



# Strengthening Futures

Impact Report: Fiscal Year 2024

## A Portrait in Resilience: Lucía's Story

What was your life like at 16? Not a child, but not quite an adult either. In that transitional time, you probably felt pressure to perform in school, fit in, and plan for your future.

"Lucía" has the added stress of growing up in a group foster home. The West Valley teen was among **20 children who attended the 2024 Free Arts Theater Camp at Herberger Theater Center**. Lucía stood out immediately at camp. She wore her dark hair in pigtails on top of her head. And she decorated her camp name tag to spark conversation and side with her favorite rapper. It read: "Kendrick Won."

The first week of camp challenges participants to explore art forms, including movement, visual arts, and spoken word. Then, campers prepare a final performance to cap the second week. Lucía chose to create an "Ariana Grande Mega-mix," blending lyrics about her life with the pop star's beats.

She worked diligently with our teaching artists and it showed in her dress rehearsal. But when Lucía

began to sing that night, in front of nearly 300 supporters, this usually confident young woman froze. After a moment, she walked off stage.

You could hear a pin drop as the audience wondered what would happen next. But backstage, a Free Arts staff member held Lucía's hands and encouraged her. A new friend fetched her water, while another camper rubbed her shoulders like a coach preparing a boxer for the next round. As she returned to the stage there was a wave of supportive snaps from the audience.

Minutes later, Lucía gave the performance of a lifetime. She sang about the "ugly thoughts" that keep her up at night and her search for belonging. And she shared that her "dream life" keeps her focused on her hope for a better future.

**Thank you for helping Lucía and others find resilience, healing, and community at camp.**



**Camp counselors, teaching artists, and mentors create a safe and collaborative environment for participants.**

# FY 2024: A Goal-busting Year, Thanks to You

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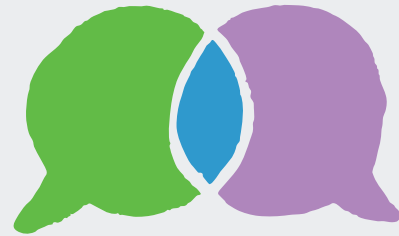
**7,919**  
participants served



**11,402**  
interactions with mentors & artists



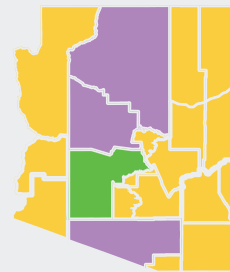
**\$249,889**  
value of 7,315 volunteer hours\*



**211**  
program activities in the community



**7**  
new program partnerships



1st year of program expansion into  
Coconino, Pima, & Yavapai counties

\*Based on Independent Sector's 2023 Value of Volunteer Time Report



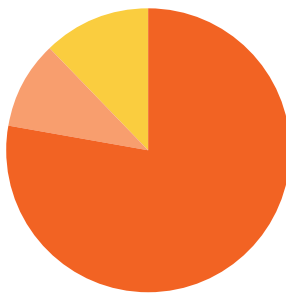
# Your Generosity at Work

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES

An overwhelming number (97%) of children and teens surveyed in fiscal year 2024 indicated that our programs overall were “good to excellent.” The graphic represents their feedback on individual outcomes. Read more about our effectiveness surveys on page 4.

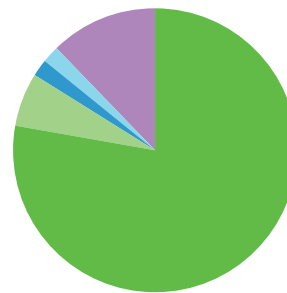


## FINANCIALS



### Expenses

Program (78%)	\$2,294,973
Administrative (10%)	305,852
Fundraising (12%)	355,273
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Total Expenses	\$2,956,098



### Revenue

Grants & Contributions (78%)	\$1,742,786
In-Kind (7%)	144,584
Events	58,584
Rental Income (3%)	35,131
Interest & Investments (2%)	261,543
<hr/>	
Total Revenue	\$2,242,628



# Measuring Our Effectiveness

One of our core values at Free Arts is strength. To help participants create strong futures, it's vital to regularly measure and improve the quality of our programs over time. To do that, we partner with The Institute for Child Development Research and Social Change at Indigo Cultural Center.

In fiscal year 2024, Indigo surveyed 770 of our participants. A few highlights:



**88%**

of children/teens reported increased feelings of safety.



**90%**

said they acquired more coping skills.



**86%**

said our programs increased their sense of well-being.

Free Arts considers programs successful when at least 80% of children demonstrate positive outcomes.

## Make a Bigger Impact in 2025

Do you transform lives by maximizing your Arizona tax credits? It's easy and this year the credits are **BIGGER** than ever. Single filers can now give Free Arts, a Qualifying Foster Care Organization, up to \$618 and joint filers can give up to \$1,234.

That money will return to you as a full refund or credit on anything owed when you file your 2025 state taxes. No itemization needed. Plus, you can still claim other tax credits that help low-income neighbors, schools, and veterans. Ensure your tax dollars change lives today by visiting [freeartsaz.org/foster-care-tax-credit](https://freeartsaz.org/foster-care-tax-credit).

## ABOUT FREE ARTS

Free Arts' mission is to **transform children's trauma to resilience through the arts**. Our research-based program model, **Art + Mentors = Resilience**, helps our participants build the resilience they need to overcome adversity by connecting them with caring adult volunteer mentors and intentional arts activities that develop both their skills and sense of self.

## FOLLOW US



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## CONTACT US

352 East Camelback Road,  
Ste. 100  
Phoenix, Arizona 85012  
602-258-8100

**freeartsaz.org**