therapy accessible to underserved youth.
- Donate Art Supplies. Help keep our shelves stocked with materials youth can explore freely.
- Refer. Connect a young person or family who could benefit from art therapy.
- Partner. Bring creative mental health programming into your school, organization, youth program, or community.
- Share. Help more people discover what art therapy can offer.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND LEADERSHIP



Amanda Balmores, *MA, LPC, LAC, ATR-BC*
Co-Founder, Executive Director, & Clinical Supervisor

"I believe that it is my calling to walk alongside youth as they navigate their mental health and discover their capacity to shine."



Krista Marks
Co-Founder and Board Chair

"I believe every young person deserves the support and opportunity to choose a new path, no matter where they started."



Cynthia Gordon
PhD, LPC, ATR-BC, CAAP
Board Member



Tom Fischaber
Board Secretary and Treasurer



Lisa Bevens
Board Advisor

CLOSING MESSAGE

The Next Chapter Is Taking Shape

Five years into this work, restART studio continues to be guided by a simple belief: young people deserve access to spaces where they can create, connect, heal, discover their strengths, and be themselves.

This year, we strengthened those spaces.

We reached underserved youth earlier. We continued walking alongside youth already involved with the justice system. We grew our team. We strengthened the relationships that help young people find us. And we continued discovering new ways to bring creativity and emotional wellness into our community.

Now, we are ready to build from that foundation.

As we enter our sixth year, we are excited to reach further throughout Boulder County while staying grounded in what has always been at the heart of restART: young people, relationships, creativity, and the belief that healing can take many forms.

Thank you to everyone who has supported this work and helped restART grow into what it is today. We invite you to keep journeying with us as we create more opportunities for young people to be seen, supported, and empowered through art.

With enthusiasm for the future and gratitude for you,
The restART studio Team

Visit us at www.restARTstudio.org
Follow us on Instagram and Facebook: @restARTstudioCO

Questions, ideas, or ways you'd like to connect?
Email us anytime at amanda@restartstudio.org