CultureCase

Increasing young people's attendance at performing arts events

This research was conducted by **Andrew J. Martin, Michael Anderson and Ricci-Jane Adams** at the **University of Sydney and University of Melbourne, Australia**

Summary

This paper examined a range of factors that determined whether or not adolescents attended a performing arts event (defined as live dance, music or drama). The study focused on out-of-school arts attendance, but used school students as its research subjects. The researchers found little patterning in the way that particular schools or regions behaved, but a lot of variation between individual students. They also found that ‘the most consistent factor linked to [arts attendance] was frequency of family attendance at performing arts events'. This was true for all types of performing arts.

The research was based on a survey of about 900 students at 18 high schools in large Australian cities

The 18 schools included a mix of educational settings and the respondents were mostly aged between 16 and 17. The survey collected a variety of demographic data on each respondent (age, language, gender) as well as details relating to the schools they attended (government or private, co-educational etc) in addition to their in-school and out-of-school arts activities, both those of the young people themselves and their families.

Not all performing arts are the same

The research found slightly different factors influenced whether a young person was likely to attend a dance, theatre or music event. For example age, socioeconomic status and studying performing arts in school were associated with attendance at music events but not theatre.

Involvement in extracurricular arts or sports activities were most likely to determine performing arts attendance

Therefore the challenge for those looking to increase arts attendance by young people is influencing the behavior of families and children at home and out of school. The traditional policies used to increase cultural activity of school-age youngsters tend to be delivered through school infrastructure, this research suggests a different approach is required.

Keywords

theatre **music** **Australia** **school** **attendance** **dance** **survey** **children**

Title	What determines young people's engagement with performing arts events?
Author(s)	Martin, A. J., Anderson, M., & Adams, R-J.
Publication date	2012
Source	Leisure Sciences: an interdisciplinary journal, Vol 34, Iss 4, pp 314-331
Link	**http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2012.687631**
Author email	**andrew.martin@sydney.edu.au**

By **Culture.Case** | 6 May 2014 | **Insights into arts and culture** , **Developing new audiences in arts and culture** |

King's Culture
© Copyright 2026
Designed, developed and maintained by **King's Digital Lab**
Originally built by **weheartdigital Ltd**
Accessibility Statement