

ETHICS DOCUMENT

CODE OF ETHICS FOR THE ONTARIO ART THERAPY ASSOCIATION

In arriving at our own code of ethics we have referred to the American Art Therapy Association Code of ethics , the Quebec Code of Ethics of Art Therapists, the Canadian Association of Child and Play Therapy Code of Ethics and the Code of Ethics of the American Psychological Association.

PREAMBLE

This Code of Ethics applies to all art therapists in Ontario in their pursuit of professional activities. The laws of the land supersede this code.

The ethical standards contained in this document are the minimum acceptable standards of the profession and the ones to which art therapists will be held accountable by the public and by their peers.

The purpose of the OATA Code of Ethics and the OATA ethics committee is to provide and maintain ethical standards for art therapists and to guide and protect members of the public seeking services in this field.

Art therapists believe in the dignity and worth of the individual as possessing a unique set of biological, spiritual, psychological, and social characteristics. While demanding of themselves freedom of inquiry and communication, art therapists accept responsibility that this freedom confers: high standards of competence, consideration for the best interests of all persons for which services are rendered, and objectivity in reporting findings.

1) RESPONSIBILITY.

Art therapists maintain the principle of responsible caring, high standards of professional competence and service, objectivity and integrity, and are responsible for the consequences of their actions.

Art therapists have a responsibility to respect client confidentiality and safeguard verbal and visual information.

2) PUBLIC BEHAVIOUR

Art therapists are responsible for the influence that their public behaviour may have on their profession, on their ability to perform as professionals, and on society. In their roles as clinicians, educators, supervisors, researchers, interns, and students, art therapists have duties and obligations toward the public, their profession and their colleagues.

3) INTEGRITY OF REPRESENTATION.

Art therapists have the responsibility to attempt to prevent distortion, misuse, or suppression of art therapy findings by the institution or agency of which they are employees.

4) INDIVIDUAL ACCOUNTABILITY.

Art therapists always maintain their accountability whether they are members of governmental or other organizational bodies, or in private practice.

5) AS EDUCATORS.

As art therapist educators, art therapists recognize their primary obligation to help others acquire knowledge and skill and to maintain high standards of scholarship.

6) EDUCATION.

As art therapy educators, art therapists provide instruction based on careful preparation and are accurate, current, and scholarly. Art therapists recognize the need for continuing education and research and are open to new procedures and adapt their practice of art therapy to changes in expectations and values over time.

7) AS PRACTITIONERS.

Art therapists recognize that their recommendations and actions may change the lives of others. They are alert to personal, social, organizational, financial or political situations or pressures that might lead to misuse of their influence. Art therapists respect the integrity and protect the welfare of the client.

8) PERSONAL ISSUES.

Art therapists' moral and ethical standards are a personal matter, unless they have an impact upon their efficacy as an art therapist.

Art therapists recognize that personal issues, conflicts or problems may bias or interfere with professional efficacy. They refrain from any activity in which their personal issues are likely to lead to inadequate performance, or harm a client, student, colleague or research participant. If art therapists become aware of personal issues when engaging in such activity, they may seek professional assistance to determine whether they should suspend, terminate or limit the scope of their professional activity.

9) COMPETENCE.

The maintenance of high standards of competence is a responsibility shared by all art therapists in the interest of the public and the profession. Professional competence includes acquiring an expanding body of theoretical knowledge, and adhering to recognized standards of practice.

Art therapists recognize the limits of their competence and techniques. They provide only services and use only techniques for which they are qualified by training and experience. They maintain knowledge of current professional information related to the services they render.

10) ACCURATE REPRESENTATION.

Art therapists use honest caution and due regard when supplying information to the public regarding:

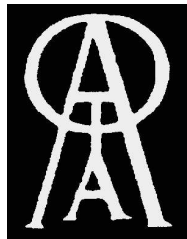
1. Their own representation
2. The practice of art therapy
3. The Ontario Art Therapy Association.

Art therapists accurately represent their competence, education, training and experience, and their rightful affiliation with professional associations. Only rightful affiliation assures standards of professional ethics and practice.

11) RESPECT.

Art therapists recognize differences among people such as those that may be associated with age, gender, socio-economics, sexual preferences, and religious and ethnic backgrounds. When necessary, they obtain related training, experience or counsel to assure competent service or research.

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