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This report describes the results of research carried out by the Arts Council in 2022 with children and young people about the arts and creative activities.

Some children and young people took part in workshops at their pre-school or school, and most completed a survey in their school or youth group.

The Arts Council wanted to hear from them to help make a plan for children and young people’s arts.
About the children and young people

A total of 676 children and young people across Ireland took part in the research.

They came from cities, towns and rural areas and from many different backgrounds including: Irish speakers; young Travellers; seldom heard children and young people; and those experiencing disadvantage.

424 Children
Aged 8 – 12 years ...
answered a survey for children.

179 Young People
Aged 12 – 19 years ...
answered a survey for young people.

17 Children
Aged 3 – 5 years ...
in a creche were asked about the arts.

48 Children
Aged 5 – 7 years ...
in a primary school were asked about the arts.

8 Autistic Children
Aged 6 – 13 years ...
in a primary school took part in the research.
What children aged 3 – 5 years said about the arts

They like music and singing, dancing, painting, drawing and colouring, listening to stories, imaginary play and Lego.

The arts/creative activities make them feel happy, good, excited, calm and fun.

They do arts/creative activities at home, in their garden, on their road, in relations’ houses.

They do arts/creative activities with their friends, childcare workers and visiting artists in their creche; with their siblings, parents and grandparents at home.
What children aged 5 – 7 years said about the arts

They like singing, dancing, drama, imaginary play and making things.

Taking part in the arts/creative activities makes children feel happy, good, nice, fun, excited, proud and cosy.

They take part in arts/creative activities in school, at home, outside and in their gardens.

They would like to do more making and building, drama, dancing, painting, clay and sculpting and crafting.
What autistic children aged 6 – 13 years said about the arts

They take part in arts/creative activities in their school with their art teacher and visiting artists, on school trips, in a local secondary school and at home.

They like singing, music, playing instruments, dancing, imaginary play, film, going to the cinema, learning circus tricks, making and building, creating things and coding.

They enjoy arts and creative activities that include sensory experiences.

Sensory experiences can have a calming and relaxing effect.

They enjoy creative experiences with movement, e.g., chasing paper airplanes.
How do the arts make children and young people feel?

What children and young people who answered the survey said...

**Children aged 8 – 12**
- **Happy**: 67.9%
- **Relaxed / Calm**: 25.4%
- **Stressed / Frustrated / Under Pressure**: 10.3%

**Young people aged 12 – 19**
- **Happy**: 32%
- **Creative**: 18.3%
- **Stressed / Frustrated / Under Pressure**: 10.3%
- **Nervous / Afraid / Worried**: 5.2%
- **Excited**: 10.8%
- **Focussed**: 8.2%
- **Expressive / Imaginative**: 8.2%
- **Enjoyment / Fun**: 16%
- **Good / Great / Amazing**: 19.3%
- **Creative**: 9.4%
- **Good / Great / Amazing**: 19.5%
Where do children and young people like to take part in the arts and creative activities?

*Children aged 8–12*

The places children take part in arts or creative activities are:
Young people aged 12–19

The places young people take part in arts or creative activities are:

- Theatre: 4.1%
- Youth Clubs: 13.3%
- School: 65.3%
- Home: 46.2%
- Outside: 6.9%
- Anywhere/Everywhere: 11%
- Friends: 4.6%
- Quiet Spaces: 4.1%
Children aged 8 – 12

What arts / creative activities would children like to try or do more of?

Painting & Colouring 30%

Acting & Drama 25%

Animation / Digital Animation 9.7%

Clay 22.2%

Cooking / Baking / Decorating 11.1%

Dancing 10.1%

Drawing & Sketching 25%

Music / Singing 17.2%

Construction / Building 17.2%
Young people aged 12–19

What arts / creative activities would young people like to try or do more of?

- **Painting** 32%
- **Clay / Sculpting / Pottery** 16.6%
- **Drawing / Sketching** 20.7%
- **Music** 27.2%
- **Acting & Drama** 25.4%
- **Spray Painting / Graffiti** 7.1%
- **Animation** 6%
What stops young people taking part in arts and creative activities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Embarrassment, Peer Pressure &amp; Bullying</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School, Study &amp; Homework</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Time</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Access to the Arts</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Confidence</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of Failure / Nervousness</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport &amp; Extra-curricular Activities</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents / Lack of Encouragement</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How can we help more children and young people take part in the arts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHILDREN AGED 8 – 12</th>
<th>YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 12 – 19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>39.2%</strong> More School-based Arts Activities</td>
<td><strong>34%</strong> More School-based Arts Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>34.3%</strong> Consulting with Children about the Arts</td>
<td><strong>31.4%</strong> More Arts Funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10.8%</strong> Free Arts Classes, Workshops, Camps, and Supplies</td>
<td><strong>21.8%</strong> More Arts Facilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7.8%</strong> Giving More Money to the Arts</td>
<td><strong>17.3%</strong> More Arts Groups / Projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.1%</strong> More Arts Facilities</td>
<td><strong>9.6%</strong> More Promotion / Advertisement of the Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.7%</strong> Helping / Encouraging Children</td>
<td><strong>5.1%</strong> Help / Support for Young People to take part in the Arts and Creative Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5.7%</strong> More Fun Activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Arts Council would like to thank all of the children and young people who shared their views. Special thanks to the child and youth advisory groups who helped to develop and design the surveys, and to make this report.

We would also like to thank the teachers and youth group leaders who coordinated the surveys for their groups; the artists who facilitated focus groups; Kids’ Own Publishing Partnership who facilitated the child and youth advisory groups; our Creative Schools team who helped us to reach a wide diversity of schools across the country; the National Youth Council of Ireland and Involve Youth Services who helped us to reach a diversity of youth groups; and researcher Sandra Roe who worked with us on this project.
Unwrapped Festival, Window Installation, Tallaght Library, 2020

Selma Daniel, AdoleTa! (rehearsal image), 2018

Tumble Circus, Cycle Circus, 2021

Irish Modern Dance Theatre, Feathers, 2015

Theatre Lovett, The True Story of Hansel and Gretel, 2015

Baboró International Festival for Children, Tiny Mutiny, 2022

Young Irish Film Makers, Members at NYCI Youth Arts Showcase, 2014

Benjamin De Burca and Barbara Wagner, Rise, 2018 © Arts Council Collection

Baboró International Festival for Children, Tiny Mutiny, 2022

Théâtre de la Guimbarde, Cache-Cache, Baboró International Festival for Children, 2018

Julianstown Youth Orchestra, 2017

Image from Arts Council consultation workshop, 2022

Arts Council child and youth advisory group workshop, 2023

Images from Arts Council consultation workshops, 2022

Highlanes Gallery, children’s workshop, 2014

Kids’ Own, Arts Council child and youth advisory group workshop, 2021

Irish Chamber Orchestra, Sing out with Strings, 2014

Jess Rowell, Making Waves, 2023

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Images from Arts Council consultation workshops, 2022

Branar, Sruth na Teanga, 2021

Helen MacMahon, Hesperidae, 2019 © Arts Council Collection

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