

TALKING POINTS: SOCIAL IMPACT OF THE ARTS

STATE OF OUR REGION

- **There's a disconnect between public perception of the value of the arts and their impact.** While 79% of King County residents believe arts benefit their personal wellbeing, and 60% cite them as a key factor in their decision to live in the area, only 28% think arts and culture promote social change at a community level.
- Research shows that beyond significant economic impact and the powerful impact arts have on each of us individually, **arts create social impact and public good**, even for those who don't participate directly.
- **Arts are a viable and proven** – yet often underutilized and unacknowledged – **strategy to intersect with social issues and meet community needs**, advancing positive and equitable outcomes in youth development and education, health and wellness, and neighborhood vitality.
- Arts aren't working in isolation: **84% of King County arts nonprofits report partnerships outside the sector.** Complementing traditional approaches to social issues, when art is integrated with another intervention it makes people more successful. These creative collaborations are helping solve the 21st century challenges we face.

ARTS X YOUTH DEVELOPMENT AND EDUCATION

- **Involvement in arts improves academic and social outcomes for youth**, leading to higher test scores and graduation rates, a greater likelihood to attend college, and an ability to regulate emotions. Positive academic outcomes are especially strong for low income youth.
 - » “At-risk” students involved in the arts are 23 percentage points more likely to attend college than peers with low arts involvement. (The Arts and Achievement in At-Risk Youth, 2012).
 - » Research shows that arts build 21st century skills including critical thinking and technical capacity for expression. This suggests arts play a key role in the development of local talent and the future of work (ArtsFund's Social Impact of the Arts Study, 2018).
 - » Students with an education rich in the arts have higher GPAs and standardized test scores, including higher SAT scores, as well as lower dropout rates (Multiple sources).

ARTS X HEALTH AND WELLNESS

- In and out of medical settings, **arts can improve individual and community health**, benefiting patient recovery, reducing anxiety, and helping individuals cope with symptoms of disease, leading to longer lives, better lived.
 - » Nationwide, 45% of medical institutions offer some sort of arts program, with 80% of those saying they do so to benefit patient recovery. (Arts in Healthcare, 2009).
 - » 67% of music therapy participants with dementia felt less anxious and reduced their use of medication (Creative Health: The Arts for Health and Wellbeing, 2017).
 - » Research is particularly strong on the impacts of arts on aging adults, and those with diseases that cause dementia (ArtsFund's Social Impact of the Arts Study, 2018).

ARTS X NEIGHBORHOOD VITALITY

- **Arts build communities** by increasing neighborhood livability, promoting social inclusion and community cohesion, and bridging cultural divides.
 - » Low-income neighborhoods with cultural resources have 14% fewer cases of child abuse and neglect and 18% less serious crime than low-income neighborhoods without cultural resources (Culture and Social Wellbeing in New York City, 2017).
 - » Cities with high concentrations of art have increased civic engagement, social cohesion, and child welfare, as well as less crime and poverty (Multiple sources).

LOOKING AHEAD

- Arts advance equitable outcomes. As the positive benefits have disproportionate impact on low income youth & neighborhoods, who often have the least access to arts resources, **arts are a means to lessen the opportunity gap.**
- **Investment in arts is a proactive strategic investment in community.** Arts can be a powerful strategy, responding to current community need and enabling preventative intervention.
- **You can have an impact** right now by leveraging and scaling what is proven to work – **by investing** in arts organizations and arts-based strategies, **partnering** across sectors and inviting arts voices to planning tables, and **amplifying understanding** of this message, we can bring the social impact of the arts to its full potential to address community priorities.

www.artsfund.org/socialimpact

For more information or questions about ArtsFund's *Social Impact of the Arts Study*, contact Sarah Sidman, ArtsFund Vice President of Strategic Initiatives & Communications, at sarahsidman@artsfund.org or at 206-281-9050.