

MEDIA RELEASE

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Children in Scotland leads with major international arts programme in 2008

Children in Scotland will be taking the lead on the arts with a major international programme planned for 2008.

The programme, *Picture this ... Young children and the arts*, will be launched with the publication in March of Children in Europe issue 14, which is published in 12 languages across 14 countries. The new issue of the magazine will examine the variety of ways the arts are used in learning, social and emotional development and communication, and in promoting inclusion.

This will be followed by an event at the Edinburgh International Book Festival in August, and a children's art competition held across Scotland, Ireland and other partner countries.

The programme will culminate in December 2008 with a major international two-day conference that will address the extent to which children are involved in determining arts activities and what education is required by those helping children access the arts. The conference will take place in Glasgow with sessions also being held in Stirling, Edinburgh and Highland.

Bronwen Cohen, chief executive of Children in Scotland, highlighted the importance of the arts in children's lives.

She said: "The arts can enrich and transform the lives of children and contribute to lifelong creativity and wellbeing. They play a crucial role in social inclusion, bringing generations together, and in the form of art therapy for children. And we should not forget the contribution of the arts workforce in Scotland and across Europe – there is an interest in the role the arts plays in every children's service."

The arts programme will be supported by the Scottish Arts Council, Learning

Teaching Scotland, and local authorities including Glasgow, Stirling and Edinburgh.

Joan Parr, head of education at the Scottish Arts Council, said: “We are currently exploring ways of fulfilling the potential of every young person in Scotland; nurturing the creativity of young people is central to that process. We look forward to working with Children in Scotland to create a forum for international debate and sharing of best practice in the crucially important area of arts provision for young people.”

Bernard McLeary, chief executive of Learning and Teaching Scotland, said: “This programme of events will bring together professionals from a range of organisations to share their experiences and best practice currently on-going in Scotland, and offer opportunities for collaboration to develop our children’s experiences of the arts.”

Bronwen Cohen added: “Our arts programme for this year will be informed by the moments in children’s lives where they engage with the arts – moments which can be very significant for children, supporting their ability to deal with less happy experiences and helping to build resilience.”

Children in Scotland is asking families to contribute to the arts programme by sharing their positive arts experiences. These can be sent to Carolyn Roulstone, croulstone@childreninscotland.org.uk

For more information visit www.childrenineurope.org.uk / www.childreninscotland.org.uk

Notes for editors:

Children in Europe is a magazine for everyone working with and for children from 0-10 and those interested in children’s issues. It is published simultaneously in eight languages by a network of national magazines. It aims to provide a forum for ideas, practice and information and contribute to the development of policy and practice and European and national levels. It is published in the UK by Children in Scotland, the national agency for voluntary, statutory, and professional organisations and individuals working with children and their families in Scotland, with the support of the Bernard van Leer Foundation.

Children in Scotland is the national agency for voluntary, statutory and professional organisations and individuals working with children and their families in Scotland. It exists to identify and promote the interests of children and their families and to ensure that relevant policies, services and provisions are of the best possible quality and able to meet the needs of a diverse society.