Throughout the entirety of human history, the arts and education have had a close and interdependent relationship. Each art form (music, visual art, theater, dance, and media arts) can perpetuate a culture’s history, impart lessons, and honor our individual and collective heritage.

Beginning with early advocates such as John Dewey, formal and informal education in the United States have demonstrated imagination, improved test scores, increased civic engagement, public savings, increased lifetime earning potential, and improved community cohesion, among other things, in more recent times. Arts and youth development also extends beyond the classroom into the realm of what is now known as Creative Youth Development, which refers to a longstanding theory of practice that integrates creative skillbuilding, inquiry, and expression with positive youth development principles, thereby fueling young people’s imaginations and fostering the development of essential learning and life skills.

The rich and well-documented formal and informal connections between the arts and education provide a strong argument for supporting arts education funding and arts education policy in every community.

**IMPACT POINTS**

**Students who participate in the arts are 40% more likely to have diverse friends.**

Participation in arts activities increases tolerance. 12th graders who participate in the arts are 40% more likely to have friends from different racial groups and 29% less likely to feel that it is ok to make a racist remark.

**Students who participate in the arts are 5x less likely to drop out.**

Students excited by school stay in school. Low-income students who participate in the arts, both in school and after school have a drop out rate of just 4%--5x lower than their peers.

**The arts improve your critical thinking by up to 18%.**

Just looking at art improves your ability to think critically. Students from high-poverty schools, according to one study, experience an 18% effect-size improvement in critical thinking about art after a 1 hour tour of a museum.

**More than 2x as likely to graduate college.**

The arts help people succeed. Low-income students who are highly engaged in the arts are more than twice as likely to graduate college than their peers with no arts education.

**Available after school arts programs cause neighborhood crime to drop up to 5%.**

Arts programs reduce crime levels. Participation in after-school arts programs causes juvenile
crime to fall by 4.2% on average, and slightly more (5.4%) in lower-income cities.


ibid.


EXAMPLES OF PRACTICE

ARTLAB
Cumberland

ArtLab is a mobile arts education and enrichment platform which allows the Arts Council to bring the power of creativity to the community. The ArtLab has offered free STEAM programming to students all across Allegany County, visited public libraries,

PLAYING THE BUILDING
New York
David Byrne's Playing the Building was an interactive sound sculpture installation. It consisted of a retrofitted antique organ, when played, the keys controlled a series of devices attached to architectural features that vibrated, struck, and blew.

THE WOODEN FLOOR

Santa Ana

The Wooden Floor uses dance to transform the lives of young people in low-income communities through a long-term approach grounded in exploratory dance education. One hundred percent program graduates enroll in higher education.

MOSAIC YOUTH THEATRE OF DETROIT

Detroit

Mosaic empowers young people by helping them develop patterns of cooperation, disciplined work habits, and effective problem-solving skills through the creation of high-quality, professional-level performances of theater and music.

GUIDANCE FOR MUSIC & ARTS EDUCATION IN NEW ORLEANS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
New Orleans

On December 15, 2020, Artist Corps New Orleans and the New Orleans Arts Education Alliance presented the work of the Music & Arts Education COVID-19 Response Working Group to the Orleans Parish School Board. The documents linked below include

MOVE-TO-IMPROVE WORLD BEATS NYC

NYC Department of Education

New York

Hip Hop Public Health today announced the release of Move-to-Improve World Beats NYC, an album inspired by music and rhythms from some of the diverse communities that call New York City home. Produced in collaboration with the NYC Department of

READING LIST

Funder Companion - Aesthetic Perspectives: Attributes of Excellence in Arts for Change

Dwyer, M. Christine; Korza, Pam; Schaffer Bacon, Barbara Dwyer, M. Christine; Korza, Pam; Schaffer Bacon, Barbara
Publication Year: 2017

In the Funder Companion to Animating Democracy’s framework, Aesthetic Perspectives: Attributes of Excellence in Arts for Change, author Chris Dwyer of RMC Research offers ideas and insights to help funders... Show More [] apply the framework to address their

Show Less []

The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth: Findings from Four Longitudinal Studies

Catterall, James S. Catterall, James S.
Publication Year: 2012

This report examines arts-related variables from four large datasets -- three maintained by the U.S. Department of Education and one by the Department of Labor -- to understand the relationship... Show More [] between arts engagement and positive academic and social
Arts Facts: Uneven Arts Education Opportunities Nationwide (2017)

Americans for the Arts, 2017

Publication Year: 2017

This 2017 Arts Facts prepared by Americans for the Arts highlights data from a U.S. Department of Education report showing that only 3% of elementary schools offer dance and only... Show More 4% offer theatre programs.

ORGANIZATIONS

GOOGLE ARTS & CULTURE

Google Arts & Culture is a non-profit initiative that works with cultural institutions and artists around the world. Together, our mission is to preserve and bring the world’s art and culture online so it’s accessible to anyone, anywhere.

SPHINX ORGANIZATION

This organization develops and showcases young musicians of color through ensembles, music competitions, and national convenings. It also hosts SphinxConnect, a national convening on diversity in the arts, where arts leaders meet to strategize and share their knowledge.

THE HESS FOUNDATION

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LEARN MORE
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