



The Essential Art of Good Mental Health

There are various ways to enjoy the arts in everyday life, whether for entertainment, socially or as a hobby. These activities can improve our mood, increase our wellbeing and enhance our relationships with others.

Dr Christina Davies is the Director of the Centre for Arts, Mental Health and Wellbeing WA at UWA and lead researcher of the Good Arts Good Mental Health project.

“With mental health issues on the rise in Western Australia, there is strong evidence that just like sport, taking part in the arts for entertainment or as a hobby can improve community mental wellbeing,” Dr Davies said.

“Arts activities such as listening to music, reading novels, singing, dancing, watching movies or painting, for as little as 20 minutes per day can be beneficial for your mental wellbeing.”

The Good Arts Good Mental Health project is based on Dr Davies’ multi-award winning PhD research that quantifies the arts-mental health relationship and highlights the benefits of the arts on health including increased happiness, confidence, self-esteem, relaxation and reduced social isolation.

“You don’t need to be good at art for the arts to be good for you,” Dr Davies said.



“Rainbow” 2021 by
Dr Christina Davies

“We’re also suggesting that people think about the arts as ‘essential’ rather than as a ‘luxury’, and give themselves permission to take part in the activities and events they love, more often.”

The project is funded by the Western Australian Future Health Research and Innovation Fund, which is an initiative of the WA State Government, and two of Australia’s major philanthropic foundations, The Ian Potter Foundation and new funding partner, The Minderoo Foundation. The project is also supported by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, CircuitWest and St John of God Health Care.

In collaboration with the community and strategic partners, the project aims to create an evidence-based campaign, with courses and programs on how the arts can be incorporated into our daily lives and raise community awareness of the impact on mental wellbeing.



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