

Arts, Culture and Creativity in the Early Years in London

Advocacy materials, evidence and research

Selection Criteria:

- Advocacy underpinned by early childhood research, and specific to the early learning domain (older age-group arts education advocacy resources are shown separately).
- Reflects established theories of early childhood development, early brain development, appropriate practice, and appropriate learning environments.
- Balance of practical as well as theoretical to ensure broad as well as deep understanding.
- Selection of best practice approaches from the international community.
- Applicable across different art forms or cultural practices.
- Fit for purpose, for arts and cultural professionals to adapt and use in their communications.

Advocacy Research and Evidence:

1. [Confident, capable and creative: supporting boys' achievements Guidance for practitioners in the Early Years Foundation Stage](#) by the National Strategies Team (2007)

Using the four principles of the EYFS as a framework, this document provides examples of effective practice and encourages practitioners to reflect on the quality of their provision, ask questions and find solutions. It draws on the experience and expertise of early years practitioners who are actively engaged in researchful practice to explore what works best for boys, much of which is highly creative.

2. [Effective Practice: Creativity and Critical Thinking](#) by DfES (2007)

This article illustrates the reasons why the processes of creativity have such an impact on early learning and development, and what effective creative practice should look like.

3. [Early Childhood Arts - Three Perspectives](#), p17 by Dr Geraldine French and p42 by Ruth Churchill Dower and Ben Sandbrook for Arts Council Ireland (2013)

This research identifies the core concepts of early childhood development that arts and cultural professionals should be aware of in developing their programming, environments, communication and delivery. It discusses where the arts fit and impact on a child's life, how best to engage and support children's learning and what the role of the artist should be (p17-41).

It also identifies the main evidence demonstrating the impact of the arts and culture on young children's lives and learning and identifies several case studies of excellent arts practice (p42-103).

4. [Developing young children's creativity: what can we learn from research?](#) By Caroline Sharp for NFER (2004)

A compilation of evidence from research and theory as it applies to developing young children's creativity. It explains how creativity is defined, identifies the implications for working in early childhood settings, and identifies some common myths about developing young children's creativity.

5. [Learning, Playing and Interacting Good practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage](#) by DfES (2009)

This booklet describes best practice in early years pedagogy, where play and learning come together, the role of creativity within this, and the role of the adult in scaffolding and supporting children's ideas and interests. Full of case studies and useful examples of good practice.

6. [The Early Years: Foundations for life, health and learning](#) by Dame Clare Tickell (2011)

This document sets out the detailed rationale behind the revised Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Framework now statutory for all early learning providers. The elements of particular relevance to the arts and cultural sectors are on p85-105, and give arts professionals a steer for positioning arts and cultural provision within the EYFS framework.

7. [Born Creative](#) by collective writers (2010)

p19-28 - An essay by Bernadette Duffy on the importance of creativity in early learning and the role of the arts, and artists, in supporting this.

8. [Creativity and Possibility in the Early Years](#) by Professor Anna Craft (2007)

Anna Craft discusses the role of creativity in young children's thinking skills, identifying the realm of 'Possibility thinking' as a process that involves a transition from the knowledge of facts - 'What is this?' - to the knowledge of exploration - 'What can I/we do with this?'. Craft discusses how possibility thinking fosters resilience and confidence, and reinforces children's capabilities as confident explorers, meaning-makers and decision-makers, and explores how creativity can be cultivated.

9. [The Foundation Years: preventing poor children becoming poor adults](#) by Frank Field (2010)

This seminal piece of research into the influences on a young child's life chances identifies the evidence which shows parents as the child's first educators. It also identifies the impact of a mother's aspirations, income and educational background on a child's educational attainment or well-being, and the important role of high quality educational and cultural opportunities for a child to thrive. Chapter 3 is the most poignant for cultural providers to understand the context for best practise family programming, delivery and outreach.

10. [Learning: creative approaches that raise standards](#) by OfSTED (2010)

This survey illustrates how 22 primary schools used creative approaches to learning. It shows how creative processes helped pupils to ask questions independently, make connections between ideas, think creatively, challenge and participate effectively, and reflect on their learning, and also evaluates the impact on pupils' achievement and personal development.

Advocacy and Best Practice Toolkits:

1. [The Education Endowment Foundation \(EEF\) Teaching and Learning Toolkit](#) by the Sutton Trust. (Current)

A summary of educational research which provides guidance for educational providers on how to use their resources to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils. The section on Arts Participation suggests that existing evidence does not show a huge correlation with improved educational attainment.

2. [Creative Partnerships \(2012\) Early Years Creativity Toolkit](#) by Clare Halstead and partners (2012)

This booklet documents two highly effective creative early years projects, with several key tips for arts and cultural practitioners partnering with early years providers.

3. [Promote creativity and creative learning in young children: Unit CYPOP 7](#) by Hodder Education (2014)

This unit (part of the Children and Young People's Workforce Diploma) is designed to provide deeper knowledge and understanding of the importance of creativity and creative learning for young children, and of professionals' competence in promoting this in early years settings. The unit also encourages improvement of practice in promoting young children's creativity and creative learning.

4. [Developing and supporting family learning in museums and galleries](#) by NIACE (2009)

A practical resource for museum and gallery staff, family learning and early years practitioners illustrating the benefits of engaging children and families in museums and best practice for developing a family learning offer.

5. [Seeing, Making, Doing – Creative development in Early Years Settings](#) by the Scottish Consultative Council on the Curriculum (1999)

This simple but effective toolkit outlines the core concepts of how arts and creative processes impact on early learning, with case studies showing these impacts in action.

6. [Reflect and review: the arts and creativity in early years](#) by Jo Belloli and Felicity Woolf (2005)

Another excellent toolkit identifying the key aspects of successful arts in early years practices, including further reading and case studies.

7. [Standards Of Excellence In Early Learning: A Model For Chicago Children’s Museum](#) by Chicago Children’s Museum (2005)

An excellent example of a Reggio Emilia-influenced approach to running a museum with young children and families at the heart of all provision. The document details a set of standards to guide early years development in museums, and the implications for practise of putting those into place.

8. [Young Children and the Arts: Making Creative Connections](#) by Task Force on Children’s Learning and the Arts (USA) (1998)

This seminal research led to the creation of a set of national benchmark standards that underpinned all arts and early years provision in the USA. It includes examples of what children and adults should be able to do separately or together as a result of the arts interventions, which cultural providers can use as benchmarks for measuring the success of their provision.

9. [Ways of Learning: Creating and thinking critically](#) by Optimus Education (2011)

This toolkit helps providers understand what creative and critical thinking is (as one of the characteristics of effective learning practitioners are required to observe as part of the EYFS curriculum). It explores different practical approaches using different artforms, and details how to support young children in creating and thinking critically.

10. [Mark Making Matters Young children making meaning in all areas of learning and development](#) by DfES (2008)

The EYFS establishes that children must be provided with opportunities to explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings through a variety of art, music, movement, dance, imaginative and role play activities, mathematics and design technology across the whole curriculum. This booklet illustrates how very young children who are given rich opportunities to explore making marks within an encouraging emotional environment will become confident and competent communicators, both orally and on paper, in all six areas of learning and development.

11. [CLOSE ENCOUNTERS WITH CULTURE: Museums and Galleries as part of the Early Years Foundation Stage](#) by Renaissance North West (2008)

This booklet documents how much children get from their experiences in museums and galleries, illustrating the high levels of involvement and improvements in language for thinking and for communication that can happen. It explores how museums can help settings deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage in a creative and exciting way, by engaging with objects and art works, showing the value of children starting or continuing their close encounters with culture in their own setting.

12. [First Steps Providing for the Early Years in museums](#) by Jo Graham for Renaissance London (2008)

This booklet sets out a series of best practice principles for any museum, gallery or cultural venue with a family and young children's offer. The principles are based in established pedagogies and illustrated with case studies.

13. Creative Arts Expression – Head Start Outcomes Framework (USA) (2015)

The Creative Arts Expression toolkit is designed to support the USA early childhood framework, Headstart, but has some useful resources that allow for creative and imaginative expression, such as music, art, creative movement, and drama. It illustrates how the creative arts engage children's minds, bodies, and senses, and invite children to listen, observe, discuss, move, solve problems, and imagine using multiple modes of thought and self-expression.

Non-early years specific advocacy resources for the arts and cultural sector

1. **Arts Matters - How the arts can help meet the needs of children and young people** by Arts Council England, North East (2006)
2. **USE OR ORNAMENT? The social impact of participation in the arts** by Francois Matarasso (1997)
3. **Art for Arts Sake? The Impact of Arts Education** by OECD (2013)
4. **The Qualities of Quality Understanding Excellence in Arts Education** by Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education (USA) (2009)
5. **Champions of Change - the impact of the arts on learning** by the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (USA) (1995)
6. **The Impact of the Arts** by David Sousa (USA) (2012)
7. **Making the case for Arts and Culture** by Arts Council England (2015)
8. PLUS infographic describing the above toolkit: <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/research-and-data/value-arts-and-culture-people-and-society-evidence-review/>
9. **All Our Futures: Creativity, Culture and Education** by NACCCE (1998)
10. **Nurturing Creativity in Young People** by Paul Roberts for DCMS (2006)
11. **Road Map for Arts Education Building Creative Capacities for the 21st Century** by UNESCO (2006)
12. **Providing the best Guidance for artists and arts organisations on assessing the quality of activities provided for children and young people** by Arts Council (2006)
13. **LEARNING THROUGH CULTURE The DfES Museums and Galleries Education Programme: a guide to good practice** by DfES (2002)
14. **7 self-reflection questions for nurturing creativity** by Ben Sandbrook (2012)