



**\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\***

**Arts and Culture are essential for Strong and Stable Families  
argues national charity**

Taking part in cultural activities together as a family helps to make families strong and stable, providing them with shared memories, history and happiness as well as resilience when times are hard. However independent research from Ipsos MORI for national charity, Creativity, Culture & Education's (CCE) highlights that **one in five parents report that their child has not taken part in any cultural activities in the past year with the family\***.

As the new coalition government announces that it "believes that strong and stable families of all kinds are the bedrock of a strong and stable society" and pledge "to make our society more family friendly", CCE is calling for policy-makers and cultural organisations to ensure that all families, no matter what their background or where they live, have access to the benefits that arts and culture can bring to family life. CCE ([www.creativitycultureeducation.org](http://www.creativitycultureeducation.org)) is the national organisation which aims to transform lives by harnessing the potential of creative learning and cultural opportunity.

Another Ipsos MORI study reveals that a child's engagement in arts and culture is dependent on the educational levels of their parents with **60% of children of parents with no educational qualifications spending less than three hours per week on cultural activities. Worryingly 20% spend none at all – including reading a book or doing creative things on a computer#.**

Increasingly, access to the arts and cultural activities are a vital part of what it means to prepare young people for a future in the 21st Century, helping them to unlock their talent and realise their potential. These experiences contribute in powerful ways to personal

development, enhancing life skills as well as building confidence. Even though there has been a range of national-level initiatives such as A Night Less Ordinary which provided free theatre tickets for under 26 year olds and free admission to national museums, which have aimed to stimulate demand, it appears that opportunities are still only taken up by some families and young people and not others.

Interested in finding out more about the barriers to accessing arts and culture as a family, CCE conducted further research with focus groups of mothers without educational qualifications. As expected, some barriers to accessing cultural activities are practical and linked to family finances with many parents concerned about hidden costs such as providing food or worrying about children wanting to stop at the gift shop on a day out. One mum said, *"No matter where you go, it all costs money – ice creams, drinks, food, you name it"*.

However, much of the testimony from parents in the qualitative research revealed more emotional reasons for not taking part. The majority displayed a lack of knowledge of their area and many were unsure of what to expect of new experiences and what might be expected of them in new situations. A mum told CCE, *"I'm not very good at going anywhere on my own; I get quite nervous"* and another said, *"I'd be scared to go – my mum could take him though"*. Work to reduce these barriers through group experiences, or taster sessions in familiar settings can all help to make the arts and cultural activities more inclusive, especially of those parents who may have little similar experience themselves, and reasons to be fearful of the unknown. The results of truly embedding creative and cultural activities in family life can be seen in the happiness of families and solid family relationships. Parents confirmed this saying, *"Spending time with them [children] means you stay close to them"*.

Paul Collard, Chief Executive of Creativity, Culture & Education, said: "Not enough attention has been paid to the effect that taking part in creative and cultural activities has on families as a whole. To date the focus of family involvement in culture has largely been looked at through one dimension: children's participation in cultural activities via Government intervention such as free museums. Yet this research and our conversations with parents have led us to identify a need to change arts and culture policy to further break down access barriers for all families. The new government has

recognised the importance of strong and stable families and we believe that access to culture can help to achieve this.”

Creativity, Culture & Education (CCE) is the national organisation which manages England’s flagship creative learning programme Creative Partnerships and the pilot cultural offer, Find Your Talent. For more details of the ‘*Parents’ views on creative and cultural education*’ report and the CCE focus group research please visit [www.creativitycultureeducation.org/research-impact/families](http://www.creativitycultureeducation.org/research-impact/families).

For more information about CCE please visit [www.creativitycultureeducation.org](http://www.creativitycultureeducation.org) or follow @CCEinsights on Twitter.

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**Notes to Editors:**

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\*Ipsos MORI interviewed 2,452 parents of children under 19 years old. Interviews conducted face-to-face in respondents’ home using Ipsos MORI’s omnibus (from April – August 2009). Results are weighted by sex, social grade, work status, region, cars in household, ethnicity and whether respondent works in the public / private sector.

#Ipsos MORI data based on 3,316 parents of pupils aged 5-10 in 10 Find Your Talent areas in England. Parents completed postal questionnaires from 12 March to 26 May 2009. Data are weighted to ensure results are representative by child ethnicity, eligibility for free school meals, SEN/Disability status, and whether pupils attended a FYT target school or not.

**Creativity, Culture and Education ([www.creativitycultureeducation.org](http://www.creativitycultureeducation.org)):**

Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE) is the national organisation which aims to transform the lives of children and families by harnessing the potential of creative learning and cultural opportunity to enhance their aspirations, achievements and skills. **Our vision** is for children’s creativity to be encouraged and nurtured in and out of school and for all children to experience and access the diverse range of cultural activity in England because these opportunities can have an enormous impact on their life chances.

CCE delivers the following cultural and creative programmes and initiatives:

- *Creative Partnerships* – England’s flagship creative learning programme: [www.creative-partnerships.com](http://www.creative-partnerships.com)
- *Find Your Talent* – is the pilot scheme to encourage children and young people to participate in cultural activities, both in and out of school: [www.findyourtalent.org](http://www.findyourtalent.org)

- *Shine* – the annual celebration of the talent of all children and young people: [www.shineweek.co.uk](http://www.shineweek.co.uk)