

Mapping Research Based Knowledge about Children, Art and Culture in Schools

Lotte Broe,

MA in Social & Cultural Anthropology

Project Researcher at the Network for Children, Arts, and Culture

The Danish Agency for Culture

lob@kulturstyrelsen.dk

www.boernekultur.dk

The Danish

NETWORK FOR CHILDREN, ARTS, AND CULTURE

- A network with participation from the *Ministry for Children & Education* together with the *Ministry for Social Affairs & Integration* along with the *Danish Agency for Culture* and the *Danish Film Institute* – serves as **Advisory Board to the Minister and Ministry of Culture**.
- Focusing on the vision that **all children and young people** should experience art and culture during their formative years; that **all institutions of culture** should contribute towards this goal; and that **all forms of art** should be involved.
- Expertise in all fields of art is found within the network.
- Aims at facilitating communication between all the different stakeholders in the “children-arts-culture-field”
- Focus on cooperation between state and municipalities, the latter being responsible for creating and implementing local policies on children’s cultural lives.

Tasks of the Network



- Inspire
- Initiate
- Coordinate
- Support
- Give advice

The Mapping Project

the whats

the whys

the hows



ORGANISATION

- **Reference group** consisting of members from Iceland Finland, Sweden, Norway and Denmark.
- Financed by a grant from the **Nordic Council of Ministers**:
February - December 2012.
- The Danish **Network for Children, Art and Culture** have employed a **part time researcher** to coordinate and carry out investigation into the questions raised by the project design.

PROJECT AIMS – THE “WHATS”

- Producing an overview of research based knowledge about children’s experiences with creative and artistic work, their encounters with art and artists within the framework of primary and lower secondary education (ages 6 – 18) in all of the Nordic countries
 - empirically founded and methodologically “sound” studies, research reports
 - assessment studies
- Describing “best practice” examples from all of the participating countries.

BASIC IDEAS – THE “WHYS”

- We BELIEVE that “Creativity Changes the World” – and we THINK that there might be some kind of evidence supporting this belief. But we KNOW very little about what kind of evidence exists and how much of it we have.
- We need to “know what we know” (and don’t know) because:
 - We want to be BETTER at engaging children in meaningful ways and to LEARN from our experiences.
 - We have to provide EASY ACCESS TO VALIDATED KNOWLEDGE about the effects on children of participating in creative and artistic processes.
 - we need to be able to point to “gaps” in our current knowledge – in order to be more specific about the NEED FOR FURTHER RESEARCH.

RESEARCH STRATEGIES – THE “HOWS”

- One coordinating researcher working with one or several correspondents in each of the Nordic countries.
- Correspondents looking into national research databases; making connections with researchers and stakeholders in the children-arts-culture field and report findings to coordinator.
- Coordinator organize findings in accordance with a matrix model developed heuristically from within the project. No qualitative assessment of research material.
- Correspondents assist in identifying “best practice” examples which will be discussed during coordinator’s meeting with correspondents in each country.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS...

- AND FURTHER STEPS

- Probing Danish research databases and professional network indicates that research projects and even assessment studies are sparse
- Research into this specific corner of the “Children-Arts-Culture-field” seems to be of a rather “philosophical” and speculative nature
- What about the other Nordic countries?
- Where do we go from here?

CONCLUDING REMARKS



REGARDING CHILDREN – the Nordic way

- Children as **beings** rather than *becomings*
- Children's right to culture
- Children's rights to participation
- We need to know more about the connections between creativity and democracy