Art therapy helps schools to foster maximum engagement, inclusion and resilience for students to achieve their best possible learning outcomes.

The Australian and New Zealand Art Therapy Association. www.anzata.org

What is art therapy?
Art therapy offers the student the opportunity to express and explore thoughts, feelings and concerns that are sometimes too difficult to put into words. In a safe, creative and supportive space, the student is invited to choose from a wide variety of art and visual media to process and creatively problem solve through their issues and concerns that may be impeding their engagement and learning in school.

How does art therapy work in schools?
The art therapist collaborates and consults with teachers, learning support, welfare staff and parents to assess and address the students’ needs and desired outcomes. The art media may include painting, drawing, clay, sandplay, stories, poetry, drama or music. Art therapy can be adapted successfully for both individual support and group programs. It can integrate into and enrich curriculum areas covering Health, Creative Arts and Social Sciences. Art therapy accesses multiple intelligences and diverse learning styles.

What are the benefits of art therapy?
- It promotes resilience and well-being;
- It provides inclusive expression of cultural diversity;
- It provides a safe place to process loss, grief, change, dislocation and trauma;
- It assists engagement with educational programs for learning accountability;
- It develops communication skills, creative problem solving, emotional literacy and management of anxiety;
- It increases confidence in addressing challenging behaviours, bullying and antisocial behaviour;
- It helps to inspire all students to access their fullest creative intelligence.

ANZATA registers art psychotherapists who have a recognised masters degree in art therapy. Contact ANZATA at www.anzata.org