

organisations to your living room every week

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Earlyarts
nurturing children's creativity



Creative Care Package 6 for Families & Teachers

Earlyarts E-Bulletin No. 80



Dear Beth

Welcome to the Creative Care Package No. 5 - a slight deviation to the normal Earlyarts Ebulletin - to bring artists and cultural organisations into your home or school and help ignite those little (and big!) imaginations in the days and weeks to come.

As we move into the next stage of this global situation and deal with the different challenges and decisions ahead, one thing is continually discussed that leaves me feeling uncomfortable. That is the way a large proportion of society are referred to as *vulnerable*, as if this is ALL that they are.

For many, this has exacerbated a sense of fear, making people feel more helpless than usual, perhaps a *burden* to society, as if society were a club they didn't have a right to participate in. But 'vulnerable' is not a great policy for economic or community regeneration because when it is used as a way to define people, it can serve to undermine their strengths, skills, agency and ability to make their own and others' lives richer. And this can be done in so many ways than just being physically present.

Just as we reassure our youngest children, being helped or looked after in one way does not mean they can't be strong, independent, capable and able to support themselves and others in different ways. I would argue that people young and old at highest risk, our *most vulnerable*, are in fact our *most valuable*. Who they are and whatever they bring in this moment is enough.

My own mum is shielding and, boy, do I miss her hugs! The things she may not be able to manage in daily life are more than made up for in those moments of connection, joy and love. There's something very fulfilling about a good hug on many levels, whether sensory, physical, emotional or spiritual. So, once this is all over, I'll be the one with a massive sign at my front door - 'Hugs on tap. Form an orderly queue!' In fact, don't bother queuing, just jump right in.

Take good care of each other,

Ruth Churchill Dower
Earlyarts Director

As an extra special offer this week...

Earlyarts is giving away COMPLETELY FREE* its Creative Play Postcard Packs to any early years, health, social care, local authority, looked after or medical settings who support children and families. You are welcome to order as many packs as you would like to help families find ways to play creatively together.



[ORDER YOUR FAMILY POSTCARD PACKS HERE](#)

**For postage costs only.*

Help us reach families everywhere!



Creative Ideas for Families and Schools

1. Music and Singing

i) Wigmore Hall are screening their production of *The Chimpanzees of Happytown*, which is Music in the Round's latest live concert for young children. Based on the book by Giles Andreae and Guy Parker-Rees and with original music by Children's Composer, Paul

Rissmann, and narration by Polly Ives, this captivating concert includes projected images from the book and irresistibly catchy songs: <https://wigmore-hall.org.uk/live-streams/family-concert-the-chimpanzees-of-happytown>.

ii) The award-winning Shining Cat duo have produced a gorgeous range of original musical stories, all based on one very special cat. So, what's not to like? Each song takes children on a fantastical adventure in which they can become transformed with Orla the cat and explore the world through Orla's amazing eyes. Join the adventure here: <https://www.shiningcat.com/>.

iii) Join Big Top for their super musical adventures and activities, designed for children and young people with additional needs and their families! Join in with their weekly sessions on their YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyXShTcdi0nZ-DrJbUUIFvQ>.

2. Art, Design, Materials and Mixed Media

i) If you ever wondered how to create a *Funky Flowers of Hope and Thanks* sculpture to show appreciation to all our amazing teachers during Lockdown, then look no further! Simply using recycled drinks bottles, the wonderful Katrin Hall from Arts Generation and Waltham Forest Cultural Programme will help you create the most beautiful flowers to pin to your front door or garden gate as a message of thanks. To make your own Flower Power, watch Kat's film here: <https://www.artsgeneration.com/video-tutorials> and on Instagram: @arts_generation_ .

ii) Leeds Art Gallery are offering some fabulous Under Fives Playground activities. Tune in to their twitter feed on 15th May then once a month after that (at least!) for video activities such as this one on rainbow ice-sculptures: <https://twitter.com/LeedsArtGallery/status/1253687969883586562>.

iii) Bristol-based creative empowerment organisation, Unique Voice, have put together a *Stay At Home* activity pack full to bursting with free, simple and fun ideas from sock puppets to maracas. Try them out here: <https://uniquevoice.org/theoffice2/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Home-Activity-Pack.pdf>.

iv) The wonderful Birdhouse Adventures in Art have published their favourite resources on their YouTube channel, including a mesmerising demonstration of Magic Shadow Puppetry tricks, the making of Superhero Capes, and storytelling character and puppet making. Get your shadow puppet fingers limbered up here: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJ4CF3BiGfvosoy0Enx-Cqg> or on their new site here: www.birdhousetheatre.co.uk.

v) The superb artist Paolo from Poplar Union, Lincoln's favourite arts centre, is running a

family art club where you can get lost in a wonderful world of making dinosaur heads, hand puppets and small worlds. Join Paolo every Tuesday
here: <https://www.facebook.com/poplarunion/> or watch previous videos
here: <https://poplarunion.com/family-art-club/>.

vi) Our lovely friends at Cambridge Curiosity and Imagination have commissioned local artists to offer Creative Care Invitations – weekly ideas for different age groups and their families to explore the spaces we are in, especially the natural world on our doorsteps, using only the simplest of materials and everyday objects. No special art skills required. Download your own invitation to play creatively
here: <https://www.cambridgecandi.org.uk/projects/reimagine/events>.

3. Dance and Movement

i) Don't miss the fantastic Saturday Superstars online streaming every Saturday from Yorkshire Dance. Saturday Superstars is a programme of dance classes for young people aged 0-16 encouraging young people to dance at home. Tune in or watch previous videos at <https://yorkshiredance.com/project/saturday-superstars-online/>.

ii) The lovely Louise Klarnett, a dancer with long experience working with children with special educational needs, has created a short film of her work in a nursery setting in East London. We thought the beautiful way in which one little boy's body languages are carefully listened and responded to through touch, senses and without words was worth watching: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4VjJp9MtC28> .

iii) Collective Motion Dance are offering online classes to practice stretching, rolling, crawling, marching, jumping, skipping and a zillion other great actions inspired by well-known stories. Get grooving with whatever sensory props you can find (scarves, ribbons, feathers, maracas) and spark up your little ones' confidence and imagination. FB live tasters free: <https://collectivemotiondance.com/dance-for-toddlers-and-preschool-children/>.

4. Museums and Galleries

i) If the weeding in my garden is anything to go by, it is hard to imagine how much work will be involved in restoring a 500 acre, 18th century outdoor gallery space like the Yorkshire Sculpture Park. But the great news is that you don't have to wait to interact with its amazing exhibitions, as you can experience them in their almost full glory (sadly, minus wind and mud) and read the fascinating stories behind them and their creators
here: <https://yosp.org.uk/>.

ii) The Museum of London have produced a superb Early Years Toolkit aimed at early

educators but just as interesting for parents and carers. Watch a captivating film showing children's learning in action, find top tips for supporting young children's creativity, articles by early years specialists and a sample of practical resources to download. Earlyarts has contributed our own research into the role of culture and creativity in early brain development. Have a look for yourself

here: <https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/toolkits/early-years-toolkit>

iii) Inspired by contemporary artists exhibiting at the National Gallery of Scotland, *Home Is Where The Art Is* brings five wonderful activities every week to help children and families make their own discoveries about art. Supporting problem solving, imagination, curiosity and open-mindedness, these activities require no materials - just a bit of imagination! The last activity is designed especially for the wee-est members of the family. So roll your sleeves up and get creative! <https://www.nationalgalleries.org/art-and-artists/features/home-where-art-creative-curriculum-kids>

iv) The awesome Turner Contemporary is featuring a whole new bank of resources for children and young people to help stay creative. Check out the new Art Rebel Workshops for families delivered by local artists, download unique arts and crafts resources or join hundreds of others taking part in their Portfolio Art Competition. All inspirational creative resources available here: <https://turnercontemporary.org/learn-and-engage-with-us-during-covid-19/>

v) If you need a little inspiration for your youngsters, why not delve into the Guggenheim Museum's Archive? Amazingly, they have made 200 of their art books free for reading online or downloading as PDFs. So whether your little ones like the alluring shapes of Picasso and Kandinsky or the bold colours and ideas of Klee and Ernst, there's something here that will stimulate even the youngest of artists: <https://archive.org/details/guggenheimmuseum>. Or check out their teaching materials for a more educational context: <https://www.guggenheim.org/teaching-materials/>.

5. Story and Theatre

i) Gather round for Storytime, connecting our homes and our little ones with children's stories to make us laugh, gasp and sing. The Lawrence Batley Theatre presents a brand new, online channel with regular updates and new content, starting with storytime featuring Giraffes Can't Dance and Peace At Last (hopefully!) here: <https://www.thelbt.org/whats-on/lbtv/>.

ii) The fabulous M6 Theatre Company are streaming *A Tiger's Tale* written by Olivier award-winning Mike Kenny and directed by the lovely Gilly Baskeyfield to tell the unbelievable true story of a family of acrobats and their adopted tiger cub, Fenella. Amazingly this true story actually happened in Earlyarts' home village of Holmfirth!

Watch the ramshackle travelling troupe perform a high spirited balancing act of circus, puppetry, live music and song (and download their resource pack) until 24th May here: <https://m6theatre.co.uk/latest/tt/>.

iii) Tune in to a new podcast series, *Lockdown Tales*, sending stories to children separated from loved ones by Covid-19. A fantastic array of story tellers – both familiar and new voices - will be bringing together families across the universe on the enchantment of a story. Available on Spotify, Soundcloud and the Wonderful Beast website, the podcast will feature new episodes on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and can be found here: <https://www.wonderfulbeast.co.uk/lockdowntales>.

iv) London Bubble patron, Mark Rylance, beautifully performs two Speech Bubbles stories specifically created by children: <youtu.be/h2C1wx4SZpg>. Sit back with a cuppa and enjoy!

v) Hay Festival have made their huge schools education offer online for free, including interviews and stories by magnificent authors such as Michael Rosen, Ade Adepitan, Chitra Soundar and Kate DiCamillo: <https://www.hayfestival.com/c-209-archive-hay-player.aspx>.

vi) Polka Theatre, the UK's No.1 children's theatre, has opened its new online channel around the theme of *Lions, Gorillas and Everywhere Bears* exploring some of the much-loved children's books that the theatre has adapted for stage, providing online story time, workshops and activities to help families stay creative. Explore your animal world here: <https://polkatheatre.com/polka-online/>.

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Don't forget you can **download a free pack on Den Making** from Earlyarts' *Nurturing Young Children's Learning* series by [signing up to the quarterly Earlyarts Ebulletin](#), along with our pack on Ten Techniques for Creative Teaching (also great for families!). This way you'll get notified of each new Creative Care Package as it is published.

Please help other families and pass this on using the share buttons below.

The Creative Care Packages are also available on [Earlyarts Blog](#) if you want to catch up on previous issues.

Have you read our new book? (Hint - see below!) If so, please [submit your review to Amazon](#) for [our book here](#) which would help us out enormously. Whether it is a one-liner or a life story, your comments are all hugely welcome - thank you!

Creativity and the Arts in Early Childhood book



CREATIVITY AND THE ARTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

SUPPORTING YOUNG CHILDREN'S
DEVELOPMENT AND WELLBEING

Ruth Churchill Dower



Jessica Kingsley
Publishers

Creativity and the Arts in Early Childhood: Supporting Young Children's Development and Wellbeing by Ruth Churchill Dower.

For those of you who might like some more in-depth reading - this brand new book takes readers through the main theories and research underpinning early years creativity – where does it come from, could or should it even be measured and what implications does this have for parenting, teaching and learning?

Plus a series of ideas on **how to think with different art forms** in the day to day, practical methods for **exploring arts materials**, and building **creative teaching and learning environments**.

Aimed at educators, artists, professionals and families, this book helps ask some key questions about how we **spot, advocate for and remove the obstacles to children's creativity**. Earlyarts readers can benefit from a 10% discount with the link below.

Buy your Creativity and the Arts in Early Childhood book here

'This thought-provoking book is an essential, much needed read. Ruth balances knowledge of the crucial importance of creativity in early years with practical, motivating methods and questions for reflection to inspire, challenge and improve practice.' *Kate Shelley, Director of Tales Toolkit*

And Finally...

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