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Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture Committee
Room T3.40
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

**Written Evidence on the Creative Scotland Bill
FAO Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture Committee
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Children in Scotland welcomes the *Creative Scotland Bill* as an opportunity to take a wider approach to the role of the arts in society. We are aware of the importance now attached to the arts across the children's sector. There is widespread and ever-increasing interest in the role the arts can play in: stimulating and supporting learning and creativity; meeting the emotional needs of children and young people; and, promoting inclusion within peer groups and across generations. Access to the arts is, and must remain, an entitlement for children and young people.¹ Their participation in arts activities can bring significant benefits not only for themselves, but also for society as a whole.

Our own work in this area has included:

1. Research

A study carried out for the Scottish Arts Council in 1999 called, ***Picture in your head***² showed that while *young* children are involved and interested in the arts, they become more resistant to this involvement as they get older and activities become more gender-biased. Two studies carried out on the children's sector workforce (one in 2005³ and the other forthcoming during April 2008⁴) have highlighted the lack of adequate information on those working in the arts with children and young people. [A copy of our soon-to-be-launched publication, ***Working it out: developing the children's sector workforce***, is attached]

2. Development and training

We have been involved in the provision of training on the arts for many years. Currently, with support from the Scottish Arts Council, we have the national pilot of a new SQA-accredited professional development qualification for arts practitioners, entitled the *Arts Education in Practice Professional Development Award*. This training is especially designed for artists who are engaged in the delivery of projects and workshops with children and young people in formal or informal contexts within schools and communities across Scotland.

¹ *Arts for All: developing cultural entitlements for young children in rural Scotland*. Children in Scotland 2007

² *'Picture in your head'*. Children in Scotland and the Scottish Arts Council 1999

³ *'Working for the Future: re-imagining the children's workforce'*. Children in Scotland 2005

⁴ *'Working it out : developing the children's sector workforce.'* Children in Scotland 2008

3. Publications and international conference

Later this year, we are running a major programme focussed on improving the understanding of the role of the arts in children's lives. The latest issue of Children in Europe magazine⁵ - of which we are the English language publisher - takes an in-depth look at what art, creativity, craft, and culture can mean for children. It provides comparative information on arts in the curriculum and in the initial education of workers in 10 EU countries. [Copy attached] The issue also includes examples of the role of the arts in intergenerational work. This work will culminate in a major two-day Europe-wide conference to be held in Scotland at the end of 2008. For more information, please visit our website: www.childreninscotland.org.uk/html/tra_tshow.php?ref=1065

As noted at the outset, we welcome the establishment of Creative Scotland and believe it is sensible to have a single body. However, we think that the new organisation needs to be given clearer responsibilities to monitor and promote arts activities for children and young people. For example, we believe that Creative Scotland should have an explicit role in developing and supporting access to arts for all children and young people at different stages in their lives. It also should be given a specific duty to monitor the fulfilment of our nation's obligations under the arts-related articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child⁶ and the UNESCO road map for arts and education.

Children in Scotland would be happy to expand on any of these points, upon request.

Yours sincerely

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Director of Policy, Research and Practice Development.

Children in Scotland is Scotland's national agency for organisations and professionals working with and for children, young people and their families. It exists to identify and promote the interests of children and their families and to ensure that policies, services and other provisions are of the highest possible quality and are able to meet the needs of a diverse society. Children in Scotland represents over 450 members, including all major voluntary, statutory and private children's agencies, professional organisations, as well as many other smaller community groups and children's services. It is linked with similar agencies in other parts of the UK and the European Union.

The work of Children in Scotland encompasses extensive information, policy, research and practice development programmes. The agency works closely with MSPs, the Scottish Executive, local authorities and practitioners. It services a number of groups such as: the Cross Party Parliamentary Group on Children and Young People; the National Children's Voluntary Forum; the National Early Years Forum, the Rural Advisory Group and the Additional Support Needs Network. Children in Scotland hosts Enquire, the national advice service for additional support for learning.

⁵ 'Picture This... young children and the arts'. Children in Europe magazine, issue 14, 2008

⁶ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by the UK Government in 1991