

New knowledge: This is how we strengthen children and youths's access to and participation in artistic activities

The evaluation of the Seize the Engagement (Grib engagement) initiative points to new ways to attract and engage children and youths in artistic activities through, among other things, good relations with cultural stakeholders and interdisciplinary collaborations. A job that can ultimately strengthen the well-being of children and youths.



The evaluation provides insight into how more children and youths can get the opportunity to experience the joy of participating in artistic activities. Photo: Jón Bjarni Hjartason.

'Grib Engagemnetet' is a Ministry of Culture Denmark initiative, which had the purpose of examining, how more children and youths can gain access to participate in artistic activities that feel relevant and developing for them. A total of 42 municipalities have participated in 27 model tests in the period 2021-2022, which have involved a wide range of stakeholders as partners: primary schools, recreational centres, libraries, music and culture schools, leisure clubs, theatres, museums, and others.

PhD and assistant professor, Kim Boeskov from Rhythmic Music Conservatory has written an evaluation report based on the 27 model experiments with the objective of providing insight into the mechanisms that regulate children and youths's access to and desire to engage in artistic activities.

Focus on relations in artistic activities

The evaluation generally points to the fact that it is crucial that artists, music and cultural schoolteachers, schoolteachers and pedagogues not only understand the context in which children and youths live, but also the cultural expressions the children orientate themselves towards, and the communities they already are a part of.

The organizers behind the artistic activities must ensure that the children can establish good relationships with e.g., the artists, the regular adults and to each other, since good relations are of decisive importance for whether children and youths want and have the opportunity to become involved.

Additionally, the activities can be advantageously planned based on the opportunities children and youths have to transfer their new interests to other parts of their lives and further develop their artistic interests in other contexts.

Finally, the evaluation also points to the fact that active participation in artistic activities has the potential to strengthen the well-being of children and youths.

The overall insights are concretized in the report in terms of five different target groups: young children, children in primary school, children in their free time, children with special needs and youths aged 13-18.

Transversal collaboration

All model tests have been based on collaboration across municipalities, institutions and stakeholders who have different professional perspectives on children and youths, and on this basis the evaluation also presents insights into what works and what does not work in the interdisciplinary collaboration.

Transversal collaboration consistently shows that there is great potential for creating access to – and participation in – artistic activities for more children and youths. However, it is conditional on the collaboration resting on a common vision for what the children and youths must achieve by participating in the activities, and on a structure that supports that all parties have the opportunity to be equally involved.

Additionally, it turns out to be a clear advantage that competence development is built into the collaboration, so that employees from the various institutions have the opportunity to learn from each other's professional approaches of dealing with the children and youths along the way.

[Read the entire evaluation of "Grib Engagemnetet"](#)

Facts about "Grib Engagemnetet"

Under the Finance Act 2021 and 2022, a total of 40 million DKK was set aside to "Grib Engagemnetet", and in the period 2021 - 2022, 27 municipally anchored model tests have been carried out with several collaboration partners. The trials have focused on developing artistic activities aimed at children and youths aged 0-24, who do not already participate in artistic activities.

The evaluation was carried out by Ph.D. and assistant professor Kim Boeskov from Rhythmic Music Conservatory, who, in addition to the model tests, has also included several other sources to supplement the study, e.g., interviews with leaders from the music and culture schools and representatives from five of the participating municipalities.

The evaluation also brings other recommendations on how to develop long-lasting models that support children and youths' access to and participation in artistic activities.

[Read more about Grib Engagemnetet and the supported model tests](#)

Further information:

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