



2025

IMPACT REPORT

What we can imagine, we can create.



Arts-based Violence Prevention | Healing-centered Storytelling | Community Dialogue

www.visioningbeyondviolence.org



Our mission: To empower communities to create solutions to gun violence by fostering visionary thinking through the power of art, education, and systemic change efforts.

Our Model

We use trauma-informed, arts-based education and community dialogue to prevent violence, amplify youth voice, and build visionary leadership.

Our Values

- Healing-centered practice
- Youth voice and community wisdom
- Art as public testimony
- Dialogue that builds connection and accountability

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LETTER FROM OUR FOUNDER

The year 2025 marks a transformative milestone in our organizational history. After a decade of impactful work as Vision Quilt, we have officially transitioned to Visioning Beyond Violence (VBV). This rebrand is far more than a name change; it represents our maturation from a grassroots initiative into a national leader in trauma-informed prevention. Over the last ten years, we have proven that art is essential as a profound tool for advocacy and community engagement. Now, we are building the operational infrastructure to scale this "culture of compassion" across the country.

We have significantly strengthened our infrastructure, from our formalized facilitator training framework to our digital systems. This evolution ensures that our trauma-informed, arts-based models can be delivered with integrity to new communities.

Witnessing the leadership of our youth this year has been profoundly moving. In June, I watched as students from Lighthouse Community Public Schools stood before the Oakland City Council to present their visions for safety. Seeing them move from classroom reflection to public advocacy reinforces our VBV motto that "What we can imagine, we can create".

I invite you to join us in 2026 as we expand our facilitator training programs and bring this vital work to even more cities through community leaders and our VBV partners.

Cathy DeForest, Ph.D. CEO/Founder, Visioning Beyond Violence





Executive Summary

2025 At A Glance

- **Art For Social Change Portland Exhibition** was viewed at Lewis & Clark Community Counseling Center's Art Therapy Gallery. (May- November 2025).
- **Youth from Lighthouse Community Public Schools** presented AGV projects to Oakland City Council (June 2025).
- **Richmond Homebase Hackathon** co-hosted at CoBiz Richmond with The AI Homegirl — Art Meets AI panels exhibited (September 2025).
- **"Free Your Mind" benefit** event for Youth ALIVE! at Chabot Space & Science Center included screen printing by VBV youth and team. (November 13, 2025).
- **Art Box completed:** 100 custom decks plus instructional booklet (December 2025).
- **Facilitator training** system formalized: 8 modules, 20+ hours, designed for 45–60 minute segments.
- **Arts in Healing International Film Festival** selected our Addressing Gun Violence documentary and broadcasted it globally through watch parties (June 2025).
- **Presentation at American Art Therapy Association's National Conference** featured our work with art therapy faculty and graduate students (November 2025).

Youth voice moved from classroom reflection to public advocacy from Vision Quilt panels to Oakland City Council presentations.

Communities engaged in healing dialogue through art and facilitated conversation, in galleries, civic spaces, and community events alike.

VBV built tools and training systems that allow partner organizations to deliver this work with fidelity and care.

OUR APPROACH

The Visioning Beyond Violence Model





01 Healing-Centered Foundation

We start by creating emotionally safe, trauma-informed spaces where young people and communities can reflect with dignity and choice. This foundation makes it possible to engage hard topics without causing harm or shutting down.

Safety and Choice

Clear group agreements, multiple ways to participate, and consent-centered facilitation.

Care and Accountability

We hold grief and truth while modeling responsibility, cultural sensitivity and community care.

02 Art + Dialogue as the Method

We use art-making and guided conversation together. Art helps people name experience and imagine alternatives, and dialogue helps groups build understanding, connection, and shared language for prevention.

Art as Testimony and Vision

Creative work turns lived experience into something visible, meaningful, and shareable.

Structured Community Dialogue

Facilitated prompts and practices support deep listening, reflection, and constructive discussion.

03 Youth Voice and Public Storytelling

We support young people as visionaries, storytellers, and changemakers. Youth are not just participants, they are meaning-makers who practice leadership through reflection, creation, and public testimony.

Civic Voice in Action

Opportunities for youth to bring learning into civic and community spaces.

Narrative Shift

Public storytelling through exhibitions, banners, screenings, and community events that invite wider dialogue.

04 Facilitator Training and Quality Support

We use art-making and guided conversation together. Art helps people name experience and imagine alternatives, and dialogue helps groups build understanding, connection, and shared language for prevention.

Facilitator Training Framework

Our 8-module structure (20+ hours) is designed in 120 minute segments, centered in trauma-informed facilitation promoting self care and community building.

Tools for Consistent Delivery

Facilitator training materials and portable tools (like the Art Box) help community leaders guide reflection and conversation within their own communities.

05 Learning, Reflection, and Improvement

Our approach includes ongoing learning, refinement, and accountability. We strengthen the work through feedback, reflection, and evaluation practices that inform how we help create safe schools and neighborhoods.

Practice-Based Learning

Debriefs and reflection from youth, facilitators, and community partners on how we measure impact on youth and communities.

Measurement with Integrity

Tracking themes, learning, and engagement to improve quality while staying grounded in what communities actually experience.

Community Impact

Exhibitions, civic voice, & storytelling





Addressing Gun Violence, From Classroom to City Hall

In 2025, Visioning Beyond Violence delivered Addressing Gun Violence (AGV) with 8th graders at Lighthouse and Lodestar, engaging **150 students** across **ELA, math, science, and art**. Students studied root causes, analyzed local data, and created public-facing work, including **poems, math posters, and animations** that brought their research essays to life. A cohort of **six students** took this learning to City Hall to advocate for more programs like AGV and to speak up for their school.

1. Multidisciplinary Curriculum

AGV is a learning experience where students study gun violence through ELA, math, science, and art, focusing on root causes, community impact, and prevention.

2. Student Work and Exhibition

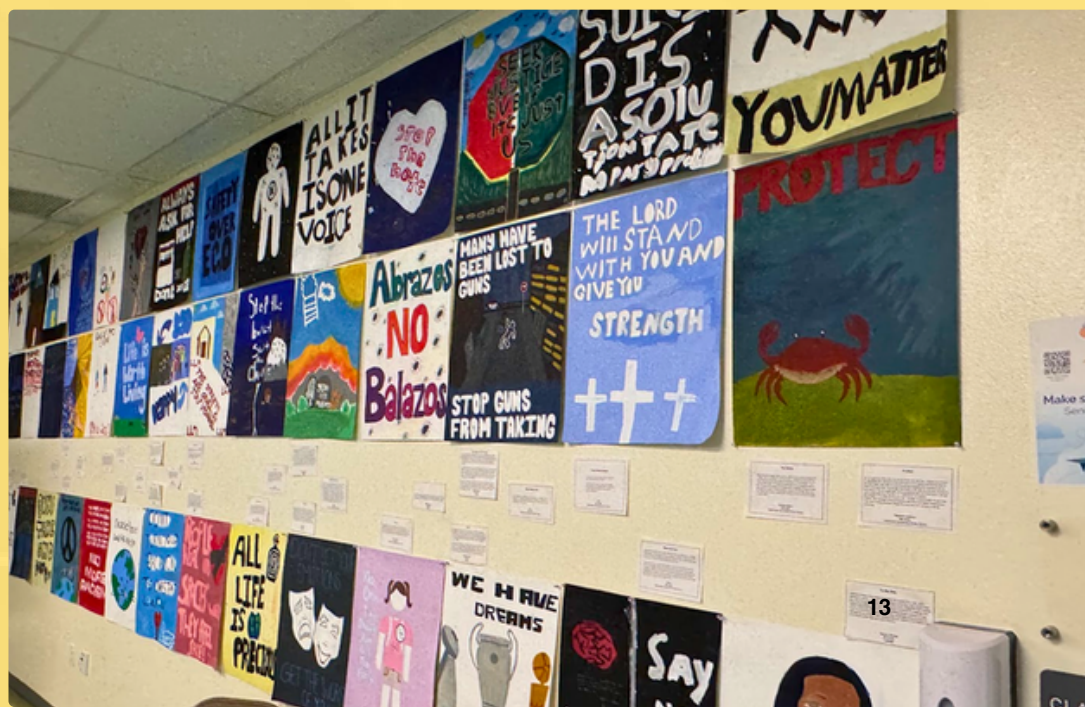
Students transformed learning into public-facing work, including research essays, poems, math posters using local data, and animations. The culminating exhibition displayed the work of 150 students.

3. City Hall Advocacy

Six students brought their AGV learning into civic space at City Hall, advocating for more programs like AGV and for their school to remain open, naming the value of learning experiences like this.

Impact: Students showed an increase in math scores after completing AGV.



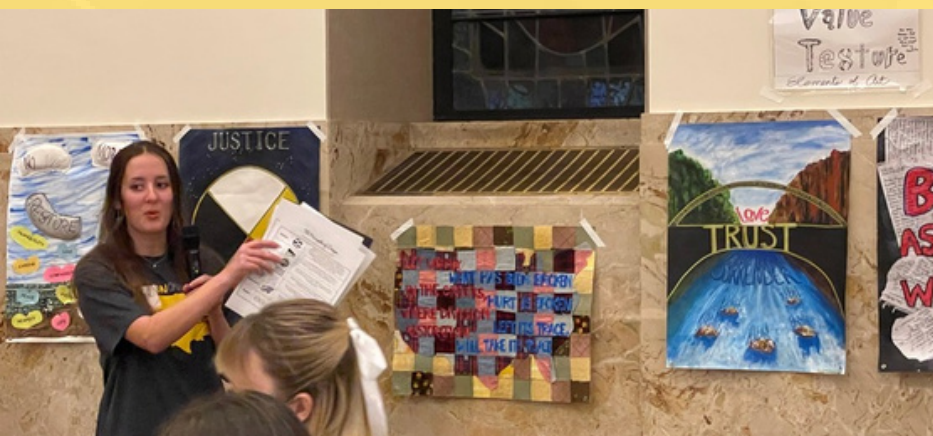




Envision a Future Without Gun Violence, Portland

Exhibition + Community Dialogue

From May through November 2025, Visioning Beyond Violence partnered with Art For Social Change at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, OR. Art Therapy faculty and graduate students were trained as facilitators culminating in the “**Envision a Future Without Gun Violence,**” community art exhibition seen by hundreds of people. Featuring artwork, poetry, and research from youth and community contributors, the exhibition invited public reflection on the impacts of gun violence and the role of prevention, healing, and shared responsibility. **Community Dialogues** enhanced the impact of the art through facilitated conversation and art-making.



01 Exhibition Outcomes

We collected evaluation responses from visitors to understand what shifted through the exhibition experience, including learning, reflection, and prevention readiness.

Increased Understanding

90% of attendees reported increased understanding of how gun violence affects people.

Prevention Readiness + Overall Rating

78% reported increased intention to prevent gun violence within their family, school, or community.

02 Community Dialogue Outcomes

The Community Dialogue paired facilitated conversation with art-making to help participants process a difficult topic in a structured, heart-centered space.

Understanding

79% of participants reported increased understanding of how gun violence affects people.

Intention to Prevent

91% reported increased intention to prevent gun violence within their family, school, or community

Belief in Art

100% agreed that art creation can impact change, and 85.3% rated the experience Excellent.

03 Community Demand and What We Heard

Participants did not only report learning, they expressed a clear desire for more spaces like this, especially in public and youth-centered settings.

Support for More Events

94% said the Office of Violence Prevention should sponsor more art exhibitions and dialogues.

What Participants Said

- “Art is therapeutic, healing, and helps us imagine an inspiring future.”
- “A picture shows more than a thousand words.”
- “The group discussion helped me develop a perspective on gun violence from a communal experience.”

Community Presence & Partnerships

VBV showed up across community spaces to expand visibility, invite engagement, and build momentum for prevention through art and dialogue.



AIHIFF Documentary + Watch Parties

VBV's 30-minute documentary was selected for the inaugural Arts in Healing International Film Festival. The film reached audiences through worldwide watch parties.



Richmond Homebase Hackathon, Art Meets AI

VBV exhibited artwork at Richmond's Homebase Hackathon at CoBiz Richmond, co-hosted with The AI Homegirl, grounding an innovation space in human-centered storytelling.



Free Your Mind Benefit Event Activation

VBV hosted interactive activations, including an Uplifting Visions Art Table and screen printing. Youth ambassadors helped support the experience.



AATAA 2025 Conference

Mary Andrus, co-chair of Art Therapy Graduate School at Lewis and Clark College and VBV Founder, Cathy DeForest, presented their partnership work at the national Art Therapy Conference, expanding visibility for arts-based prevention and healing-centered facilitation.



The Missing Word

VBV contributed planning and on-set support for "The Missing Word," strengthening storytelling as a tool for truth-telling, connection, and prevention. This film builds a shared language in expressing loss and love for parents who have lost children



A NEW CHAPTER

Vision Quilt → Visioning Beyond Violence



VISIONING
BEYOND VIOLENCE



Why We Rebranded

In 2025, we transitioned from Vision Quilt to Visioning Beyond Violence. The new name reflects our purpose more directly, fostering visionary thinking to amplify youth and community voice, art, and facilitated dialogue to support community healing and violence prevention. While our name evolved, our values, relationships, and commitment to young people remained the same.

What stayed the same

Youth-led storytelling, community-rooted art, and healing-centered spaces that invite reflection and prevention.

What became clearer

Our focus on violence prevention, civic voice, and the role of facilitated dialogue in building safer communities.

What this enables

Stronger partnerships, clearer public communication, and a model that can scale through facilitator training and shared tools.



Our original name, Vision Quilt, carried this work since 2015.

Formerly Vision Quilt, now Visioning Beyond Violence



SCALING THE MODEL: FACILITATOR TRAINING

In 2025, Visioning Beyond Violence strengthened the foundation for growth by formalizing our **Facilitator Training model**. This work is designed to equip educators, art teachers and therapists and community leaders to deliver VBV programming with consistency and care, so the learning can continue beyond a single classroom or site. Our training centers trauma-informed facilitation, healing-centered dialogue, and ethical storytelling, providing partners with the skills and tools to hold safe spaces and guide meaningful reflection.

1. Facilitator Training Framework

VBV's training prepares facilitators to lead art-making and guided conversation around violence prevention in a way that is structured, supportive, and healing-centered. The framework is organized into 8 modules designed in two hour segments, totaling 20+ hours.

2. What Facilitators Learn

Facilitators build practical skills to deliver the work with integrity, including: creating emotionally safe group agreements, guiding dialogue on difficult topics, supporting youth voice, and translating research and lived experience into creative testimony without harm or extraction.

3. Tools and Quality Support

Participants receive training materials and facilitation tools that support consistent delivery, including structured prompts, session guidance, and portable resources that help partners lead reflection and conversation with care.

Facilitator Training strengthens quality and sustainability by building partner capacity to lead this work independently.

Module 1: Welcome + Preparation

Facilitators are introduced to the mission of VBV and the facilitator's role and responsibilities. Facilitators practice creating and upholding trauma-informed agreements and using grounding tools (like The 4 Circles of Self Care) so participants feel emotionally safe, respected, and supported from the start.

Module 2: Addressing Gun Violence, Root Causes + Community Solutions

Facilitators build confidence in guiding justice-centered learning related to the systemic root causes of gun violence, including historical, social, and economic drivers. They practice holding space for difficult conversations, connecting personal stories to broader systems, and supporting participants to consider evidence based and community-led solutions.

Module 3: Building Resilient Individuals + Communities

Facilitators learn how to guide participants toward strength, not just struggle. This module focuses on protective factors and resilience strategies, helping participants identify sources of coping, support, and hope. Facilitators practice trauma-informed approaches that uplift healing and empowerment, and learn how to hold community dialogues that honor lived experience while supporting forward movement.

Module 4: The Art of Visioning

Facilitators learn to use creativity and the art of visioning as a pathway to healing. This module introduces poetry practices that help participants process what they carry and imagine what they want. Facilitators reflect on visionaries who have inspired their lives and communities. Using visualization practices, they reflect on their wildest hope for their community and reflect on what they want others to understand about their story and vision for a safe, resilient future.

Module 5: Drafting VBV Artworks

Facilitators learn how to support artistic expression with gentleness and respect. This module helps facilitators guide participants in art concepts as they begin shaping their stories and visions into artwork, without imposing interpretations or “fixing” the work. Facilitators practice offering encouragement and constructive guidance, creating a nonjudgmental environment for vulnerable expression, and helping participants connect their personal art to collective visioning.

Module 6: Creating + Completing VBV Artworks

Facilitators learn how to support participants with care and integrity as they complete their artworks, focusing on sustaining momentum and providing support without pressure. Facilitators practice ways to honor each participant’s unique creative process and cultural heritages. Facilitators learn how to help their community members prepare for sharing their visions while protecting their dignity and consent as artwork moves closer to public view.

Module 7: Preparing for Exhibitions + Community Engagement

Facilitators learn how to bring participant voice into public space responsibly. This module covers curating and preparing exhibitions that uplift youth and community stories, collaborating with partners to present work with care, and facilitating dialogue and storytelling. Facilitators learn how to treat exhibitions as spaces for healing and awareness, while also supporting advocacy and community learning.

Module 8: Facilitator Resources + Planning Tools

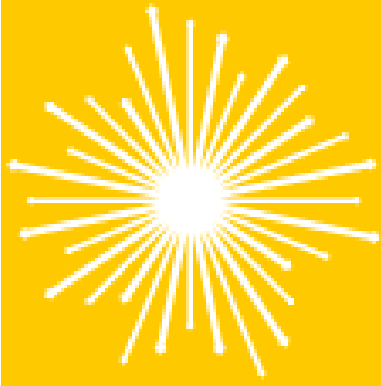
Facilitators review neuroscience information about how creative expression helps youth and people of all ages heal, learn and thrive. They also reflect on how partnerships using the VBV model can contribute to systemic narrative change. Facilitators begin planning their work with their community using evaluation tools and accessing VBV media, films, and facilitation resources.



THE VISIONING BEYOND VIOLENCE ART BOX

The Visioning Beyond Violence Art Box is a portable facilitation tool designed to spark reflection, dialogue, and visioning through original artwork, poetry and quotations. Built to support VBV's curriculum and community-based programming, it helps youth and adults slow down, process lived experience with care, and imagine what safety and healing can look like beyond violence. The Art Box is flexible for classrooms, workshops, restorative circles, and community gatherings, while still providing clear structure so facilitators can lead sessions with consistency and intention.

The box comes with practical guidance and multiple ways to use the cards, including opening circles ("choose a card that speaks to you"), writing and journaling prompts, paired or small-group dialogue, visioning exercises, quotation discussions, story circles, and closing reflections. Because the entry point is an image or a quote, participants can engage at their own pace, making hard conversations more accessible and less intimidating. In 2025, VBV completed 100 custom Art Box decks and an instructional booklet, creating a tangible tool that helps partners carry this work forward in real community spaces.



VISIONING BEYOND VIOLENCE

What's Next in 2026

In 2026, Visioning Beyond Violence will focus on scaling with integrity. Building on the foundation created in 2025, we are expanding facilitator training, strengthening evaluation, and growing partnerships so more communities can access healing-centered prevention through art, dialogue, and youth voice.

01 Facilitator Training

Launching training cohorts with partner sites so educators, art therapists, and community leaders can deliver VBV programming, expanding access beyond VBV-led sessions.

02 Expand the Exhibition + Community Dialogue Model

Bringing exhibitions and facilitated community dialogues into additional public spaces using art as testimony and invitation, and dialogue as a pathway from reflection to prevention readiness.

03 Strength, Evaluation, and Learning

Refining tools to measure impact to improve VBV program quality, and strengthen what we learn from youth and adult participants and partners. Analyzing neuroscience research on how art affects the brain and increases academic achievement.

04 Go cross-city Partnership and Capacity

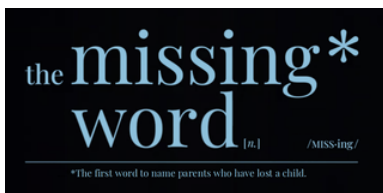
Deepening partnerships in Oakland and Portland while building relationships that support expansion into new communities. Strengthening organizational capacity through systems, staffing, and sustainable funding to support long-term growth.

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS!

Lewis & Clark
Graduate School of
Education and Counseling



Art For Social Change





VISIONING

BEYOND VIOLENCE

What we can imagine, we can create!