

Media Release

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New child protection guide allows arts workers to create safety

A new child protection guide for the creative community in Scotland has been launched to reflect important developments in legislation and policy.

Creating Safety (2011), produced as a joint venture by Children in Scotland and Creative Scotland, reflects new national guidance on child protection, the introduction of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme, and changing attitudes towards risk assessment.

Since the previous edition was published in 2004, professionals have been encouraged to focus more and more on the *benefits* of activities, rather than just the risks, and to make judgments based on an understanding of the balance between the two. It is an approach that acknowledges children's need to explore limits, and take part in a range of exciting and challenging opportunities in order to reach their full potential.

Creating Safety is useful for anyone working with children and young people in creative activities, from large arts or heritage organisations developing policy and procedures for child protection to volunteers or freelance professional artists working with children and young people. The guide is aimed at for example, a dancer or film-maker setting up a programme of sessions with a youth group, or a storyteller or musician working in an early years setting.

Joan Parr, Portfolio Manager for Education, Learning and Young People at Creative Scotland, said;

"This is a fantastic resource which will prove useful to both individual artists and organisations working with children. This revised version is a user-friendly introduction to new legislation, with a focus on working in cultural settings. Scotland is leading the way in developing excellent, exciting and meaningful creative activity for young people in education. Creative Scotland aims to support the highest standard possible for the benefit of the young people of all ages and Scotland itself and *Creating Safety* is a step towards achieving this aim.'

Marion MacLeod, Senior Policy and Parliamentary Officer at Children in Scotland, said: "Children's participation in artistic, cultural and creative activities plays an extremely important role in their overall development. *Creating Safety* has been written to help create environments where risk is minimised, and children have the freedom to unlock their creative potential, both physically and intellectually.

"*Creating Safety* is not a step-by-step guide. This is because every project, situation, and indeed every child is unique - rules, regulations and procedures on their own cannot compensate for using common sense and sound professional judgment to anticipate and respond appropriately to different situations. There are however, elements of good practice that will help minimise risk and create a positive environment. It is so important to take an approach which carefully balances the

benefits of an activity with the risks. This will help ensure children do not miss out on important opportunities.”

Creating Safety: child protection guidelines for Scotland's arts, screen and creative industries can be downloaded from <http://www.creativescotland.co.uk/showcase/artworks-scotland> and <http://www.childrenscotland.org.uk/creatingsafety>

Notes to Editors

1. **Children in Scotland** is the longstanding national agency for the whole of the children's sector, reaching over 250,000 individuals through our extensive membership of more than 450 statutory agencies, voluntary sector organisations, professional associations and community groups. For further information visit www.childrenscotland.org.uk

The Children in Scotland Annual Conference 2011, 'Meeting of Minds: working together to build better lives for children', held in association with City of Edinburgh Council will take place on 3-4 November 2011, in Edinburgh

2. **Creative Scotland** is the national development agency for the arts, screen and creative industries, and its ambition is to see Scotland recognised as one of the world's most creative nations. *Investing in our Creative Future*, the organisation's first corporate plan sets out its vision: *That Scotland is recognised as a leading creative nation – one that attracts, develops and retains talent, where the arts and the creative industries are supported and celebrated and their economic contribution fully captured, a nation where the arts and creativity play a central part in the lives, education and well-being of our population.* For further information visit: <http://www.creativescotland.com>