



ART ESCAPE

Explore, Play, Engage, Create



Our start:

In 2012, five local artists saw a need in Sonoma Valley for more art-creating opportunities. They were particularly interested in providing experiences in art for youth who were not receiving much art education at school.

Their goal was to create a welcoming venue for children, adults, and art educators to nurture and expand the importance of fine arts and crafts.

Art Escape was intentionally located on the west side of Sonoma Valley because there were no art venues on that side of the valley.



**Impact100 Sonoma
awarded a \$15,000 Community Grant to
Arts Guild for the Art Escape Project:
Where Can Van Gogh (2015).**

What we do:

Art Escape makes creative activities affordable and accessible to a wide variety of people, especially disadvantaged youth. We offer a wide array of art workshops, summer art camps, and exhibition space for both new and established artists. Our art workshops are taught by qualified instructors who include formal art studio production knowledge while encouraging self-expression and self-exploration. Unique to Art Escape are: our mobile art education studio, free family art days, bilingual art classes, and workshops for art teachers who want to expand their art teaching abilities.

Most of our programs are offered at low or no cost. The atmosphere at Art Escape is supportive and encouraging.

A single story:

A year ago, one of our board members was at Sonoma Valley High School for an evening program and she came across a seventeen-year-old boy who was waiting in the hall for his dad. He was holding some complicated origami and said that he had made them himself. He was awkward and shy – one of those kids who would be considered to be “on the spectrum.” She invited him to Art Escape where he shared his origami skills during a free family day.

After receiving positive feedback, he was encouraged to teach (with some coaching) an origami workshop. He gained confidence and self-respect. He now refers to himself as a true origami artist. He has taught additional classes and has given private lessons. His origami is continually on display at Art Escape for all to enjoy. He has also sold more artwork than any other artist at Art Escape.

He acquired a sense of belonging at Art Escape, has made friends at school through Art Escape, earned money, and continues to grow – both personally and artistically. Now he is learning how to use a sewing machine and draw manga (a style of comics created in Japan).

Our future:

Art Escape is excited about the future with plans to create a larger circle of participants and even more services. We are looking forward to increasing community relationships and collaborating more with fellow nonprofit organizations in Sonoma Valley.