

1. Art experiences in school

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TABLE OF CONTENTS		Pag
NTRODUCTION		Pag
KEY FINDINGS		Pag
GOOD PRACTICES		Pag
Process-Based Learning		Pag
Equal Access to the Arts		Pag
Equity in Arts Experiences		Pag
Subtle Connections to Bully	ying	Pag
Roles & Responsibilities in Arts E	Educations	Pag
Connecting to Curriculum		Pag
Diversifying Experiences		Pag
RECOMMENDATIONS		Pag
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INTRODUCTION

Arts education is a value resource for disrupting social issues and promotion social inclusion. Nevertheless, arts education is frequently under-funded and lacks access to adequate resources and supports to achieve positive outcomes for youth. Cofunded by Erasmus+, The Anti-Bullying Movement Series (ABMS) brought together five European non-profit partner organizations: Município de Vila do Porto (Portugal), Fundacíon Uxio Novoneyra (Spain), Xenia (Austria), Pro Progressione (Hungary), Association Kulturanova (Serbia), and Netzwerk Kultur & Heimat (Germany) to use art and culture to disrupt bullying in youth-at-risk by increasing the skills and competencies of artists, educators, youth workers, educational leaders, and support staff that serve youth-at-risk. ABMS featured seven adult learning, teaching, and training events that focussed on fostering social inclusion and augmenting the skills of participants in disrupting bullying behaviours in youth-at-risk through movement.

Approximately 70% of ABMS participants deduced that the public education system in their country is in crisis and 78% agreed that artists are in crisis. ABMS participants that serve youth-at-risk also shared they feel stuck, powerless, and alone when it comes to instigating inclusive and meaningful arts and culture experiences for youth-at-risk.

This purpose of this paper is to provide recommendations from ABMS's learning, teaching, and training series to instigate growth in the education and cultural sector — while also addressing current barriers to arts education in schools. This paper will discuss:

- Process-based learning
- Equal access to the arts
- Equity in arts experiences
- Subtle connections to bullying
- Roles and responsibilities in arts-education

Page 3

WHY WAS IT GOOD

- Connecting to curriculum
- Diversifying experiences

The adaptable, self-reflective, and expressive characteristics of arts-based experiences give arts education the means to plan an important role in cultivating positive behavioural change. In ABMS, we have developed an ideal framework for arts education and conclude our project with evidence-based recommendations for how to effectively use arts education to disrupt bullying in youth-at-risk.

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SOCIAL INCLUSION LENS Highest good-practices, why **KEY FINDINGS** The below are highlights of what the artists, educators, youth workers, educational leaders, and support staff who attended our trainings learned about disrupting bullying in youth-at-risk: 94% of participants gained new knowledge about how to use facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language to promote belonging. 93% of participants felt our training(s) increased their ability to reorient negative behaviours into positive ones (for example: inclusion, empathy, compassion). 92% of participants felt our training(s) increased their ability to disrupt bullying in youth populations through art and culture. 96% of participants detailed the art and culture methodologies and social value skills they learned in our trainings(s) could be applied to arts education and linked to curriculums in their communities. After our training(s) 96% of participants felt more aware of how cross-cultural sharing can be effective in problem solving. Over lap. After our training(s), 96% of participants were more aware of the shortcomings of arts education curriculums. 94% of participants are more aware of how arts education curriculums in their srupting bullying. region could better relate to disrupting bullying. Page 5

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Key Trajectories of Socially Inclusive Arts Education: As a consortium we concluded that the best practices of socially inclusive projects are when everyone can participate or has access to participate. Actively removing the barriers youth-at-risk face to fully participating in arts opportunities is critical for achieving equity not only in the arts but also to make our nations more equitable and inclusive for all people.

PROCESS-BASED LEARNING

ABMS participants agreed that process-based learning is an effective strategy to disrupt bullying through arts-education experiences. Giving youth the opportunity to be in positive stress environments with the guidance of arts education experts, allows them to practice the positive social values that challenge bullying. It is the responsibility of the artist in the classroom to curate a respectful and ethical artistic process and to promote positive social awareness and knowledge. Positive role-modelling is a key component of process-based learning and helping youth develop positive values, knowledge, and skills. A positive role model has the power to strengthen young people's sense of identity, promote self-esteem, and above all, decrease the negative and harmful behaviours that cause bullying.

Creating opportunities for youth to work together while challenging their creativity and artistic expression adds a layer to process-based learning that is more applicable to wider world problems. Process-based learning that includes opportunities for collaboration and cross-cultural sharing, further develops empathy for others' perspectives and experiences. Collaboration also encourages a sense of belonging and pride that can be felt at the end of an artistic process when youth have the opportunity to reflect on what they were able to achieve together—even after encountering challenges, disagreements, and frustrations.

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EQUAL ACCESS TO THE ARTS

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Ensuring youth have equal access to arts experiences is vital to creating transformative meaningful change. We believe that school is the ideal environment for the arts to transpire to increase the engagement of youth-at-risk. Arts experiences at school ensure that youth-at-risk who face barriers to participating in the arts outside of school, have equal access. To support the arts in schools, we believe it should be the responsibility of the school (supported by government funding)—and not the parents to fund arts experiences in school. By allowing students to participate free of charge, this eliminates barriers to participation, especially for youth from families in financial need and in populations who are underserved by society. Furthermore, it is important that youth from diverse backgrounds participate together irregardless of financial need, identity, or ability. Having diverse youth learn to collaborate together is necessary to disrupting the negative behaviours that fester into bullying and ensures no students are excluded. Exclusion that causes distress and/or harm is a form of bullying, so schools need to understand how and when these disparities emerge and model inclusive behaviours by providing all youth with the opportunity to participate.

EQUITY IN ARTS EXPERIENCES

We believe that all arts-education experiences should actively work towards removing all barriers youth face that could impact participation. Sharing this responsibility between both the educator and the artist leading the project is important to ensuring equity—because sometimes guest artists in the classroom are unaware of specific barriers youth face. By sharing the role of removing barriers between both the artist and educator, this ensures that equity is considered before and during the artistic process. Is it important for artists to also be able to adapt their projects and expected outcomes throughout the process so all youth feel included. Equity in arts experiences can be achieved by considering the support and resources each student needs to be successful throughout the artistic process. Therefore, irregardless of ability, gender, race, socio-economic status,

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religion, all students should be set-up to succeed. Considerations such as access to arts supplies, healthy meals, and proper footwear should also be examined when developing inclusive and accessible arts projects.

SUBTLE CONNECTIONS TO BULLYING

The focus of socially inclusive projects that aim to disrupt important social issues such as bullying, should focus primarily on the artistic process and not the issue itself. This creates a more natural progression of youth learning to work together through the promotion of positive social values. The arts allow youth to express themselves and this innately leads to connections, compromise, disagreements, and even frustration. However, instead of focussing on negative behaviours as the core of an arts project, ABMS participants discovered the best practices to disrupt bullying were actually from arts experiences that did not directly tie to bullying. We found that projects centred around creating something together through positive collaboration were the most successful at indirectly addressing bullying by promoting compassion, empathy, diversity, and belonging. Addressing negative behaviours should still be present, but it does not always have to be done in an obvious way. We found that youth typically react negatively way when they are told "no", "that's bad", "don't do this", contrary to how they may react when guided to respectfully work together with diverse youth.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES IN ARTS EDUCATION

We discovered projects are most successful at achieving their intended social value outcomes when both the artist and the educator are involved and have responsibilities throughout the process. ABMS participants that were educators shared this is often a barrier because of teacher fatigue, and ABMS that were artists discussed challenges around not getting paid for preparation time to collaborate with teachers. However, in an ideal world both artists and educators agreed they should be involved throughout the artistic process allowing for:

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Page 8

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- More support throughout the project
- Diverse perspectives to be presented and explored

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- Deeper sharing and learning about the social issue
- Positive role-modelling of collaboration

For example, youth may feel more comfortable sharing their ideas to their regular classroom teacher versus a guest in their classroom, or sometimes youth act differently when a guest artist is leading their class versus their teacher. Leading by example and sharing responsibilities in the classroom demonstrates to students what compromise, collaboration, leadership, and working with someone different than you looks like. To reiterate, ABMS participants agreed that the responsibility of creating equitable arts experiences should be shared between the artist and the educator.

CONNECTING TO CURRICULUM

We concluded that because the arts are an effective way to develop creativity, self-expression, and respect for others, all socially inclusive arts experiences touch on important curricular outcomes. In education, a common outcome is to help youth develop skills to become positive citizens and the arts are an excellent way to explore this theme. Socially engaged arts practices are particularly impactful in the development of citizenship and the ability for youth to feel empowered, so they can contribute to positive change. The arts are also important in developing youth agency. By providing youth with opportunities to make their own creative decisions, they develop confidence—not only in themselves, but also in their peers. There is a direct link between bullying and low self-confidence, so including arts activities that give youth the power to make their own decisions and celebrate their work is crucial. Furthermore, the arts allow youth the creative freedom and time to think carefully about how they observe the world and connect with others. These processes are important to developing empathy and understanding different perspectives and cultures. Some of the most common curricular goals are to build essential skills like communication, collaboration, and

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problem solving, and ABMS participants believe socially engaged arts practices promote all of these.

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DIVERSIFYING EXPERIENCES

Based on projects ABMS participants have led in their home communities, we concluded that the arts are most successful at addressing bullying when there is a mix of experiences inside of schools as well as outside of the school environment. Exposing students to different environments like a theatre, street performance, museum, or open studio is especially important for students who face barriers to participating in art outside of school. Having a range of arts experiences both inside and outside school may also increase youth appreciation for the arts. Having youth-at-risk engage with diverse artists exposes them to different ideas, experiences, but also helps youth imagine and practice solutions to social problems such as bullying. An outside eye, like an artist working with a school, may also bring new valuable perspectives about collaborating and fostering empathy that otherwise may not have been presented to a group of students initially by educators. ABMS participants also noted that having arts experiences in the classroom normalizes the arts as a valuable way for students to gain new knowledge and skills. Furthermore, including arts experiences in the classroom also acknowledges that every student learns differently and celebrates diverse ways of learning.

Page 10

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Recommendation 1: More time in schools for arts education.

Educational governances, decision-makers, and educators must examine the use of time and resources in the classroom to better establish a commitment to arts learning in schools. Many decision makers, educators, and parents view the arts as something for celebration or aesthetics. However, the arts are crucial for skill development and communication.

- The decline or lack of arts education is schools highlights issues of equity and accessibility.
- Youth-at-risk are most severely impacted when arts education is not given adequate space in curricula or learning environments.
- Arts participation increases youth agency, promotes greater social inclusion, and reduces occurrences in negative behaviours.

Recommendation 2: More government support and money.

Government funding to support arts education initiatives needs to be increased. We have the research to prove the importance of arts in education, as well as a global desire to improve the lives of future generations. Therefore, government funding for the arts must be prioritized.

Recommendation 3: Change curriculum from subject-based education to project-based education to include interdisciplinary projects.

Arts education has the potential to benefit diverse learners because of its adaptive attitude and ability. Programs must be adapted, and accommodations must be considered, so active participation is possible for diverse learners.

- Adaptive learning should be used to help remove barriers to learning and create pathways to understanding and exploring different subjects in new ways.
- Project-based education empowers learners and helps educators overcome the challenges associated with traditional learning methods.
- Adaptive learning promotes community and allows youth to achieve a greater understanding of the importance of inclusion and other social values that challenge bullying.

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How could it be better?

Recommendation 4: Have subjects overlap to include more opportunity for the arts.

To dedicate more time for the arts in schools, a solution that supports our first recommendation is to overlap curriculums—to combine arts experiences in other subjects like math or science.

- Not overlapping subjects allows for learning in a different way. Diverse learners
 are given the opportunity to grasp important skills and knowledge in a different
 way than core subjects may be taught in the mainstream.
- Including arts experiences in other subjects allows for further opportunities for skill and communication development.
- Including arts experiences provides learners the opportunity to explore key ideas
 in other subjects through their own lens. Making sense of an idea through
 individual expression allows for further learning about a concept and also
 promotes the development of empathy for others' experiences and perspectives.

Recommendation 5: Refine arts education language. There is no the language in curriculums that specifically says it has to be socially inclusive.

Many educators may not realize the potential of diverse art forms to create positive social change. Especially when acknowledging the generational, geographical, and cultural barriers that educators may face to arts participation, as well as social justice issues in education. A review of arts education curriculum will provide educators with in-depth tools and perspectives to better utilize art experiences to promote social change-making.

Recommendation 6: Schools need more specialized teachers in the arts.

There is usually only one teacher responsible for ALL arts.

Participants have been clear that educators are tired and overworked. Not having specialized teachers in the arts burdens arts educators even more and prevents students from experiencing diverse arts experiences. In fact, 77% of our consortium feel that artists are in crisis mode in their respective country or communities.

WHAT ARE SOME GOOD ART EXPERIENCES IN SCHOOLS IN ONE COUNTRIES? (ALT EDUCATION) Oill.

- · Not having specialized arts teachers in schools is exacerbated in remote communities. It is important that different at-risk communities have access to educators with expertise in different art genres to provide students with a variety of learning experiences.
- It is important students are presented with different perspectives in the arts by learning from different teachers. Furthermore, having different marginalized teachers responsible for teaching the arts promotes even further learning about different perspectives, cultures, communities, and worldviews.
- If possible, schools should share and recommend specialized artists they bring into their school with other schools to help reduce the time it takes to find specialized teachers.
- It is important to support the arts and artists in schools to create a culture of arts appreciation—consequently increasing the potential for artistic sustainability and overall belonging in diverse communities.

Recommendation 7: Some artists do not want to work in schools because of strict structures. There should be more space / flexibility in curriculum for social inclusive art projects.

Artists often think outside of the box when it comes to arts experiences and teaching key skills about expression and communication that are important for all students to learn. Participants agreed there have to be some learning guidelines. Nonetheless, curriculum is often too prescriptive, and there is no room for creative solutions to presenting arts experiences.

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- Community knowledge and support is inconsistent—creating obstacles to implementing socially inclusive art projects in schools.
- Some communities and schools lack effective or adequate legislation, policies, and standards that enhance human rights and the social inclusion of diverse populations.
- Artists must be given adequate power in decision-making when developing lessons. Currently, lack of knowledge and appreciation for the arts excludes artists from contributing to meaningful change-making in the classroom.

BRING THE ARTIST FROM THE STREET TO SCHOOL

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Recommendation 8: Schools should get a set amount of money for arts education.

To support the value and importance of arts in education, it is crucial that the arts are dedicated a set amount of money. Although we recommend above that arts be integrated into other subjects, our consortium agreed that without a set amount of funding for the arts, they will continue to be forgotten.

CONCLUSION

This paper provides in-depth good practices and recommendations for the education and culture sectors to more closely link arts education with bullying by lobbying for the augmentation of curriculums to give them more specific references and examples. Our project outcomes show that public education systems are in crisis, and artists and art educators across the globe need increased academic, physical, and social support. By linking bullying with education more directly, we give both educators and artists that work with youth-at-risk innovative curricular stimulus to address behaviours that fester into bullying—consequently ensuring we provide meaningful, long-lasting change in the education system and in the lives of bullying victims.

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