



Family Arts
Campaign

FAMILY AUDIENCES: WHAT MATTERS?

Photo: Theatre Royal Nottingham



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: APRIL 2014 INTERIM EVALUATION OF THE FAMILY ARTS CAMPAIGN

"We're now working together to ensure that our offer across the whole organisation is family friendly." **Hall for Cornwall**

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FAMILY ARTS CAMPAIGN - A POSITIVE START

"It's made us remind ourselves about putting ourselves in the shoes of families and their needs."
Artrageous

The Family Arts Campaign is a large scale, national collaborative programme led by the visual and performing arts sectors to increase levels of arts engagement by families. It will do this through three main areas of work:

Increasing the amount and range of high quality arts content available
Increasing the quality of family experience (Family Arts Standards; Family Arts Awards; annual conference; peer learning opportunities)
Improving marketing (UK Family Website, major marketing campaign including development of partnerships)

Increasing engagement of families in the arts transcends any category of art form, geography, organisational scale or model. In commissioning this Family Arts Campaign, Arts Council England sought an approach which could operate on a national scale, bringing together the interests and expertise of multiple arts sectors and making the work relevant to the widest possible constituency. Moving the focus on family audiences from a local and regional level to a national platform is of paramount importance.

The Campaign aims to increase and broaden family audiences and participants for the visual and performing arts sectors generally, but is focusing its work on those organisations which are members of the consortium leading the Campaign, as well as Arts Council England's National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs). It has also built a partnership with The Big Draw. Many other organisations and individual artists have also taken part in other aspects of the Campaign, including museums, heritage organisations and libraries.

The Family Arts Campaign is being led by a consortium of six performing and visual arts trade bodies:

Association of British Orchestras
UK Theatre
Society of London Theatres
Independent Theatre Council
Visual Arts and Galleries Association
Dance UK

The Campaign is overseen by a Project Board, chaired by Kathryn McDowell, with a central co-ordination team led by David Brownlee.

At the half-way point in the Campaign and following on from the first Family Arts Festival, this Interim Evaluation gathers what the sector is learning about family audiences. This major national campaign is enabled by considerable investment from Arts Council England as Strand 2 of Audience Focus, its new stream of investment in audiences for the arts.

This short Executive Summary shows the considerable achievements and headlines of the Campaign so far and reflects the insights, innovative practice and changes in attitude toward family audiences from the participating organisations. Its recommendations will inform the roll-out of the Campaign, which will run until March 2015.

The full Interim Evaluation Report is available separately.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

OF THE FAMILY ARTS CAMPAIGN

928 arts organisations across the UK took part in the first Family Arts Festival, the main strand of the Family Arts Campaign - 86% from outside London (*Year 1 target = 500*)

401,541 attendances were reported by 48% (441) of the participating organisations (or 65% of the hosting organisations) ^[1] (*Year 1 target = 350,000*)

2,295 events in the Family Arts Festival: 1,235 were charged and 1,060 free

188 organisations that registered events are NPOs (*Year 1 target = 250 NPOs*)

113 pieces of new or newly-commissioned work were shown during the Festival

60,000 hits on the website (www.familyartsfestival.com)

88% of organisations that took part said their Family Arts Festival events were successful

60% of organisations say they will take part in the 2014 Family Arts Festival and a further 38% are considering their involvement.

95% of organisations believe that the Campaign should continue beyond its current funding period (March 2015)

110 organisations have signed up to the Family Arts Standards (*as at April 2014*)

453 arts professionals participated in specially devised training on family audiences. The first Family Arts Conference attracted 307 attenders

128 organisations received votes from their audiences through the Family Arts Awards

17 Local Family Arts Networks started up, involving 142 organisations and one individual artist

New 'Test Drive the Arts' For Families resource downloaded 292 times (*as at April 2014*)

70% of organisations said taking part in the Family Arts Campaign added to their knowledge and practice

^[1] *Extrapolating this figure to include all events is problematic but worthwhile. If the average number of 911 attendances per hosting organisation is taken, a total of 642,225 attendances can be estimated. The breadth of type and size of event (which varied between single figures attending a workshop, to three- or four-figure numbers attending performances, to five-figure numbers experiencing public arts installations) make it difficult to generalise.*

INSIGHTS AND INNOVATIONS: HEADLINES IN THE STORY SO FAR

The Family Arts Campaign set out to shift attitudes and change practice in how arts organisations work with family audiences in order to increase participation by families. Organisations taking part in the Family Arts Campaign are deeply interested in the family audience and its further potential. So far many positive developments are emerging:

New attitudes and new audiences: organisations are rethinking ideas about their family offer and where families fit into their organisation and programming. They are seeing the value of the family market and that building loyalty and increasing frequency can lead to increased audience spend and organisational stability. The Campaign is starting to shift how arts organisations think about family audiences. Participation in the Festival is provoking new thinking, ideas and ambitions and organisations look forward to becoming more engaged in the 2014 Campaign in order to take this further

Here today and here tomorrow: realising the importance of the family audience : organisations are realising that if they attract family audiences now and give them positive experiences this will lead to lifelong interest and create a taste for the arts and a sustainable audience

Price v value: more understanding is emerging about how families differentiate between perception of value for money: quality of experience is a major motivation in influencing decisions - rather than just price

New understanding is leading to new audiences: organisations are thinking more carefully about the family market; some already identify new attenders as a result of the Festival. Organisations deriving most benefit are those at a less developed stage of family programming and who have engaged more deeply in the resources offered by the Campaign

"It's highlighted that families are a constant growing demographic, and the term family is very broad. The word family can mean so much to so many people, so it depends on what ages you're looking to nurture and what you're willing to programme."

New Wolsey Theatre Company

"Increased knowledge and understanding of the needs of families and what encourages them to visit a venue like ours."

New Art Exchange

"We took the family audience for granted and felt that by simply putting the show on that was enough. We have implemented many changes front of house and to our pricing structures - 2014 will see our babe in arms tickets available to children up to the age of 2 years old - and possibly 2.5 years."

The Woodville



Photo: Dance City



Photo: Arnolfini

A national campaign is welcome: organisations are enthused by a national campaign and there is a strong sense of wanting to belong to it. However, they feel that Campaign brand and PR needs a real boost to heighten its impact. Some organisations question the value that the Campaign has added, feeling that it was their own efforts that ensured success, but the Campaign's role in initiating this national focus on family audiences should not be underestimated.

"It was great being part of a national initiative and I think this raised the profile of our venue as I noticed we attracted new audience from outside the area". Horse and Bamboo

The Family Arts Standards are proving an invaluable tool for organisations to benchmark their provision and identify how they can improve.

"Using the Family Arts Standards, we surveyed our family audiences and a lot was revealed about our venue - which although has ample provisions for families, is not always welcoming, comforting and lacks the extra value activities needed to attract families." Action Transport Theatre

A catalyst for new work being created and for organisations identifying capacity for growth in their programme for families: the short lead-in time for the 2013 Festival meant that many organisations branded existing product: but many new products and events were created so much new work was included in the Festival

"We have limited provision for Family audiences as part of the Company's main programme - an annual Xmas show is the main offer, so the Family Arts Festival has enabled me to prompt thinking in the organisation about extending this provision for families." Royal Lyceum Theatre Company

"Our 'There's a Rumble in the Jungle' programme would not have been composed if I hadn't heard about the Festival. For the Hallé this has helped us recognise that our new St Peter's rehearsal venue is just perfect for family audiences and we will now programme other family activities when the Orchestra's schedule allows." Hallé Orchestra

Collaboration and critical mass : new partnerships and networks are developing understanding about the value of a collaborative approach: local impact has been much greater than anticipated, and it has become apparent that local networks and relationship lie at the heart of organisations' engagement with families

"It has made us focus on hard to reach audiences that can be approached strategically by the consortium of local organisations." Quad, Derby

Driving organisational change: recognising that a successful offer for families requires a whole-organisation approach

"We're now working together to ensure that our offer across the whole organisation is family friendly." Hall for Cornwall

"We are looking closely at the Standards and how we will improve our family offer post our major refurbishment. It has started conversations about cross-departmental working and how as an organisation we need to prioritise family working."

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic

Validation: the Campaign is recognised as an opportunity for the work of organisations which are already developing good family arts practice to be validated and disseminated

A positive prospect: there is positive feeling towards 2014, and 95% of organisations believe the Campaign should continue beyond this date. They identify more with the Festival than the other strands and talk about the Festival and the Campaign interchangeably; the wider benefits that could be derived from the other strands need to be reiterated and clarified.



Photo: Theatre Royal Nottingham

LOOKING FORWARDS: RECOMMENDATIONS

2013 shows a strong start to the Family Arts Campaign, with many targets met or exceeded. The challenge is to sustain and build on these positive outcomes and create a strong legacy. This Campaign has huge potential: organisations are deeply interested in developing family audiences and consider the Campaign a great initiative with high relevance to their audience development plans.

The Festival is a good mechanism for focusing attention on families. The Campaign has an important strategic role in advocacy for family audiences, to respond to the voice of families and to support learning about the needs of family audiences. Effective dissemination through training events and online resources are seen as valuable and should be continued through the campaign.

These suggestions emerge from the Interim Evaluation Report to capitalise on progress so far and inform planning for the future.

1. BUILD ON THE POSITIVE RESPONSE TO 2013 FAMILY ARTS FESTIVAL

There is a positive feeling towards the 2013 Festival, and 95% of organisations believe that the Campaign should continue beyond its current funding period (March 2015). 60% of organisations say they will take part in the 2014 Festival and a further 38% are considering their involvement. Being part of a national campaign is clearly important to organisations, but some of their expectations will need to be better met.

This first Festival was put together very quickly so many organisations were unable to become as deeply involved as they would wish. In many cases they badged existing programmes. The longer lead-up to the 2014 Festival gives participants the opportunity to draw further value from the Campaign, especially if the benefits and the messaging are well advocated.

Reiterate the benefits of participation to participating organisations across all levels including CEOs: in several organisations decisions about participation are taken at top level, so it will be important to widely communicate the initial successes and benefits of the Campaign to sustain.

2. THE CAMPAIGN IS MORE THAN THE FESTIVAL: SHIFT THE THINKING ABOUT AUDIENCES

The core purpose of the Campaign is to shift ideas and practice in how arts organisations engage with families and better meet their needs and expectations. Some organisations are identifying the Festival as the Campaign and not necessarily getting this wider goal. Organisations are evaluating success in terms of Festival profile. The 2014 Campaign should focus on wider aspirations so that awareness of other aspects of the Campaign, especially the Family Arts Standards and training, is raised among participating organisations.

3. CAPITALISE ON A SENSE OF BELONGING BY ORGANISATIONS: RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

Nearly 1,000 organisations are already signed up with potential for many more to join. A critical mass of organisations would greatly extend the campaign in 2014. However it is important to emphasise the quality of relationships with organisations rather than simply increase numbers.



Photo: Bridgewater Hall

4. HEARTS AND MINDS: RAISE THE PROFILE OF THE FAMILY ARTS CAMPAIGN

Raising the profile and building brand visibility are priorities for the Family Arts Campaign and Festival. Some organisations feel that the national impact of the brand has not met their expectations so this needs urgent consideration in planning 2014. Ambassadors, champions, Project Board advocacy, committed media partners will all help to build profile. The Campaign team is addressing raising national profile and a national sponsor. Flagship events will build the Festival brand visibility through attracting national media attention.

5. INVEST IN THE MOST EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

The website and social media are the most effective communication tools. The priority for 2014 should be developing the content and maximising the effectiveness of these channels. Organisations hope that www.familyartsfestival.com becomes the 'go to' place for families and want to set clearer marketing goals for the campaign team. They want to see a strong national media profile for the site; a concise, good quality digital resource for audiences, with an efficient local search facility to enable audiences to access the full local offer, as well as easier upload mechanisms and navigation. Organisations would also like a secure online area they could access for specific information such as benchmarking data.

6. MAKE THE MOST OF 'LOCAL'

Local audience, local media and press, local marketing and communication channels, local networks, local funding. Organisations saw value in 'belonging' to a national campaign insofar as they were part of something they believed in and could draw ideas from, but this was distinct from the actual value added. Are families more local than any other kind of audience? This aspect needs to be reflected in planning next stages and in developing the Campaign's national brand.

7. BOOST THE APPETITE FOR LEARNING

The target for NPOs is not currently being met: possibly these organisations feel there is less value to be derived for them from the Campaign. However, many participating organisations have a strong appetite for learning – for research, for case studies and for sharing practice with peers. They benefit from feedback from families, acting on it and demonstrating impacts.

The Campaign can provide organisations with the knowledge and tools to achieve this and harness the resources of those that are already knowledgeable, including NPOs and others with more advanced practice.

8. SPREAD THE KNOWLEDGE

Only a few participants are researching their family audiences, and those who do reap benefit from the knowledge they acquire. Family Arts Campaign and Networks could provide further training and online resources to help organisations to research their family audiences. Greater synergy with CultureHive could help achieve this.

New knowledge is spurring a rethink about communicating with families, so that key messages align to what actually matters to them, leading to appropriate content and method of delivery.

9. FIRST ENCOUNTERS: SHARE NEW IDEAS FOR ATTRACTING FIRST-TIME ATTENDERS

The Test Drive online resources provided by The Audience Agency and Mousetrap Theatre Projects as a tool for increasing family audiences and reaching specific family groups are being downloaded. In addition, many new ideas and collaborative initiatives for engaging family audiences are evolving and, if shared, would be a valuable resource.

10. RECOGNISE THE NEEDS OF DIFFERENT SECTORS

Museums and heritage organisations are keen to participate in the Campaign and many have extensive expertise in engaging family audiences. Although the Family Arts Campaign must continue to be clear that it's funding should only be used to support arts activities, it needs to consider how to recognise the needs of, and communicate better with, different sectors such as heritage.

11. RECOGNISE THE NEEDS OF DIFFERENT ORGANISATIONS

There needs to be greater appreciation of the range and size of organisations who are involved. Some are large, national NPOs, others are very small local bodies run with limited resources; many rely on volunteers. There is a wide range of experience. Lack of capacity or resource is influencing decisions about participation. Communication needs to be relevant to all and uncomplicated. Demands on administration need to be light.

12. SUPPORT THE FAMILY ARTS NETWORKS

The Family Arts Networks are emerging as key players in creating awareness and raising the profile of the Festival through collaborative initiatives to inspire local audiences. Continued training and development opportunities for the Networks will benefit the 2014 Festival profile audience reach as well as creating an important legacy.

13. REVIEW THE FAMILY ARTS AWARDS

Many small organisations did not ask their audience to vote as they felt they did not stand a chance. This needs to be addressed in order to get better participation.

14. REFOCUS THE FAMILY ARTS STANDARDS

The Family Arts Standards offer the opportunity for learning through reflection and practical action. It is important that they are not overshadowed by the Festival.

15. MAKE USE OF THE RESOURCES OF CONSORTIUM PARTNERS

The capacity of the consortium partners varies widely in resource levels and in priorities. This first phase has been valuable in building understanding about the partnership of consortium members and of how they work together.

A more bespoke approach to communication with the consortium partners that responds to their individual needs and resources will ensure that opportunities and resources are more productively harnessed and that the advocacy and ambassadorial role of the partners is strengthened.

Photo: Theatre Royal Nottingham



THE FAMILY ARTS CAMPAIGN'S RESPONSE TO THE APRIL 2014 INTERIM EVALUATION

We're delighted that our independent evaluators have recognised what an amazing impact the Family Arts Campaign has made in so little time, but equally we agree there is much more to be done.

While the big numbers achieved in 2013, particularly for the Festival, were beyond our wildest hopes, what is most encouraging to us is the way that the Campaign has helped organisations examine their current practice and improve it. We absolutely agree that the Festival needs to be used as a springboard into the wider campaign.

The Festival was always intended to be the centrepiece of the Campaign and the element with the highest public profile. However we feel the Standards have the potential to have the biggest impact in improving the experience for families. We have already seen the potential our Networks have for collaboratively improving practice and growing audiences. Specially commissioned training for the Campaign has been extremely well-received and our Conference and Learning Event have been great opportunities to share good practice.

Our challenge in 2013 was to rapidly build a critical mass of organisations. We agree that this year our focus should be more on deepening relationships than pushing for significant further growth. We will however still try to build new relationships in places and sectors where we currently are under-represented. This includes with Arts Council England's NPOs.

As well as deepening relationships, we want to focus on quality, particularly in the Festival. We will use 2014 as a year to champion artistic quality and innovation in work for families. We will also re-examine our Awards and see how these can better support the recognition of artistic excellence.

It has been a fundamental part of the Campaign's philosophy that we are not 'the experts'. We rely on arts organisations to share best practice and be honest about the success and challenges of innovative approaches. We have no intention of moving away from this genuine 'sector-led' approach, but we do acknowledge that for the organisations that are the leaders on family engagement, the Campaign may have less to offer.

While we hope that the profile we can give organisations who are leading the way will be a reward in itself, we will work to try and ensure there are other ways they can benefit. In particular, we are making every effort to increase the profile of the Festival by securing a major corporate partner. Even if we are not successful in this quest, we will do all we can to improve the impact of our marketing campaign, particularly our media and social media activity.

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