

# INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF CHILDHOOD 2017



## First International Festival of Childhood (IFC2017) aims to start global dialogue on modern childhood

**Playing with Big Ideas** - A remarkable gathering of leading thinkers, authors and early years specialists are coming together to share their thoughts, concerns and ideas about modern childhood at the first four-day **International Festival of Childhood (IFC2017) that will take place in Bath on the 29th June to 2nd July 2017.**

The event will consist of a multi-disciplinary seminar, surrounded by inspiring, creative and playful events and activities. The Festival is the result of a collaboration between the national Save Childhood Movement and the Bath-based cultural organisation 5x5x5=creativity. The festival is aligned with Bath's annual Forest of Imagination contemporary arts initiative, and partners include the National Trust, the Royal Society of Arts (RSA) and Bath Festivals. The City of Bath is hosting the event as part of its commitment to becoming a UNICEF Child Friendly City and Community.

**What would the world look and feel like if we really maximised human potential and creativity? What kind of people would we be? And what global problems could we solve?** From scientists to paediatricians, pedagogues, early years experts and psychologists; from educational researchers to businessmen, creative artists, writers, teachers, parents, practitioners and policy-makers, the festival aims to unite

the thinkers with the doers in order to put these questions at the forefront of everyone's agenda.

**Wendy Ellyatt, Founder, Save Childhood Movement**

"From the erosion of family life, to increasingly risk averse societies, commercialisation, the impact of the digital world and the downward pressures of the schooling system, over the last few decades there have been massive changes in the lives of young children. The evidence suggests that this is having a massive toll on child health and wellbeing. Combining a serious four-day seminar within an extravaganza of playful events and activities, the festival offers a global platform for people to come together to explore the issues and to seek solutions."

**Penny Hay, Founder, 5x5x5=creativity**

The International Festival of Childhood will celebrate the wonder of childhood, and share some of the most innovative and playful experiences in its 'Forest of Imagination'.

Forest of Imagination is a unique pop-up contemporary arts and architecture event combining multi-disciplinary installations with a kaleidoscope of imaginative events and happenings: a place of serious creative play. Come and be part of the fun and festivity. Immerse yourself in a wealth of creative and thought provoking events across the City of Bath."

- Ends

## For more information, please contact

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[www.festivalofchildhood.com](http://www.festivalofchildhood.com)  
#intfc2017

## NOTES TO EDITORS

### The Save Childhood Movement (SCM)

**The Save Childhood Movement** was established in 2013 and consists of a growing collaboration of individuals and organisations that share a deep concern about societal values and wellbeing and the current erosion of natural childhood. The movement established National Children's Day in 2014 and is now introducing the concept of the festival as a means for it to reach a growing global audience. [www.savechildhood.com](http://www.savechildhood.com)

**5x5x5=creativity** is an independent, arts-based action research organisation with charitable status that supports children and young people in their exploration and expression of ideas, helping them develop creative skills for life. Originally set up with groups of 5 artists, 5 educational settings and 5 cultural centres in triangles to work together to collect evidence of creativity and how best to support it. Since 2000, 5x5x5 has worked

with over 250 settings across 10 Local Authorities. 5x5x5=creativity helps improve children's and young people's life chances by developing their confidence in themselves as creative learners and thinkers whilst inspiring higher levels of motivation and engagement in their learning. [www.5x5x5creativity.org.uk](http://www.5x5x5creativity.org.uk)

**Forest of Imagination** aims to inspire and develop playfulness and creativity in people of all ages through creative engagement. Forest of Imagination is an innovative and radical space, reimagined as a place for contemporary creativity and intuitive play. The Forest of Imagination is a place for art and participation. It involves the reinvention of a familiar space to inspire intuitive play and imaginative thought - to heighten a sense of nature and the city environment. The Forest engages everyone in a seriously playful and alternative experience of nature, contemporary art, landscape and architecture. [www.forestofimagination.com](http://www.forestofimagination.com)

The **UNICEF international Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI)** was launched in 1996 to act on the resolution passed during the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) to make cities liveable places for all; in UNICEF terms, aiming to put "children first." The UN Conference declared that the wellbeing of children is the ultimate indicator of a healthy habitat, a democratic society and of good governance. Child Rights Partners and Child Friendly Cities are a platform to take forward the child rights agenda in both the developing world and the industrialized world. The CFCI, a movement gathering together a wide range of partners, advocates for governance approaches and participatory urban management promoting the realization of the rights of the youngest citizens.

## Child Wellbeing in the UK

**Poverty:** There are currently 3.7 million children living in poverty in the UK. That's over a quarter of all children. 1.7 million of these children are living in severe poverty. In the UK 63% of children living in poverty are in a family where someone works. *Barnardo's, Jan 2016*

Children and adults from the lowest quintile (20 per cent) of household income are three times more likely to have common mental health problems (than those in the richest quintile) - *Centre for Social Justice Report, Feb 2011*

Early child poverty has been linked to brain changes related to depression in older children. "Children from poorer families are more likely to experience changes in brain connectivity that put them at higher risk of depression, compared with children from more affluent families." *American Journal of Psychiatry, January 2016*  
<http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/305208.php>

**Obesity:** Today nearly a third of children aged 2 to 15 are overweight or obese, and younger generations are becoming obese at earlier ages and staying obese for longer. *Childhood Obesity: A plan of action* [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

**Physical Literacy:** the numbers of young boys and girls meeting the Chief Medical Officer's (CMO) physical activity guidelines has fallen below one in five. This is less about the number of children who are playing sport and more about the number of children growing up without the aptitude for basic motor and coordination skills learned through childhood activity. A study by Cambridge University published in *Pediatrics* in March 2014 found that children are not just 'naturally active'

or inactive, but that they take their parents' lead in developing healthy exercise habits early on.

*Childhood Physical Literacy Report, 2015*

[http://www.ukactive.com/downloads/managed/Start\\_Young\\_Stay\\_Active.pdf](http://www.ukactive.com/downloads/managed/Start_Young_Stay_Active.pdf)

**Mental Health:** 850,000 children aged 5-16 have mental health problems

[http://www.youngminds.org.uk/about/whats\\_the\\_problem - Nov 2016](http://www.youngminds.org.uk/about/whats_the_problem - Nov 2016)

- Three children in every classroom have a diagnosable mental health disorder. Roughly 725,000 people in the UK suffer from Eating Disorders, 86% of these will have shown symptoms before the age of 19. One in 10 deliberately harm themselves regularly (and 15,000 of them are hospitalised each year because of this
- Nearly 80,000 children and young people suffer from severe depression
- Half of all lifetime cases of mental illness begin by age 14
- 45% of children in care have a mental health disorder - these are some of the most vulnerable people in our society
- Nearly 300,000 young people in Britain have an anxiety disorder.
- Many thousands of children and young people are isolated, unhappy, have eating disorders and self-harm; some tragically take their own lives. Many are likely to become victims of crime, grow up in dysfunctional families, or left to cope with illness, drugs and/or alcohol issues – not necessarily their own.

**Maternal Mental Health:** More than 1 in 10 women develop a mental illness during pregnancy or within the first year after having a baby. If untreated, these perinatal mental illnesses can have a devastating impact on the women affected and their families. In the UK, mental illness in pregnant and postnatal women often goes unrecognised, undiagnosed and untreated.

<http://everyonesbusiness.org.uk>

**Early Attachment:** Four in ten babies don't develop the strong emotional bonds – what psychologists call “secure attachment” – with their parents that are crucial to success later in life. Disadvantaged children are more likely to face educational and behavioural problems when they grow older as a result – *Sutton Trust, Baby Bonds Report, 2014*

**Teacher turnover:** Record numbers of teachers are leaving the profession. The DfE has reported that the number of full time teacher either leaving the profession, retiring or going on maternity leave is at the highest level in more than a decade. This year schools recorded a loss of 9.5 per cent of staff. Schools Week, 30th June 2016  
<http://schoolsweek.co.uk/highest-teacher-leaving-rate-in-a-decade-and-6-other-things-we-learned-about-the-school-workforce/>

**Reduction in Creativity and the Arts:** Entries for GCSEs in arts subjects have fallen by 46,000 this year compared with last, according to new figures recording England's exam entries for 2016. This year's loss is more than five times the size of the loss in 2015, when candidate numbers fell by 9,000. *Arts Professional, June 2016*

<http://www.artsprofessional.co.uk/news/exclusive-arts-schools-plummets-new-figureshow>

## 200 Word Editorial

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**[www.festivalofchildhood.com](http://www.festivalofchildhood.com)**  
**@INTFC2017**

# What does modern childhood look like?

What kind of people  
do we want children  
to grow up to be?

What kind of values  
do we want our  
children to inherit?



What kind of societies  
do we want to live in?

Are we protecting  
children's natural  
developmental  
rights?

What can we do  
together to create a  
better world?

PRESS RELEASE

[www.festivalofchildhood.com](http://www.festivalofchildhood.com)

5x5x5=creativity



**BATH  
FESTIVALS**