



2025-26 Alumni Survey

What AIR Meant to Us

43 Arts in Reach alumni — from current teens to adults over 30 — told us what they took with them.

97%
say AIR built
their creativity

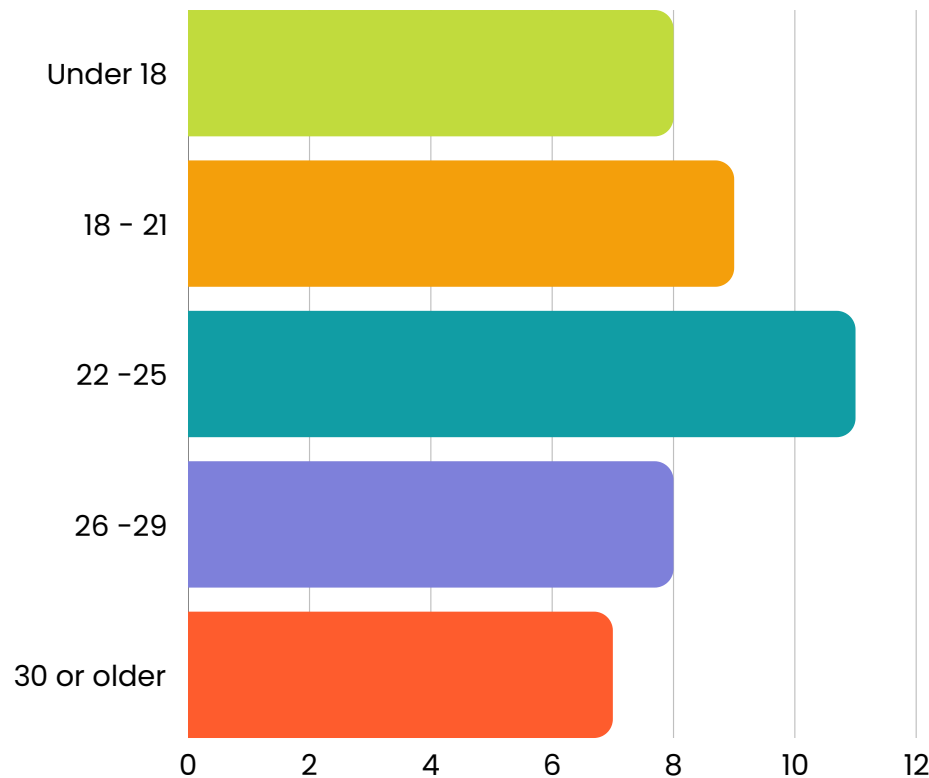
43
alumni
responded

93%
felt supported
by AIR adults



Who we heard from

43 alumni responded, spanning every stage of life after AIR.



43

alumni
responded
in total

25+

years of
programs
represented

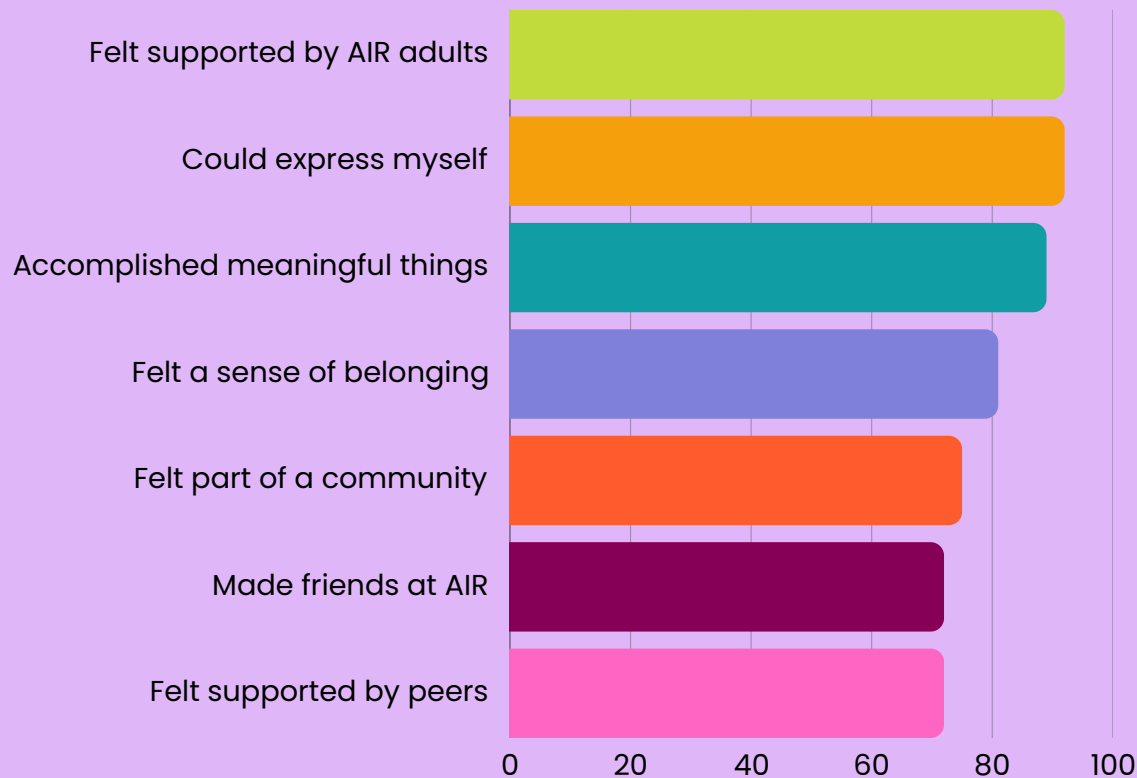
"The people... they were passionate, dedicated, caring, quirky, fun and vibrant. They were role models and mentors, and grew to become friends as I got older. I met some of my best friends in AIR."

— AIR alum

Source: 2025-26 AIR Alumni Survey. Age question answered by all 43 respondents.

A Place to Belong

Share who agree or strongly agree — the relationships are what alumni remember:



28 of 36

Strongly agreed they felt supported
by AIR adults.

*The great encouragement and
environment you got when you were in
the space of AIR. You never felt like you
didn't belong — you always
had a space in AIR.*

— AIR alum

Source: 2025-26 AIR Alumni Survey; 36 alumni answered each item.

Skills that lasted

Share of alumni who say AIR helped them build each skill “somewhat” or “a great deal”



I've been so much more confident in expressing myself through my art, performing and speaking in front of others, and trying new things. I'm not afraid to jump into a new art form because of the experiences I had.

— AIR alum

I got much better at talking and socializing with my peers — as well as considering how to convey my thoughts and feelings to others.

— AIR alum

Source: 2025-26 AIR Alumni Survey; 35-36 alumni answered each item.

Getting through hard times

Among alumni who faced each challenge, the number who say AIR helped them cope

28 of 36

who experienced anxiety or panic attacks said AIR helped

23 of 29

who experienced depression said AIR helped

18 of 24

who experienced bullying said AIR helped

“

AIR gave me a place to feel cared about in a way I wasn't getting anywhere... It gave me a place to belong, to feel valued, to feel like I had a sense of worth. I didn't need to be "on" — I just had to be myself.

— AIR alum

”

“

I'm here today.

**— AIR alum,
on AIR's impact on their life**

”

Source: 2025–26 AIR Alumni Survey. Bases exclude alumni who reported not experiencing the challenge. AIR is not a clinical mental-health provider; these are alumni's own reflections.

In their own words

Asked what impact AIR had on their lives, alumni said:

“

AIR changed my life. Plain and simple. It gave me a space to feel welcomed, supported, and valued. This was not always the case at school and definitely not at home. I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for the support and valuable skills I received from attending AIR.

— AIR alum

”

“

It will always hold a special place in my heart. I now work in childcare, have a small art business of my own, and am going to school to become an art therapist.

— AIR alum

”

“

The way it empowered my shy and anxious younger self. I felt supported by my peers and adult mentors. It challenged me and opened my mind. It gave me a sense of safety and sisterhood.

— AIR alum

”

“

My time with AIR was the happiest I'd ever been in my life. I hope more people get the privilege of being part of a community like AIR.

— AIR alum

”

Source: 2025-26 AIR Alumni Survey open-response questions; 24 alumni described what they remember, 20 described AIR's impact.





What this tells us

Asked what impact AIR had on their lives, alumni said:

1

The relationships hold.

Support from AIR's adults is the strongest result in the survey — 92% of alumni agree, years after their last program.

2

The creative confidence lasts.

97% say AIR built their creativity and 92% their willingness to try new things — the exact skills AIR sets out to grow.

3

It mattered when it counted.

Alumni who faced anxiety, depression, or bullying in their teens say AIR helped them through it.

4

Some carry it forward.

Alumni now teach art, run creative programs, are doctors and nurses, and are/training as art therapists — and send their own children to AIR.





www.artsinreach.org