



NEWS AND INFORMATION

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New Harris Poll Reveals that 93 Percent of Americans Believe that the Arts are Vital to Providing a Well-Rounded Education

AUSTIN, TX— A new Harris Poll released today on the attitudes of Americans toward arts education revealed that 93 percent of Americans agree that the arts are vital to providing a well-rounded education for children. Additionally, 54 percent rated the importance of arts education a “ten” on a scale of one to ten.

The telephone survey was conducted as part of an ongoing public service campaign—“Art. Ask for More.”—developed by Americans for the Arts, the Ad Council, and the Austin-based advertising agency GSD&M. The results of the survey were announced today by Peggy Conlon, president & CEO of the Ad Council, during her keynote address at the annual convention of Americans for the Arts in Austin, TX.

The survey reveals additional strong support among Americans for arts education:

- 86 percent of Americans agree that an arts education encourages and assists in the improvement of a child’s attitudes toward school.
- 83 percent of Americans believe that arts education helps teach children to communicate effectively with adults and peers.
- 79 percent of Americans agree that incorporating arts into education is the first step in adding back what’s missing in public education today.
- 79 percent of Americans believe that it’s important enough for them to get personally involved in increasing the amount and quality of arts education.

At the same time, it reveals uncertainty among “those involved in the life of a child” about how to become involved in advocating for arts education in schools:

- 62 percent believe that there are other people or organizations in the community who are better suited to take action (than they are).
- 40 percent say that they do not know how to get involved in arts education.

With these results, the public service campaign will now expand its message about promoting arts education to a message of empowering parents with more specific tools on how to make a difference in the arts in their communities.

“These results reveal the extraordinary impact that our campaign has had in just over two years,” said Ms. Conlon. “I am confident that our successful partnership with Americans for the Arts and GSD&M will continue to motivate parents and adults to champion arts education and recognize its importance in school and in the community.”

Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of Americans for the Arts, said, “These survey results show that there is a consensus among the American people that the arts are vital to a well-rounded education. They underscore the need to continue the effort to expand arts education in America’s schools and communities.”

“It’s more than important, it’s absolutely vital that American children understand and appreciate art in its many forms,” said GSD&M President Roy Spence. “GSD&M has a long history as an advocate of the arts and education, and we are proud to have developed this campaign.”

The Harris Poll was conducted by telephone in May of 2005 among 1,000 Americans, 18 years of age or older. The margin of error was + or -3.1 percent.

The “Art. Ask for More.” campaign has been running in print, television and radio, and alternative media for three years. The campaign has received more than \$110 million in national media donations to date and includes participation from 367 local partners nationwide. The success of the campaign is due largely to these hundreds of local Americans for the Arts partners.

These advertisements have received placement in the *New York Times*, *USA Today*, *Parade*, and *Time*, as well as airing on the major broadcast TV, cable, and radio networks, and in the country’s top-100 media markets.

Americans for the Arts is the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America. With offices in Washington, D.C. and New York City, it has a record of more than 50 years of service. Americans for the Arts is dedicated to representing and serving local communities and creating

opportunities for every American to participate in and appreciate all forms of the arts. Additional information is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

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