



Cultivating Compassion Through Art

EDUCATOR PROGRAM PACKET

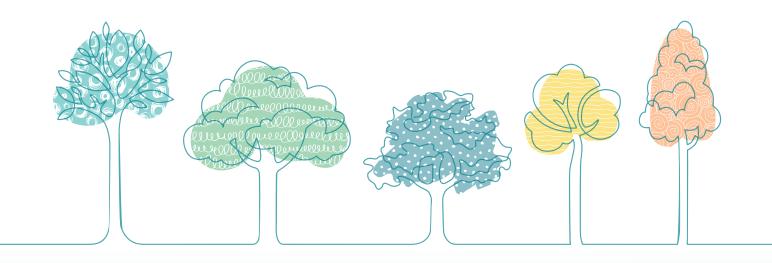






TABLE OF CONTENTS

Program Overview

Frequently Asked Questions

The Five Branches of Hope

Self-Exploration and Creative Brainstorm: Activity Sheets

Branches of Hope: Self-Affirmation Cards

Leaves of Inspiration: Shareable Affirmation Cards

Permission Slip

Participant Consent and Entry Form

Hosting Your Own Exhibit





PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Love Your Tree is a national arts-based program for people of all ages focused on cultivating self-compassion, body acceptance and positive mental well-being through creativity, community connection and self-reflection. This student guided initiative self-empowers the student body to learn how to appreciate their body and mental wellbeing.

Prior to 2021, Love Your Tree (LYT) has focused on highlighting body diversity and helped thousands of participants use art to embrace positive body image for themselves and others. Love Your Tree is growing in new and wonderful ways that provide new content and make room for a celebration of diversity that extends beyond body image to overall mental wellness.

The tree is a universal symbol for growth, resilience, strength and the beauty of individual differences and diversity. Just like humans, every tree in the forest is unique, yet trees remain connected to one another and the world around them in powerful ways. Through participation in *Love Your Tree*, students of all ages are encouraged to explore the tree metaphor and share creative expressions of acceptance, gratitude for the unique forms of our bodies and our lives, and appreciation of many ways in which we get stronger and heal through connection with others.

Getting Involved Is Easy!

- **Step 1:** Download the Educator Program Pack.
- **Step 2:** Use the information and guided activities to create an original piece of creative art based on one (or all) of the Branches of Hope.
- **Step 3:** Submit your entry at LoveYourTree.org and your artwork will be added to the national virtual art gallery. Remember, artwork is a broad term that includes any application of your creativity and imagination. Entries may include art in all its forms. Visit the Q&A section for details about how to submit different types of art.

More Ways to Get Involved and Make an Impact:

- Host your own *LYT* art workshop for a class. Simply download the Activity Sheets and LYT PowerPoint Slides (find helpful tips for hosting a workshop in the FAQ section).
- Attend quarterly events and activities. To learn more, visit LoveYourTree.org.
- Download the Branches of Hope (PDF) and submit it with a selfie to LoveYourTree@ERCPathlight.com.
- Send Leaves of Inspiration (PDF) to someone currently in treatment doing the hard work of healing from mental health struggles such as depression, anxiety, PTSD and eating disorders. Fill out and submit to LoveYourTree@ERCPathlight.com.

For more information on deadlines and submission guidelines, be sure to read the FAQs section.



Cultivating Compassion Through Art





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What type of artwork can I submit?

Love Your Tree is all about creativity. Traditionally, entries have been in the form of posters (paintings, drawings, etc.) or other forms of visual art such as photography and digital design work. However, we were so inspired by all of the new submissions (like this beautiful song) that we're encouraging every student to think outside the box! Posters, poems, collages, spoken word, TikTok videos, choreography, sculpture — as long as you can send it (or a photo or video of it) to us, it belongs in the Love Your Tree gallery! Here are some tips for submitting various forms of artwork:

- Visual 2D or 3D artwork (posters, paintings, drawings, graphic design, etc.)
- Submit photo file (JPEG, PNG)
- Written works of art (poems, stories, lyrics, etc.)
- Submit document file (.doc or PDF)
- Visual/movement performances (spoken word, choreographed dance, theatrical performance, etc.)
 - Submit video file (MP4, FLV, MOV or AVI)
- Spoken/musical performance (instrumental composition, song lyrics, etc.)
- Submit audio or video file (MP3, MP4, FLV, MOV or AVI)

Is there a deadline to enter the program?

The Love Your Tree campaign will be open and active **through December 31**. If you will be hosting a workshop, submitting your own artwork or planning a Love Your Tree event for your own community, please keep these dates in mind. All entries for this year must be received prior to the December 31 deadline to be included in this year's online gallery. Submissions accepted outside of campaign dates are held until the campaign opens next year.

I'm not much of an artist. Are there other ways for me to get involved?

We believe everyone is an artist in their own way and it can be fun and rewarding to let creativity flow no matter what comes out of it. Don't let a lack of formal artistic ability keep you from experimenting with art. However, if you're looking for a new way to get involved or spread the positive *Love Your Tree* message with others, check out our downloadable Branches of Hope and Leaves of Inspiration affirmation cards that you can easily fill in and share on social media, submit to the campaign or even print and give to someone who needs encouragement. Educators are also welcome to print and give them to their students when they notice positive actions as a reward and submit a photo to the campaign.

How old do I need to be to participate?

Exactly the age that you are right now. We've had the pleasure of hosting *Love Your Tree* events for preschoolers on up through senior citizens. Just like trees can keep growing and changing from tiny saplings to ancient redwoods, there's really no age limit to creativity and self-expression. However, everyone who submits artwork to the campaign is required to submit a Participant Consent and Entry Form as well. If you're under 18, that means your parent or guardian needs to consent too, so you'll need their permission to participate.



Cultivating Compassion Through Art





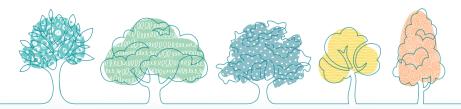
What's involved in hosting a workshop?

Workshops can look different depending on the age of your students, how much time you have available, access to supplies or your individual goals for engagement. Workshops can be educational, relaxing, therapeutic and fun! The Love Your Tree campaign has easy-to-use activities and a ready-to-go PowerPoint presentation that can be helpful tools to walk participants through the Love Your Tree creative process. Many facilitators take these ideas and adapt them into even more beautiful creations. Over the years, Love Your Tree workshops have been hosted in a variety of settings:

- Middle and high school art curriculums
- Kindergarten murals
- Parent-child art workshops

- Campus-wide celebrations
- Writing workshops and more

We encourage you to use the available materials here and put your own creative spin on the concepts! Remember, the only goal is to inspire self-compassion, body acceptance and positive mental well-being, and to help spread those themes through connection to the community. Need help hosting a workshop? Please email us at LoveYourTree@ERCPathlight.com.





THE FIVE BRANCHES OF HOPE

Love Your Tree uses the metaphor of the tree and its universal symbols to help participants celebrate themselves and others across the following "branches of hope."



Diversity & Uniqueness

Just as trees are all unique in their shapes, functions, sizes, colors, growing patterns and blooming seasons, so are we! Love Your Tree honors the natural beauty of diversity and the beauty of our imperfections. With their branches sprouting in different directions and roots attaching in different soils, every tree is an individual and no two are exactly alike in appearance or existence. In this way, the tree can symbolize our individuality and our distinct paths as different experiences shape us into who we are.

Examples: "Like trees in a forest, we all grow in different ways and can find our own light." "Like a tree, my body is unique and worthy of love." "Like a tree, I am more than my outward appearance."



Community & Connectedness

Trees symbolize togetherness and serve as a reminder that we are never alone or isolated. Did you know that trees can communicate with one another through root systems and need one another to grow properly in a forest system? Even across continents and oceans, trees are constantly in a cycle of connection with the air we breathe and the environments we live in. Like trees, we are deeply connected to each other and the world even beyond our own family tree.

Examples: "Like a tree, I have deep roots and am not alone in my journey." "Like a tree, I am connected to my community." "Like a tree, I am an essential part of something bigger."



Mindfulness & Joy

Walking through a forest is known to have a calming effect on mood and provides a wonderful atmosphere for mindfulness and self-reflection. Imagine all the different ways we interact with trees – relaxing in a hammock strung between two old trunks, kids climbing and laughing in the branches or simply sitting and watching the wind blow through the leaves. *Love Your Tree* uses the tree symbol to encourage rest, meditation, playfulness, peace and connection with nature as a form of self-care and joy.

Examples: "Like a tree, I can be still." "Like trees in the wind, I am relaxed with each breath." "Like a tree full of playful kids, I am full of joy."



Cultivating Compassion Through Art





Resilience & Change

Even when trees lose their leaves or look bare during winter, new buds appear and fresh leaves unfurl in the spring. Other trees stay green through unexpected droughts or serve as shelter through the coldest winters. Over time, trees adapt to unexpected situations, often growing over or around barriers like sidewalks and fences, sprouting new branches. This is similar to how people grow and change over a lifetime, and it reminds us that we can adapt to all types of unforeseen circumstances.

Examples: "Like a tree, my mind is blooming." "Like a tree, my body changes through the seasons in my life."



Strength & Growth

Different types of trees stand strong all over the world and display their strength in a variety of ways. Some spread their roots deep or wide into the soil to ground and stabilize themselves. Others grow right into the edges of cliffs or are perfectly suited to stay upright during a hurricane. Just as trees grow strong, we can grow stronger physically and mentally. In the same way that trees are essential for life and are used for structure, comfort, nourishment and relaxation, we too have many strengths to share with the world.

Examples: "Like a tree, I can get through difficult storms." "Like a tree, I have many strengths and grow with every challenge." "Like a tree, my body is growing in its own wonderful way."



LOVE YOUR TREE Cultivating Compassion Through Art



SELF-EXPLORATION AND CREATIVE BRAINSTORM: ACTIVITY SHEETS

1. What is your favorite kind of tree?	
,	

You can explore various images of trees in print or online. Sometimes it helps to search for photos of your favorite outdoor places or locations and see which kinds of trees exist there. Can you recall any favorite memories related to trees?

2. What is your favorite part of the tree? Circle examples from the list below or write in your own.

Roots	Leaves	Bark	Rings	Shade/Shadow
Trunk	Blossoms	Fruit	Shape	Other?
Branches	Seeds	Knots	Smell	

3. Write down three words to describe this part of a tree and/or describe why you like it.

(Examples: colorful, bold, aromatic, peaceful, fun to play on, etc.)

4. What is something that makes you unique or different?

(Examples: interesting freckle pattern, great with dogs, infectious laugh, passion for traveling, etc.)

- **5. What are some communities or groups that are important to you?** Or who are the people in your life you feel most connected to? (Examples: church groups, friends, family, advocacy organizations, neighbors, etc.)
- **6. What is something you are proud of or a challenge you have faced (or are facing)?** Have these challenges changed you in a positive way? (Examples: seeking treatment for a mental health issue, trying a new hobby, healing from an injury, overcoming negative body image, healing from a toxic friendship, etc.)
- 7. What makes you feel strong or in what ways have you grown stronger over the last year?

(Examples: I feel strongest when I'm playing with my kids; I'm strong in my faith; I've started saying what I'm feeling and it makes me feel strong and confident)



Cultivating Compassion Through Art



8.	Where	is y	your t	favorite	place -	or wha	at is	your	favorite	way – to	spend ti	ime in	nature?	
							_			_				

(Examples: in my backyard around the fire pit, at the top of a mountain, listening to the waves at the beach)

9. What is your favorite part of your body? Circle examples from the list below or write in your own.

Head	Neck	Wrists	Knees	Heart
Face	Shoulders	Hands	Skin	Muscles
Eyes	Chest	Fingers	Calves	Nails
Hair	Brain	Waist	Ankles	Toes
Nose	Arms	Hips	Feet	
Lips	Elbows	Thighs	Freckles	

10. Write down three words to describe what you love about those parts of your body or what they allow you to do.

1.	
2.	
3.	

11. What are your favorite characteristics or parts of your personality? Circle examples from the list below or write your own.

Loved	Social	Intelligent	Unique	Honest
Different	Grounded	Outspoken	Authentic	Other?
Passionate	Beautiful	Confident	Reflective	
Comfortable	Resourceful	Fast	Artistic	
Creative	Complex	Resilient	Compassionate	
Natural	Strong	Flexible	Funny	
Respected	Determined	Trustworthy	Caring	



Cultivating Compassion Through Art



12. Artist Statement: Based on your responses to the above questions, how would you complete the following statements? You can choose one or complete all of the prompts as a way to experiment and explore your *Love Your Tree* messages.

Like a tree, I am	
Like a tree, I will	
Like a tree, I grow	
Like a tree, I provide	
Like a tree, my body is	
Like a tree	

If you filled in multiple statements, review them and circle the one that you like best. It should be the one that makes you feel powerful, confident and inspired when you read it. It can help to visualize what that statement may look like as a poster.

The above statement can now serve as your artist statement. Use this phrase, along with all of your responses on the worksheet, to inspire your *Love Your Tree* poster or creative submission. Remember to incorporate the metaphor of the tree to do one or all of the following:

- 1. Celebrate your own resilience and/or strength.
- 2. Illustrate the importance of community and social connection.
- 3. Communicate gratitude for your body or celebrate what makes you unique.
- 4. Highlight the natural diversity of people and paths to healing.
- 5. Encourage mindfulness or self-care.
- 6. Challenge the media's narrow definition of success or beauty and dispel pressure to be "perfect."



LOVE YOUR TREE Cultivating Compassion Through Art



SKETCHING PROMPTS

Use a separate piece of paper if you need more room.

Step 1: Quickly sketch your favorite kind of tree.

Step 2: Quickly sketch yourself, incorporating any of the characteristics that make you unique or aspects of your body and personality for which you are grateful.

Step 3: Explore the two sketches together.

Ask yourself: Are there any similarities? How can I combine the two images? Play with the possibilities!



Cultivating Compassion Through Art



Step 4: Use the tree elements identified on your worksheets to represent aspects of the body.

Example: Toes and feet spreading out like roots above the ground where the tree is anchored.

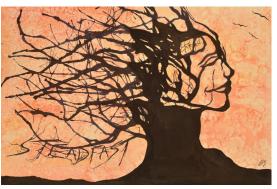
Step 5: Use the tree/body metaphor to create a blended image of your artist statement.



"Like trees, our differences make us beautiful." Liz L., Diversity Age Category: 15-18



"Like a tree, my body...is strong." Stella H., Luzy Age Category: 11-14



"Like a tree, I am...steadfast." Gavin M., Steadfast Age Category: 15-18

Step 6: Decide what kind of art you would like to create based on your tree representation.

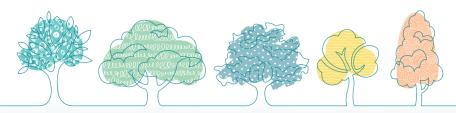
These are just some of the possibilities:

- Poster (paint, colored pencil, collage, pastels, pen and ink, etc.)
- Poem or spoken word
- Song/lyrics/musical composition
- Dance choreography
- Original photograph
- Sculpture

Step 7: Create and submit. Once your idea comes to life, don't forget to take a picture and/or upload it to the *Love Your Tree* virtual gallery at **LoveYourTree.org**

Step 8: Share your art and the *Love Your Tree message with the world.* Creating your own artwork is just part of the process. Art is so powerful! By sharing your message of body positivity, self-acceptance or resilience with others, you are not only helping yourself but also inspiring or empowering the people who see it to create change or overcome challenges in their own lives.

Share a link to your artwork in the online gallery via your social media channels. Be sure to use the #LoveYourTree hashtag.



LOVE YOUR TREE Cultivating Compassion Through Art



BRANCHES OF HOPE: SELF-AFFIRMATION CARDS

Celebrate yourself and your unique journey by completing the prompts on the cards. Snap a selfie with your card and share on social media, or send a photo to LoveYourTree@ERCPathlight.com to help shine a light on the importance of self-compassion and community connection.

Diversity and Uniqueness	Community and Connectedness
Like a tree, I am unique because	Like a tree, I am connected to
Resilience and Change	Strength and Growth
Like a tree, I show resilience by	Like a tree, I grow stronger through







BRANCHES OF HOPE: SELF-AFFIRMATION CARDS

Mindfulness and Joy	Diversity and Uniqueness
Like a tree, I find joy in	Like a tree, my body is







LEAVES OF INSPIRATION: SHAREABLE AFFIRMATION CARDS

Brighten someone's day by completing the prompts. Upload or snap a photo and send to LoveYourTree@ERCPathlight.com, and your inspiring messages will be shared with individuals in treatment as they work to heal from depression, anxiety, eating disorders and other mental health conditions.

Diversity and Uniqueness	Community and Connectedness
Like trees, our differences are beautiful because	Like trees, we are connected by
~ Your #LoveYourTree Advocate	Your #LoveYourTree Advocate
Resilience and Change	Strength and Growth
Like trees, we show resilience by	Like trees, we show strength through
~ Your #LoveYourTree Advocate	~ Your #LoveYourTree Advocate







LEAVES OF INSPIRATION: SHAREABLE AFFIRMATION CARDS

Mindfulness and Joy	Diversity and Uniqueness
Like trees, we can find peace when	Like trees, our bodies are
~ Your #LoveYourTree Advocate	~ Your #LoveYourTree Advocate



LOVE YOUR TREE Cultivating Compassion Through Art



PERMISSION SLIP

Dear Parent or Legal Guardian:

Your child is invited to participate in a *Love Your Tree* Art Workshop at their school. This is an activity that will take place in the classroom and is supported by Eating Recovery Center and Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center. The activity will take place under the guidance of school staff.

Love your Tree is an arts-based program for students of all ages focused on cultivating self-compassion, body acceptance and positive mental well-being through creativity, community connection and self-reflection. Through the workshop questions and conversations about body image, media literacy, mental well-being and self-compassion may occur. The workshop will produce a piece of artwork that is requested to be submitted to an online gallery with a separate consent form.

If you would like to allow your child to participate in this workshop, please complete, sign and return the following permission slip to your child's teacher before the workshop.

If you have any questions, please reach out to your school professional or contact ERC Pathlight directly at LoveYourTree@ERCPathlight.com.

My child has my permission to participate in the workshop mentioned above. I understand that this workshop will take place on school grounds under the direction of school professionals with the support of ERC Pathlight staff. As parent or legal guardian, I remain fully aware of the information being shared in the workshop and liable for any legal responsibility that may result from the personal actions of my child.

Parent's Printed Name:	
Parent's Signature:	_
Child's Name:	
<u> </u>	
Date:	





PARTICIPANT CONSENT AND ENTRY FORM (Page 1 of 2)

Please fill out both pages before submitting this form.

Thank you for participating in Love Your Tree, a creative arts activity for people of all ages focused on cultivating self-compassion, body acceptance and positive mental well-being. Entries can be any original form of visual art, written word or expressive/performance art. Examples include, but are not limited to, posters/paintings, songs/lyrics, poems and original choreography. Appropriate entries received through December 31 will be added to the online gallery.

Ready to Submit Your Artwork?

Both options will require participants under the age of 18 to obtain parent/guardian consent.

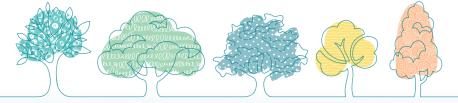
1. Submit your artwork online at LoveYourTree.org. You will be prompted to complete the online consent form and upload a photo/file of your entry.

- OR -

2. Submit your artwork via email to LoveYourTree@ERCPathlight.com and attach a photo/file of your entry along with this completed and signed consent form. (Teachers or workshop facilitators may also collect these forms and files and submit as a group.)

Entry Details:

Artist name:	Age:	DOB:
Parent/guardian name (if artist is under 18):		
raicila gaaraian name (ii artistis anaci 10).		
Email:		
Location (City/State):		
Title of artwork:		
Artist statement (i.e., <i>Like a tree, I am</i>):		
Did you participate in a <i>Love Your Tree</i> workshop? Yes No		
If so, please list the name of your facilitator/teacher:		
Was your participation in <i>Love Your Tree</i> related to your involvemen If so, include it here:		ation or school/college?







PARTICIPANT CONSENT AND ENTRY FORM (Page 2 of 2)

Please fill out both pages before submitting this form.

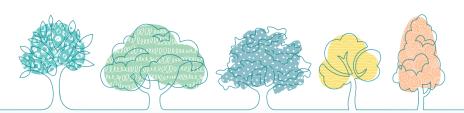
Would you like the name of this group listed with your art in the online gallery? Yes No

Would you like to share anything else about the story/inspiration for your artwork or your experience participating in *Love Your Tree*?

Consent:

I understand that by signing below and submitting my artwork to the *Love Your Tree* campaign, I am giving Eating Recovery Center and Pathlight Mood & Anxiety Center full permission to utilize and share my submission online (website and social media) and in print format now and in the future. I understand that my first name/last initial and age may be posted with the artwork. I confirm that my/my child's artwork is an original piece of art that was designed and created solely by me (or my child) and has not been copied from other sources. I understand that submitting a piece of art does not guarantee that it will be displayed or featured on the site and that I am not being compensated in any way for my entry or participation.

Artist Name (PRINT)	Artist Signature	Date	
If the artist is under the age of 18, plea	se have a guardian sign here.		
Parent/Guardian Name (PRINT)	 Parent/Guardian Signature	Date	





HOSTING YOUR OWN EXHIBIT

Love Your Tree is an arts-based program for students, of all ages focused on cultivating self-compassion, body acceptance and positive mental well-being through creativity, community connection and self-reflection. A crucial part of the program is the creation of artwork by students, classes and student-led clubs. But an even more important part is the sharing of that artwork in the virtual art gallery at LoveYourTree.org and in your local communities.

Art is powerful! Art sparks conversations, inspires new thinking and even shifts. When people see, hear or read your *Love Your Tree* messages, you are planting seeds. Conversations about mental health, body positivity and self-love will start growing where they might not have before!

What's the best way to plant more seeds and reach more people? HOST YOUR OWN LOVE YOUR TREE ART EXHIBIT! Here's how...

- **1.** Identify a desired exhibit space and seek permission to use it.

 This could be anything from a bulletin board to a campus courtyard, art or health classroom, or auditorium.
- 2. Identify a date and time for your exhibit opening (and closing).
 This might be a one-day special event or it might mean your group's artwork is displayed in a common space for up to a month or more.
- 3. Establish a plan for how you will display the posters and how many you can include.

 This might involve heavy-duty tape or wall-safe tape, staples for bulletin boards, easels, fancy art hangers or display panels. It's up to you to determine what works best for your space, your budget and your community. Be sure to include labels with the artist name and poster title, which can easily be printed from a home printer.
- 4. Recruit volunteers to help you set up and clean up your exhibit.
- **5. Spread the word by creating a flyer or online event listing on social media or public calendars.**Start promoting your event in person (flyers, posters, invitations) and online (social media posts, calendar listings) and remind students that they can do this at home with their family; it is not just an at-school activity.
- **6.** One or two days before your exhibit opening, curate your Love Your Tree exhibit!

 This generally requires help from your friends/volunteers. Larger and more complicated exhibits might require more time and effort to set up. This is also a great time to email potential guests a reminder about the event.



Cultivating Compassion Through Art



7. Host your event and have fun!

If you have a budget – or time to solicit donations – you can consider providing refreshments to your guests, playing background music or inviting a keynote speaker on mental health, body image or mindfulness to make the night extra special. Reach out to us at LoveYourTree@ERCPathlight.com and we may be able to support you in your search.

8. Take photos of your event and featured artists.

Send them to us at LoveYourTree@ERCPathlight.com and/or post them on your social media page with **#LoveYourTree**. You can also include them in thank-you emails or cards to participants, attendees and volunteers.





HOSTING YOUR OWN EXHIBIT

Love Your Tree is an arts-based program for students, of all ages focused on cultivating self-compassion, body acceptance and positive mental well-being through creativity, community connection and self-reflection. A crucial part of the program is the creation of artwork by students, classes and student-led clubs. But an even more important part is the sharing of that artwork in the virtual art gallery at LoveYourTree.org and in your local communities.

Art is powerful! Art sparks conversations, inspires new thinking and even shifts. When people see, hear or read your *Love Your Tree* messages, you are planting seeds. Conversations about mental health, body positivity and self-love will start growing where they might not have before!

What's the best way to plant more seeds and reach more people? HOST YOUR OWN LOVE YOUR TREE ART EXHIBIT! Here's how...

- **1.** Identify a desired exhibit space and seek permission to use it.

 This could be anything from a bulletin board to a campus courtyard, art or health classroom, or auditorium.
- 2. Identify a date and time for your exhibit opening (and closing).
 This might be a one-day special event or it might mean your group's artwork is displayed in a common space for up to a month or more.
- 3. Establish a plan for how you will display the posters and how many you can include.

 This might involve heavy-duty tape or wall-safe tape, staples for bulletin boards, easels, fancy art hangers or display panels. It's up to you to determine what works best for your space, your budget and your community. Be sure to include labels with the artist name and poster title, which can easily be printed from a home printer.
- 4. Recruit volunteers to help you set up and clean up your exhibit.
- **5. Spread the word by creating a flyer or online event listing on social media or public calendars.**Start promoting your event in person (flyers, posters, invitations) and online (social media posts, calendar listings) and remind students that they can do this at home with their family; it is not just an at-school activity.
- **6.** One or two days before your exhibit opening, curate your Love Your Tree exhibit!

 This generally requires help from your friends/volunteers. Larger and more complicated exhibits might require more time and effort to set up. This is also a great time to email potential guests a reminder about the event.



Cultivating Compassion Through Art



7. Host your event and have fun!

If you have a budget – or time to solicit donations – you can consider providing refreshments to your guests, playing background music or inviting a keynote speaker on mental health, body image or mindfulness to make the night extra special. Reach out to us at LoveYourTree@ERCPathlight.com and we may be able to support you in your search.

8. Take photos of your event and featured artists.

Send them to us at LoveYourTree@ERCPathlight.com and/or post them on your social media page with **#LoveYourTree**. You can also include them in thank-you emails or cards to participants, attendees and volunteers.

