

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
Tuesday, June 11, 2024

Indy Peace, Indy Art Center, & Brooke's Place Open "Healing HeARTS" Exhibition

**INDIANAPOLIS** – On, May 30, 2024, Indy Peace, in collaboration with the Indy Art Center and Brooke's Place, opened the "Healing HeARTS" exhibition. For ten weeks, the Indy Peace Fellows gathered at the Indy Art Center to create art as a tool for healing and growth while navigating the impacts of gun violence. The artwork and photos highlight their journey and are now on display at the Indy Art Center (located at 820 E 67th St., Indianapolis, IN 46220) through July 31, 2024. This ceremony was also an opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of the Indy Peace Fellows with family and loved ones.

"Witnessing our team use art to resolve conflict and trauma has been a transformative experience," said Mary Alexander, vice president of community violence intervention for the Indy Public Safety Foundation. "We are thankful to our partners in helping Indy Peace implement this innovative solution to address the trauma inflicted by gun violence."

Participants explored various artistic mediums, such as glassblowing, printmaking, and ceramics, guided by skilled instructors and grief support facilitators.

"Art therapy and other therapeutic interventions are crucial in addressing the deep wounds left by gun violence. Therapy provides a safe space for individuals to express their pain, heal from trauma, and rebuild their lives," said Tony Lopez, Office of Public Health and Safety Deputy Director of Community Violence Reduction. "By engaging creatively, those affected by gun violence can find their voices, regain a sense of control, and foster resilience within their communities. Our commitment to these therapeutic practices is essential in transforming the aftermath of violence into a path towards recovery and hope."

During the exhibition's opening, Mayor Joe Hogsett declared June Gun Violence Awareness Month. His proclamation also thanked Indy Peace for their hard work to reduce gun violence in Indianapolis. The exhibition includes more than a dozen art pieces from program participants, a photography exhibit of the process, and personal video testimonials. An interactive component also invites visitors to share their messages of peace for Indianapolis. The public is encouraged to experience the unique collection to learn more about the personal effects of gun violence in our community and the efforts to end it.

Indy Peace is a partnership between the Indy Public Safety Foundation and the Office of Public Health and Safety, developed as part of Mayor Hogsett's Violence Reduction Strategy. Announced in fall 2021, the strategy is powered by \$150 million in American Rescue Plan funds. It emphasizes investments in law enforcement, behavioral health services, solutions that address the root causes of violence. It also includes peacemakers who engage with those at risk of becoming perpetrators or victims of gun violence. Indianapolis experienced a total 31% reduction in criminal homicides and a 20% reduction in non-fatal shootings over the first two years of the strategy's implementation.

To view video testimonials and the process of "Healing HeARTS" please follow this [link](#).

**INDY PUBLIC SAFETY FOUNDATION**

The Indy Public Safety Foundation (IPSF) is a non-profit dedicated to enhancing public safety and quality of life in Indy. We achieve this through a combination of philanthropic support for our city's public safety agencies, innovative community programs, and collaborative partnerships. To learn more, visit [www.indypsf.org](http://www.indypsf.org)

## OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Office of Public Health and Safety (OPHS) works to address root causes of crime and reduce violence in Indianapolis neighborhoods. The office convenes public safety and public health agencies along with community partners to execute focused policy efforts in the areas of food security, offender re-entry, and homelessness. The office acts as the coordinating agency for Mayor Joe Hogsett's violent crime reduction strategies and comprehensive criminal justice reform efforts. To learn more, visit [www.indy.gov/OPHS](http://www.indy.gov/OPHS)

## Indy Art Center

The Indianapolis Arts Center is a community-based arts organization that fosters creative expression and artistic appreciation through education, exhibitions, and outreach.

## Brooke's Place

Brooke's Place provides support groups, therapy services, and community education to empower children, teens, young adults, and their families to thrive in the midst of grief.

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