

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF CHILDHOOD 2017



Save Childhood
Movement

5x5x5=creativity

SUPPORTING THE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF CHILDHOOD

Playing with **Big Ideas** – bringing together the thinkers with the doers to promote child wellbeing

UNICEF Child Friendly Cities coming together to share knowledge and understanding

Scientists helping us understand the human brain and how we learn

Health experts sharing their concerns and offering solutions

Academic experts from around the world sharing their knowledge and expertise

Teachers talking about the education system

Businesses sharing what they feel matters

Parents and families sharing new ways of connecting and working

Top creatives talking about the importance of play and creativity

Children's authors sharing the importance of storytelling and why and how children need to express themselves

Nature experts sharing ways of reconnecting children with nature

Digital childhood forums helping to shape ways of using technology to serve child and family wellbeing

Universities sharing latest research findings and ideas

Cities and councils sharing strategies and projects

SUPPORTING THE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF CHILDHOOD

A celebration of what's great about childhood... and how we need to protect it





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1.0 INTRODUCTION

It is universally accepted that the period of life that has the single biggest impact on our later wellbeing is that of early childhood. It is during this period that we develop the values, belief systems and dispositions that will shape our learning and behaviour for the rest of our lives. It is also the time of life that most people associate with being the most free and happy.

Throughout the world, however, there is a growing concern that modern children, particularly those living in modern urban environments, are being exposed to a range of environmental pressures that are unprecedented in human history, and that may be damaging to their long-term health and wellbeing. From rapid changes in family and community life, to increasingly risk-averse societies, the lack of freedom to roam and contact with nature, the downward pressures of the schooling system, the impact of digital technology and the increasing commercialization of childhood, children have never been so vulnerable to external forces. And this is evident from a series of increasingly alarming statistics on child physical and mental health. The UNICEF Child Friendly City initiative was launched in response to growing concern about children's eroding rights and freedoms.

To counter this situation there is also now growing global interest in what nurtures individual and societal wellbeing. At a time of great disillusionment about political systems more and more people are expressing interest in the big questions i.e. What underpins a good life? What nurtures creativity and wellbeing? What is the true purpose of education? What is the nature of disadvantage? And is success more about meaning, purpose and fulfillment rather than simply how much money you earn?

The International Festival of Childhood will be the first of its kind to not only celebrate what's great and powerful about childhood, but to also highlight the very real dangers that children are being exposed to. Combining some of the most exciting, innovative and playful children's projects and organisations with the latest thinking on brain science and early development, it will bring together a unique and multi-disciplinary team of experts to share their own thoughts about the situation together with many of the solutions that are currently being explored. In particular it will aim to look at the nature of early disadvantage, the importance of local communities and how we can help every child to fulfill his or her potential.



2.0 VISION/OBJECTIVES

A globally significant bi-annual event that champions children's rights and freedoms, unites leading thinkers and organisations, promotes contemporary ideas and solutions and positively impacts on societal wellbeing.

The objectives are:

- To open up dialogue and influence debate about the culture of childhood and the value of the child as a citizen with developmental rights from pre-birth
- To create a world-class platform for raising awareness about the importance of early human learning and development
- To promote the importance of playfulness and creativity and raise awareness that children are highly competent learners from pre-birth
- To show that child development and wellbeing is significantly impacted by adult wellbeing
- To promote the concept of the whole child and that wellbeing comprises physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health
- To promote the concept of lifelong learning and to challenge systems that restrict learning to ages or stages
- To create a forum and collaborative culture where leading thinkers from around the world are regularly encouraged to come together to share knowledge and understanding
- To facilitate the development of systems that better support and nurture natural human development and the creation of more caring, meaningful and sustainable human societies.

Entertainment and events

Lots of really fun stuff for families and kids to have a go at

Thought-provoking talks

What the experts think about the pressures on modern childhood and what we can all do about it

The latest research

Bringing together the latest global evidence on child health and wellbeing

Examples of great practice

Sharing what works to support children and families and how communities can make a difference



3.0 CHILD WELLBEING

Across the world child health and wellbeing is a subject of increasing concern. Currently one in ten children in the UK is being diagnosed with a mental health disorder, one in three is clinically obese, one in 12 of our adolescents deliberately harm themselves and nearly 80,000 children and young people currently suffer from severe depression including 8,000 children aged under 10 years of age. Many expert groups have now started saying that they are seeing a child mental health epidemic.

In recent years there have been great advances in the developmental sciences and, in particular, in our understanding of early brain neurology. Science tells us that the foundations of sound mental health are built early in life. Early experiences—including children's relationships with parents, caregivers, relatives, teachers, and peers—interact with genes to shape the architecture of the developing brain. Disruptions in this developmental process can impair a child's capacities for learning and relating to others, with lifelong implications.

Measures of health and social problems in other countries have revealed that it is not poor material conditions that necessarily imply that richer countries do better than others, but the scale of material differences between their citizens. In other words it is how we compare ourselves to others. Child wellbeing is strongly related to inequality and the sense of inequality begins in early childhood. Countries that do well on indices of child wellbeing have invariably invested heavily in the importance of family life and early relationships and we know that social inequalities in early childhood are entrenched long before the start of formal education.

Investment in our understanding of early childhood therefore does more than just pay significant returns to children. It also supports families and communities, benefits taxpayers and enhances economic vitality.

The Office for National Statistics Mental health in children and young people in Great Britain, 2005

Health and Social Care Information Centre (2009), Children's overweight and obesity prevalence, by survey year, age-group and sex

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE)
UNICEF Report Card 6, Child Poverty in Rich Countries, 2005



4.0 CREATIVITY

Curiosity and creativity are essential for healthy human development and there is increasing understanding that creative learning and innovation go far beyond a focus on the arts in education. Instead they encompass the human developmental sciences, cognition, intuition, work and play, human rights, citizenship, science, technology and entrepreneurship.

There is a deeply personal inner process that stems from the intuitive capacity of meaning-making and that builds on pre-existing personal knowledge, and another outer process that is about actively participating, sharing and collaborating with others. Both rely on open structures that allow possibilities to be birthed and explored free from external expectations.

The cultivation of creativity is now seen as a pre-requisite for healthy business development and it was recognized by 1500 CEOs interviewed by IBM as an essential element for them navigating an increasingly complex world.

'Children need the freedom to appreciate the infinite resources of their hands, their eyes and their ears, the resources of forms, materials sounds and colours. They need the freedom to realise how reason, thought and imagination can create continuous interweaving of things, and can move and shake the world.'

Loris Malaguzzi



5.0 CORE THEMES

Day 1 - Freedom to be my Self

Early Human Development
Nature and Nurture
The Multi-Sensory Learner
Wonder and Joy
Time and Space

Day 2 - Playful Learning

Curiosity and Meaning-Making
ABC of Movement
Play, Creativity and Imagination
Stories and Storytelling

Day 3 - Lifelong Learning

Children and Cultures
The Digital World
Children and the Media

Day 4 - Rights of the Child

Children and Poverty
Child-friendly Cities and Communities
Children and Peace



IFOC - leading the debate on child rights and societal wellbeing

The festival will ask some of the big questions about what nurtures human development, how we combat disadvantage, the demise of play, the true purpose of education and what values we want to promote for healthy, happy families and sustainable societies.

It will bring together a unique collaboration of organisations and people who are passionate about childhood and who want to forge new and creative alliances focused on scaleable change.

Play and Playfulness

Learning styles and dispositions

The Digital World

Connection with Nature

Stories and Storytelling

Art and Creativity

Child rights and values

Parenting

Families and Communities



6.0 AUDIENCES

Everyone - from schoolchildren with their parents and grandparents, to teachers, headteachers, scientists, artists, musicians, authors, business people, leading thinkers, policy-makers and politicians – potentially has an interest in this subject. The conversations will take place via talks, public debates, workshops, interactive seminars, film screenings, creative installations, exhibitions and social media.

ONGOING DIALOGUE

Participants will have the opportunity to engage in an ongoing dialogue about key concepts and themes via virtual and physical meeting spaces at the House of Imagination. This space will provide a portal for developing and exchanging ideas, creating an on-going gallery of learning to be shared digitally and in real time/ space with the dialogue continuing long after the event has taken place.





7.0 PARTNERS AND SPONSORS

The City of Bath is hosting the Festival with the project leadership being shared by the Save Childhood Movement and 5x5x5=creativity. We are currently seeking to identify both national and international sponsors and partners who would like to be involved in growing the project into a major bi-annual event.

We are looking for fully collaborative partners who care about the issues and who want to help us reach both national and global audiences. From financial support to creative input and ongoing strategic alliances, we hope to forge strong, powerful and ongoing relationships that can help us open up a world-changing dialogue on the needs of modern childhood.

**BECOME A
CHAMPION FOR
CHILDHOOD**

"We want to create a globally significant event that champions children's rights and freedoms and that, in future years, could be replicated in other countries. The world is changing fast and we think there is a need to recognise the fact that the foundations of healthy societies are laid down in early childhood and that the old ways of schooling and definitions of success no longer apply.

What matters for the future is that we honour the importance of our innate curiosity and creativity and that we support the development of happy, healthy, connected human beings that care about themselves, but that also recognise the part that they play in creating more meaningful and sustainable societies."

Wendy Ellyatt



8.0 PATRONS AND BENEFACTORS

By becoming an IFOC founding supporter you will help us to realise the vision of not only establishing the first festival in the UK, but to also forge the cross-cultural links and collaborations that, from 2019, will enable the concept to be replicated elsewhere in the world.

Shaping the future

Initiating positive and lasting change

Helping create a world fit for children

Our founding supporters will:

- be acknowledged in the festival brochure and website
- have advance access to the festival programme
- have reserved seating at all events
- have opportunities to meet the creative teams and speakers
- be invited to the end of festival celebration
- be invited to actively participate in the post event global dialogue hubs
- have priority access to future global festival events



9.0 WHY SUPPORT US

By sponsoring The International Festival of Childhood, you will not only be supporting the vision and aims of the two partners, but you will gain access to a wide range of benefits that will help you to meet your own objectives.

Helping you to meet your objectives:

- Building brand awareness using our marketing channels, national & local media coverage and Festival site presence
- Communicating corporate identity by aligning with a creative and innovative cultural collaboration
- Targeted marketing to an ABC1 audience demographic and mailing list of 10,000
- Funding our educational work in the community
- Promoting brand values to stakeholders including trustees, consumers, employees, the community, media and our high profile speakers
- Joining a network of national and regional partners
- Playing a part in supporting the future of a culturally iconic and globally significant event



10.0 DEVELOPMENT TEAM

The Save Childhood Movement

The movement was launched in April 2013 and consists of a growing collaboration of individuals and organisations that share a deep concern about societal values and wellbeing and the current erosion of natural childhood. It has a particular interest in how modern culture impacts the values and mindsets of children, especially in the early years. Its first major campaign was launched in September 2013, achieving both national and international attention, and in 2014 it ran the first National Children's Day UK with the aim of this becoming a major annual celebration.

The movement aims to identify and highlight those areas of most concern, to protect children from inappropriate developmental and cultural pressures and to fight for their natural developmental rights. It also aims to provide a critical platform for dialogue and debate, to identify examples of inspirational practice and to help source innovative and future-focused solutions.

5x5x5-creativity

5x5x5=creativity is an independent, arts-based action research organisation with charitable status that supports children and young people in their exploration and expression of ideas, helping them develop creative skills for life. Originally set up with groups of 5 artists, 5 educational settings and 5 cultural centres in triangles to work together to collect evidence of creativity and how best to support it. Since 2000, 5x5x5 has worked with over 250 settings across 10 Local Authorities. 5x5x5=creativity helps improve children's and young people's life chances by developing their confidence in themselves as creative learners and thinkers whilst inspiring higher levels of motivation and engagement in their learning.

5x5x5=creativity is now a nationally recognised and highly regarded long-term research project of vitality and innovation, influencing practice across the South West and beyond. Throughout the research there has been a transformation of practice in classrooms and across whole schools. School without walls, Forest of Imagination, House of Imagination and Child Friendly City are key initiatives that 5x5x5=creativity are developing in collaboration with creative, cultural and educational partners.



11.0 CONTACT

Want to know more?

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There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children.

Nelson Mandela



www.festivalofchildhood.com



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