



Inquiry Meeting 1
17th October 4-6pm
House of Lords Committee Room 2

Chair: Lord Howarth of Newport

Baroness Andrews
Lord Berkeley
Lord Bichard
Helen Goodman MP
Nigel Huddleston MP
Baroness Morris of Yardley
Baroness Neuberger
Rt Hon Ed Vaizey MP
Baroness Young of Hornsey

Expert witnesses:

Gabrielle Allen, Guys and St Thomas' Charity
Paul Camic, Professor of Psychology and Public Health, Canterbury Christ Church University
Steve Chalke, Founder, Oasis
Susie Hall, Head of Arts, Great Ormond Street Hospital
Susan Hallam, Emerita Professor of Education and Music Psychology, UCL Institute of Education
Clive Niall, Artist Teacher
Naomi Shoba, Head of Youth Arts, Ovalhouse
Dr Matthew Taylor, Consultant Psychiatrist, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust

Synopsis of Chapter Five: Childhood, Adolescence and Young Adulthood

This chapter looks at the ways in which health is manifested from the first moments of life. It takes brief account of the influence of maternal nutrition on the growing embryo and points to a role for the arts in promoting healthier eating. It then moves to consider the soothing effects of the arts for mothers in labour and the improved recovery rates of babies exposed to music in neonatal intensive care.

Giving every child the best start in life finds its way into several influential health documents and merits further exploration. Implication of the arts in parent-child bonding is found to span the early years, helping to confer resistance to chronic stress and promote cognitive, linguistic, social and emotional development. A section dedicated to early childhood development variously explores the impact of reading aloud upon linguistic aptitude; the use of dance in achieving school readiness; the success of art, music and drama therapies in overcoming emotional and conduct disorders; and the effect of music upon cognitive development. A case study is provided of an orchestral project which aims to tackle socio-economic deprivation. In exploring the factors that influence health across the social gradient, attention is paid to education and the mitigating effect of the arts on educational outcomes.

Consideration is given to the presence of the arts in healthcare environments, from the design and decoration of hospitals and GP practices to the palliative effect of participatory arts on children's wards. A substantial section examines the mental health and wellbeing of children and its inter-relationship with that of their parents, and examples are given of participatory arts programmes which have been found to address perinatal mental health. Heed is paid to the statistic that most serious mental illness begins before the age of 24, half of which is manifested by the age of 14, alongside the increasing emphasis that is being placed on prevention and early intervention. A case study is provided of a project which uses dance as a form of early intervention in psychosis for adolescents and young adults. Finally, mention is made of the 'cliff edge' faced by young people as they make their way into adult services, alongside the disorientation of leaving home for the first time, and the ways in which the arts might help.

Questions for discussion:

Are there any obvious gaps in the content or argument?
Should there be other practice examples mentioned in the text?
Are the recommendations adequately supported by the argument in the text?
Are the recommendations the right ones and to the right people?