



The health benefits of taking part in the arts – follow the science

Online event, Friday 19 May 2023

Event chat

This document includes all the comments, links and questions that were shared in the chat during the event. Many of the questions were answered verbally during the event – please watch the event video or read the full transcript of the event to find these.

Q. Many people are told as children that they can't sing, draw, etc. What is the ongoing wellbeing impact on those individuals? And what happens if they try singing or drawing later in life?

One such person here Wondering/hoping that greater awareness of neurodiversity may improve the situation for young people going through education at the moment.

Hello - I am interested in randomised control trial studies on singing for lung health. Has anyone in your team done systematic reviews on experimental design singing for lung health studies? I am a researcher (conducting an RCT at the moment) but also in social enterprise group - Bring Me Sunshine Trio (Strings and Song for health and wellbeing).

How can we make the arts more accessible to disabled people and other people living with mental distress and chronic illness — especially people experiencing intersectional marginalisation / lack of access due to socio-economic-cultural issues?

Are there similar studies for participation in eg sports? If so are there key differences?

this may come up under barriers in next bit?

Is social prescribing without access to talking therapies or other support effective? Is it sometimes used in place of person centred support?

Are the health benefits for adults also independent of whether they excel/their ability level?

Are there any particular songs or genre of songs that have proved to be more successful than others in promoting wellness? Particularly helping those with Parkinsons disease?

Is there any difference in the wellbeing impact of listening to live music and recorded music? If so, is it explained by the social interaction alone or something more?

I'm working in schools serving areas of significant deprivation and trying to convince heads to engage in more music activities handbook on why music is important - I could really do with a simple 'why taking part in music matters' factsheet to engage headteachers and get them to commit!

are you listening to the Movers and Shakers podcasts?

This organisation and research might be of interest re the lung health question

<https://www.singingforhealthnetwork.co.uk/research-overview>

Bring me Sunshine Trio has been commissioned by local GP to deliver singing for lung health - we are delivering our 3rd course now for patients with COPD, long covid and other lung conditions. Our data set is very small though (just 10-15 patients on each course) so it would be interesting to find out about research on this with larger numbers.

Is it possible to have a link to the study of children's engagement in the arts and self-esteem?

Wiltshire Music Connect have some nice resources I'm sure you could use

<https://wiltshiremusicconnect.org.uk/whymusic/>

Are the effects you describe due to association or causation? Is there enough evidence to say that participation in the arts causes these outcomes, or are people who participate a selected group?

That's amazing that you've been commissioned by your GP! Have you done the training? Look at The Musical Breath website for all the info you could ever need!

Yes, two of our group have done training courses on it.

<https://www.singtobeat.co.uk/> Parkinsons related research

Are there any plans to do research of singing/cultural engagement for people with Long COVID?

Is it better for emotional and mental health to watch a film at the cinema with others or stream it online alone?

With the data sets do the cohorts include children who've come through trauma and/or been deprived of music / the arts — e.g. the post WW2 study did it include Kinderwagen children / children who survived the holocaust? And the Romanian orphanage children in the later 20th C?

Have you seen this website? The Cheyne Gang could tell you if they were researching impacts of this work. <https://www.longcovidsupportscotland.com/>

Re singing for lung health - the first study of this was undertaken at Royal Brompton and Harefield Hospital and further studies have been conducted by the Sidney de Haan Research Centre for Arts and Health. ENO also ran a Breathe programme for long Covid patients.

Are the cohorts/data sets global or only UK / Europe ?

Please can I have the link to the study that Karen mentioned where the socio-economic gap is closed for kids engaging in arts activities within the school time! That is perfect!

The link to the study is contained within this research: <https://sbbresearch.org/new-report-by-ucl-researchers-links-participating-in-arts-and-culture-to-longer-healthier-lives/>

Hi everyone, we're Drax Africa, a duo of multi-talented twin brothers from Zambia, Africa. Thanks for this amazing opportunity and we hope to see more of this going forward. As Drax Africa, we believe that creativity transcends all barriers and that the possibilities of making the world a better place are endless. However, you have stressed the importance of the Arts with regard to good health, associated psychological benefits and cultural engagement. But the question still remains. Why is it not the Arts ultimate goal to make a difference in the lives of millions of people who have been affected by atrocities like extreme poverty, war and racism especially at this critical time with all that is going on around the world? The power of art and music is evident in our day to day living but only gets diluted when the need to be used right arises. Together we can champion the fate of humanity to greater Love, Peace and Kindness.

I wonder how you define cultural activities? Are you including social clubs, pubs with entertainment, etc.? Different socio-economic groups have different cultural interests.

What does "engaged omnivore" mean?

Consumes everything presumably

are these data sets mixed age groups ? (In the first part, you were referencing child study cohorts?)

Is there any data on cultural attendance and mental health in Scotland?

have a look at the full report too, all the data is available to scrutinise: <https://sbbresearch.org/new-report-by-ucl-researchers-links-participating-in-arts-and-culture-to-longer-healthier-lives/>

Are there intersectional data sets for people (beyond gender, which you showed us) *working* in the arts and cultural activities?

What is the impact on children whose parents / educators drive them to prioritise musical / cultural engagement ?

Here's the link to the research again: <https://sbbresearch.org/new-report-by-ucl-researchers-links-participating-in-arts-and-culture-to-longer-healthier-lives/>

Live performances across musical genres? e.g. would it include say Bangla or rave music as well as acoustic / classical ?

Is your definition introducing bias?

Would playing video games count as a cultural activity?

In primary schools, there's a difficulty around teacher confidence, especially teaching music - recent workforce study only 33% of primary teachers feel confident teaching music, this has a knock on effect on how often and well music is currently being taught in schools both within the school day and as after school enrichment activities - if we can improve teacher skill set, music making quality and quantity would improve and have more impact on the socio economic gap and mental health/wellbeing.

Do you get art activity information as a self-reported value from individuals or do you get figures from certain venues etc? If so how do you select those venues?

It would be interesting to unpack a community's arts engagement against the local cultural assets. For example, people in Tower Hamlets may be culturally active but many won't have engaged with the Whitechapel Art Gallery (or even know it exists).

While the evidence of the benefits of participation in the arts was clearly demonstrated in your slides, I had some difficulty in seeing quantitative increase in value. I wonder if you can comment on this

I'm interested in including a few paragraphs in grant / funding applications describing qualitatively the health/medical/wellbeing benefits of classical music (as audience or performer) - is there anything in your research I could use?

It's fascinating research, Karen. Do you have thoughts on the sudden deprivation of music and cultural activities on women and girls in Afghanistan / other people in conflict zones / refugee camps?

Because of WIFI problems I missed the first 30 minutes, but I'm interested to know whether there is any specific research on the impact of music specifically in social prescribing outcomes?

For e.g. women and girls orchestras in Afghanistan

I believe that there may be a large group of people who listen and participate in live music in social activities, such as pubs, etc. which may influence the social background areas.

As a fundraiser for our local community choirs (adult and children), can you suggest donors, sponsors who might help us financially?

live music round the room is a mainstay of folk!

Im interested to know whether there is any specific research on the impact of music specifically in social prescribing outcomes?

ENO Breathe had research on their programme for long covid

Fascinating information, thanks. I may have missed this earlier (I was late), but is there any research on the benefit of activities which require purposeful practise over a long period of time? - e.g. learning an instrument, dancing

Once you know more about what the active ingredients are, it will be very interesting to see what other activities or genres or locations etc also have these. And could possibly also have health benefits arising from these.

[https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanres/article/PIIS2213-2600\(22\)00125-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanres/article/PIIS2213-2600(22)00125-4/fulltext)

Re long covid . . . this link might be helpful: <https://www.scottishopera.org.uk/join-in/breath-cycle/>

Related Q on how people in the community can access social prescribing / funded access?

Bradford is the City of Culture in 2025. Given its multi-cultural and socio-economic mix, I would welcome comments on the opportunities that this gives to address some of the issues raised in the research

Is there any information about how long the health benefits last after engagement in the arts? For example if I sang with a choir for 10 weeks, would the benefits stop during a summer holiday or would there still be some residual benefit to tie you over?

Related to this latest question about intensity of engagement, it is often said that taking up any kind of exercise for any length of time AT ANY AGE is beneficial. Is this true for arts engagement?

Have you done any research on young writers?

Please count us in on this if at all possible. jan@churchillmusic.org.uk We run a Sing for Fun group aimed at singing to improve health and wellbeing.

There is some recent research also from UCL re 'Does learning to play an instrument have an impact on change in attainment from age 11 to 16? | British Journal of Music Education |

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/british-journal-of-music-education/article/does-learning-to-play-an-instrument-have-an-impact-on-change-in-attainment-from-age-11-to-16/BC97A160E140E7DA3C80CFFFC35F83AB>

Have you done any research on performance stress on young performers and / or pressures to produce on composers/writers/artists?

Social prescribing resources <https://www.makingmusic.org.uk/resource/social-prescribing-resources>

I lead community choirs and often have people join when they retire having not sung since they were at school. They do seem to benefit in many ways.

Is social prescribing as effective if it only involved someone at the end of the telephone.

Has there been any research on how music can be used to deter the current global crisis such as war, extreme poverty and inequality?

Is the fact that participation takes time important