

The arts and culture provide economic, social, health and wellbeing, and education benefits to society.¹

The *Arts Tonic* series presents the evidence that demonstrates how arts and culture based approaches can help people to stay well, recover faster, manage long-term conditions and experience a better quality of life.²

The evidence also demonstrates how arts and cultural interventions can save money and help health care and social services professionals and other staff to do their work well.

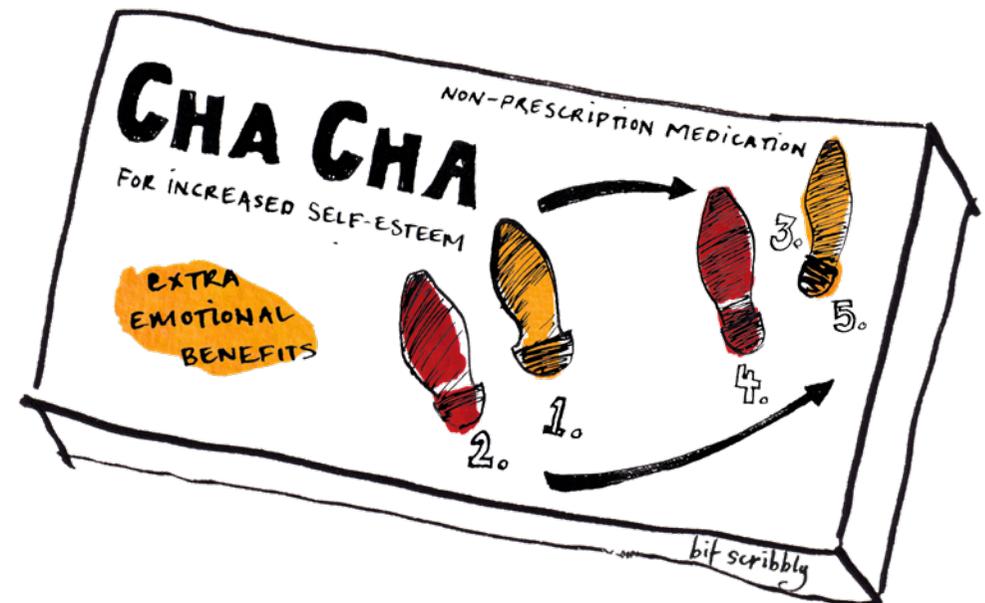
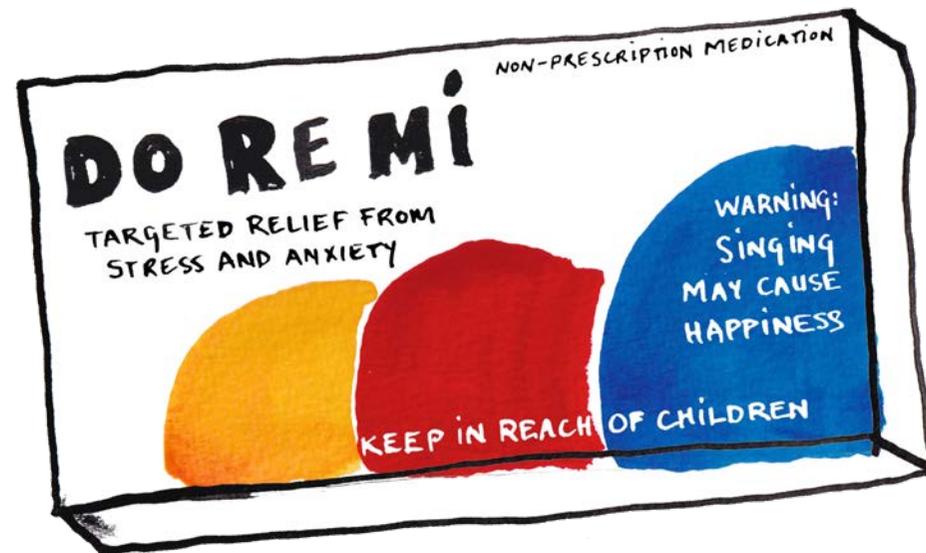
This series is designed to influence the thinking and practice of people working professionally in health care and social services, as well as of artists, creative practitioners and cultural producers working in arts and cultural organisations.

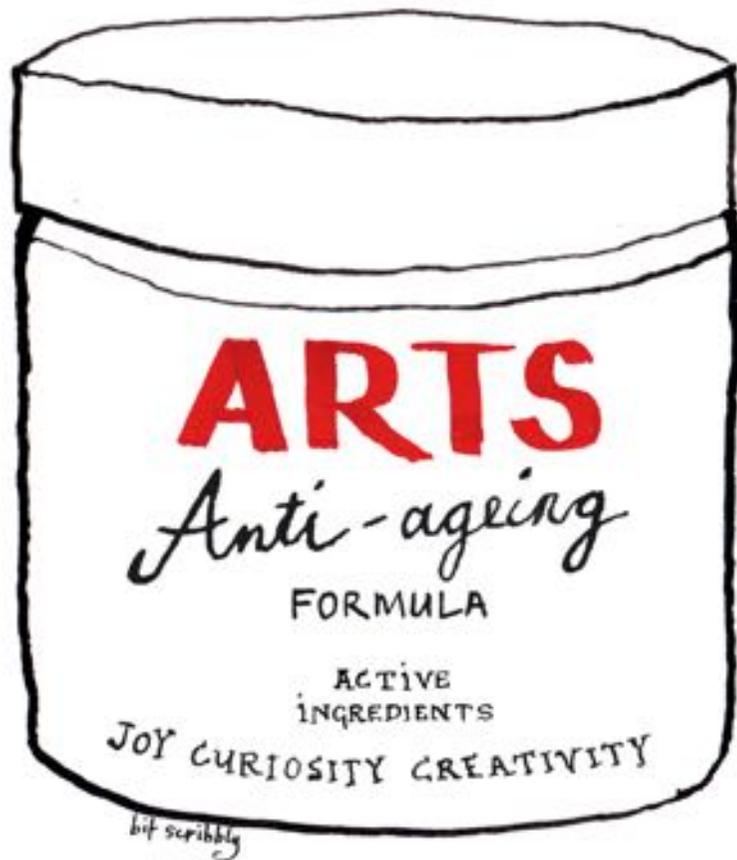
The endeavour is to inspire an informed and open-minded willingness to acknowledge that the arts and culture can make a significant contribution to addressing a number of the pressing issues faced by our health care and social services in improving people's lives.

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BEING WELL

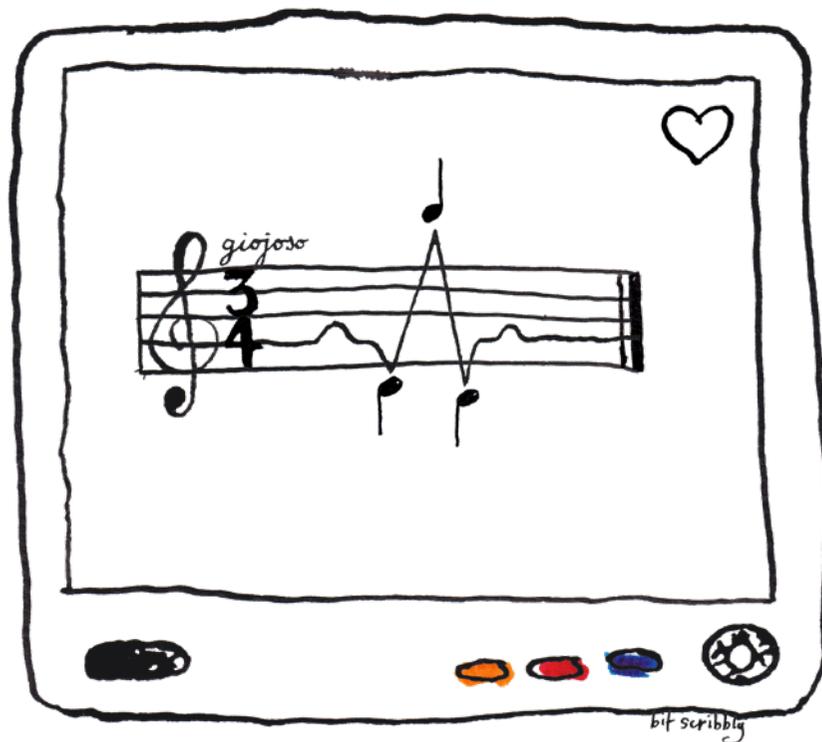
- People who attend theatre/dance and pop or classical concerts are more likely to report good health and quality of life, even after adjusting for other factors.^{3,4}
- People who attend concert, theatre or film are significantly healthier, have lower anxiety and are less subject to depression.⁵
- The more frequently people attend performing arts and other receptive arts, the more likely they are to report good health.^{6,7}
- Rare and moderate cultural events attendees in urban areas are 3 times more likely to die of cancer over time than frequent attendees.⁸
- Attendance at cultural events was found to significantly reduce diastolic blood pressure in participants.⁹
- Singing improves mood and cognitive stimulation.¹⁰
- People who engage in the arts for two or more hours/week report significantly better mental well-being.¹¹





AGEING WELL

- Singing increases energy, joy and elatedness. Singing increases the level of oxytocin, also known as the "love hormone."¹²
- Attending concerts and theatre increases perceived vitality.^{6,13}
- Attending cultural events is linked with longevity. People who rarely attend such events run a nearly 60% higher mortality risk than those attending most often.¹⁴
- Singing in a choir improves the health of older adults and reduces doctor visits.¹⁵
- Dancing provides emotional benefits, increases self-esteem and builds coping strategies.¹⁶
- Musical activity throughout the life span preserves cognitive functioning in advanced age.¹⁷
- Those who read for pleasure were also 33 per cent more likely to report good health.¹⁸
- Avid readers live almost two years longer than those who don't read.¹⁹
- Engaging in artistic, craft, and social activities in both midlife and late life, reduces the risk of dementia.²⁰
- Art making significantly lowers cortisol levels (stress hormone).²¹
- Engaging with contemporary visual art helps older people to form identity.²²



BETTER HEALTHCARE

- Listening to music after surgery reduces postoperative pain.²³
- Listening to favourite tunes and stories can significantly decrease post-surgical pain in children undergoing major surgery.²⁴
- Vital signs, stress, anxiety and blood pressure are improved when music or visual arts are used in hospital environments.²⁵
- Cultural activities at work improves mental health and reduces the likelihood of exhaustion among employees.²⁶
- The benefits of dance for people with Parkinson's disease is 'multi-layered' and provides stimulation – not just physical, but emotional, intellectual and social.²⁷
- Medical staff perform better when engaged in hospital arts programs.²⁸
- Dance substantially improves quality of life in women following treatment for breast cancer.²⁹
- Creative craft making improves wellbeing. A UK study demonstrates that the Social Return on Investment is 1 : 118, which means that for every £1 invested, a social value of £118 is generated, mainly in forgone treatment bills; reducing GP visits by 28% and attendance at emergency wards by 24%.³⁰

CHEERFUL CHILDREN



- Music education reduces cortisol (a stress hormone) levels among elementary school students.³¹
- Low-income students who are involved in arts activities have higher academic achievement.³²
- The arts build resilience and self-esteem in young people.³³
- The arts permit the making of mistakes as part of the creative process and cultivates responsible and productive management of risk by young people.³⁴
- The arts encourage self-directed learning and self-efficacy. The arts connect students to themselves and each other.³⁵
- The arts assist with positive identity formation.³⁶
- The arts help in the successful transition to adulthood and the development of in-demand job skills.³⁶
- The arts connect learning experiences to the world of real work and assist in developing job skills.³⁷
- Young people involved in sustained, structured community-based arts programs exhibit increased abilities to complete tasks.³⁸
- Music study leads to lasting changes in children's brains, increasing their capacity to perform tasks that require sustained attention and careful listening and reading.³⁹
- Creativity and creative problem-solving skills are developed significantly through arts involvement.⁴⁰
- Music and arts based programs bridge the gap in school achievement and improve grades in English, Mathematics, Science and Technology for children in disadvantaged and high need communities.⁴¹
- Music and arts based programs reduce depression and improve social and emotional wellbeing and resilience for children in disadvantaged and high need communities.³⁹
- Nine out of ten Australians agree that the arts are an important part of the education for everyone.⁴²
- Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds involved in school-based arts programs demonstrated increased creativity, lower dropout rates, increased social skills, and higher academic achievement.⁴²
- Arts based afterschool programs for students from low socioeconomic backgrounds reduce criminal and delinquent behaviour in low income housing.⁴³

HAPPY NEIGHBOURHOODS



- People who attend live music are almost twice as likely to have a stronger sense of belonging to their city or town compared to those who don't attend.⁴⁴
- Individuals who rate arts and culture in their community as "excellent" are nearly three times more likely to report a "very strong" sense of belonging to their city or town.⁴⁰
- Arts and heritage experiences make residents feel part of their local community.⁴⁵
- Arts experiences help bring people from diverse backgrounds together as a community.⁴⁶
- Participating in arts activities builds a shared sense of community identity.⁴²
- Performing arts brings energy and vitality to communities, improves quality of life and well-being of residents, makes communities more creative and fosters a stronger sense of pride and identity.⁴⁷
- Participation in the arts predicts civic engagement, tolerance and altruism.⁴⁸
- Participation in the arts has social benefits including personal growth, community development, and social cohesion.⁴⁹
- Arts and culture based activity addresses broader social concerns beyond local belonging or identity, including the integration of migrants, impacts of gentrification, the restructuring of rural economies, or a fear of constant change and insecurity.⁵⁰
- Arts festivals increase individual and community self-esteem and cultural confidence, develop local leadership, social, cultural and economic initiatives for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and communities.⁵¹
- Adults who attend art museums, art galleries, or live arts performances are far more likely than non-attendees to vote, volunteer, or take part in community events.⁵²
- Arts improves a community's capacity to act and builds trust and cooperation.⁵³

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