

FAMILY-FRIENDLY ARTS



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Audience profile

Drama and musical are popular genres for parents because the bar to enjoy the performance is low.

Genres participation

Mainstream	Occasional participation	Low participation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drama • Musical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music • Dance (e.g. children ballet performance) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chinese performance arts

Despite frequency of participation, respondents share some common views and characteristics.

- Majority are parents with kids in early primary school age. Parents often take the initiative to bring kids into performance and select which shows to watch.
- Participation declines as kids grow, unless the kids are involved in the practice of relevant art forms (e.g. one attended dance performance with daughter who was 14-year-old as she was aspired to become a dancer). 10-12 years old is a turning point when kids are mature enough to appreciate art performances primarily targeted at adult audience with stronger emotional messages.
- Fulfilling academic/ assignment requirements is the major reason parents bring kids to performing art shows, followed by a desire for cultural family leisure activities.
- Compared to other art forms, audience are less explorative and tend to prefer classic plays more (e.g. Rapunzel and The Nutcracker).
- Overall, engagement with drama and musical is the highest. These art forms integrate a wide range of theatrical elements to provide a rich experience that is easy to appreciate even for small kids.



“After my kid turns 10, he is more mature to appreciate music because he can compare the experience with the existing music knowledge. He knows what are the performers doing and can identify good playing.”

Family-friendly Arts participant

All respondents (N=6) are parents aged under 14 and have participated in >2 paid performing arts performances in past 1 year. Frequency of participation varies across group.

Triggers of initial engagement

Schools often take the initiative in encouraging pupils' art participation. Many parents agree it is an educational hangout activity.



School activities/
homework

- A mandatory requirement that students need to participate, e.g. to fulfill an academic/ homework requirements or as part of the school's field trip/ outing activities
- The trial experience then becomes a talking point and triggers future participation



Nurturing

- Parents see arts participation as a learning opportunity and a way to stand out in school application.
- One of the goals is to explore children's interests and potential.
- Art performers serve as a role model in terms of "hard work" and "confidence".



"'1 sport & 1 art' (一體一藝) is a school policy. My daughter is learning Chinese dance and this is advantageous to apply for secondary schools."

Family-friendly Arts participant



Leisure/
family activity

- The entire family can spend time together in a group.
- It is also a static activity that parents can relax and enjoy.
- Some parents use it as a reward of good behaviors.



"My younger son started arts participation in kindergarten, and he told his brother about it. Then, my older son became so enticed to shows. We will go together in the future."

Family-friendly Arts participant

Show checklist centres on kids' preferences. Successful shows have to tick attractive stories and interactions.

Plays

- “Safe choice” is frequently mentioned and most associate “safe” with “classic” for its recognized and attractive plots
- To ensure it is a suitable play, parents would even research its background before deciding
- Cartoon characters have an edge as kids find it more relevant and cuter. Girls gravitate towards fairy characters/cartoon while boys prefer detective stories.
- Well-adapted plays with strong storyline and animal characters are appealing to both parents and small children .



“I would choose classic plays in the beginning, such as ‘Arabian Dreams(天方夜譚)’. I know a bit of it. For boys, ‘Sherlock Holmes’ is a good option as they like detectives. These pieces won’t go wrong.”

Family-friendly Arts participant



“The Nutcracker is mainstream and thus a choice that won’t go wrong. Normally, kids should start with something classic and they could have the autonomy when they turn 10 years old.”

Family-friendly Arts participant



“Small kids may not understand the adapted novel. It might be more suitable for those above 10 years old.”

Family-friendly Arts participant

Suitability for kids

- Parents look for cues on interaction as it allows kids to feel themselves as a part of the performance
- Audience participation such as singing altogether, standing up, and counting down together
 - Post-show, photo time works well
- Specifying age limit to help parents to tick the checklist
- Avoid exam period / late show time (after 8pm)



“Even with masks, the kids are engaged when performers asked them to stand up and clap”

Family-friendly Arts participant



“We queue for 20 minutes to take photos with Rapunzel performers amid hot days!”

Family-friendly Arts participant

To keep their kids attentive during the show, parents count on beautiful stage design and performers' acting (bold movement & body language).

Stage design

- “Looking nice and rich” is important. Both performers and backdrop grasp the most attention.
 - Performers' bold movements catch attention. An example would be the jumps and swings by ballet dancers in “Nutcracker”.
 - A respondent used the live band performance in “Arabian Dreams(天方夜譚)” to illustrate an impressive sound effect
 - Lighting enhances show experience. A case mentioned is good spotlights on leading dancers with big lighting installation in Nezha: Untold Solitude(一個人的哪吒).
- ! Watchout: Exaggerated stunts/ effects (e.g. fire) could scare off younger kids



“The backdrop used in ‘Nutcracker’ is glittery and beautiful. You can’t have your eyes off the stage.”

Family-friendly Arts participant



“We left Lion King halfway through the show because my 7-year-old son was scared of the fire.”

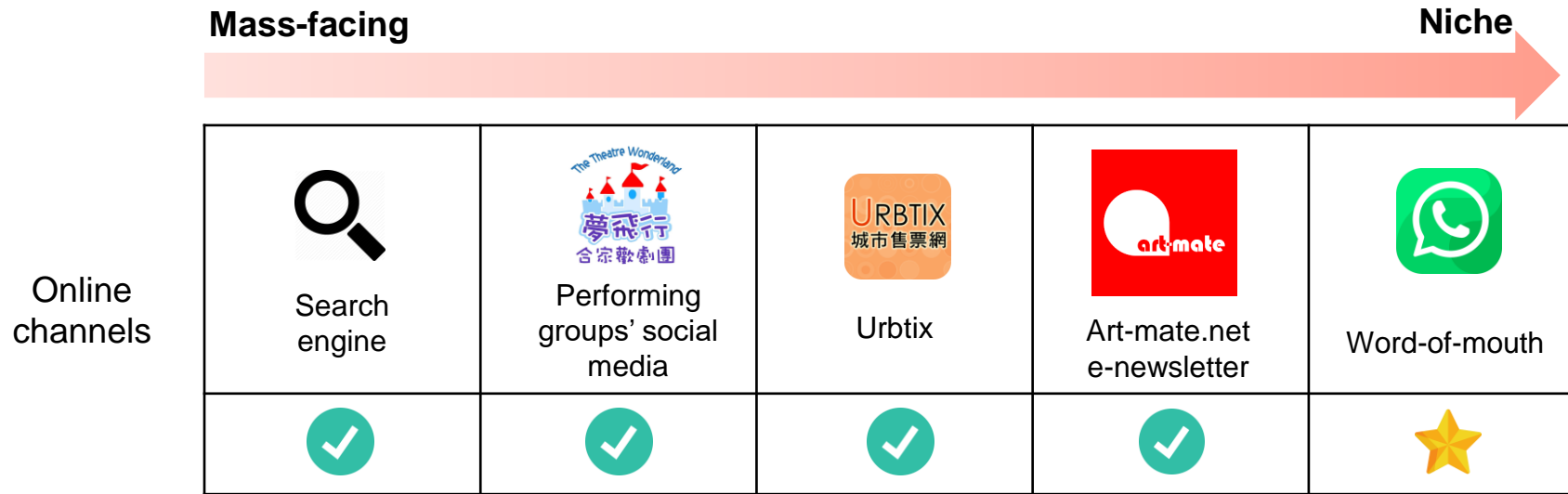
Family-friendly Arts participant

Location: Most parents would prioritise near venues. Travel effort has to be justified by show attractiveness.



Food for thoughts: Unlike other art forms, halo effect from sizeable groups and famous performers is less significant

Parents' information-seeking route has little to do with performing groups. Most stay in their own circle online for updates on leisure activities for kids.



Potential touchpoint

Parent-focused Facebook page

- While existing online channels face broad art audience, some respondents wish to see content targeting specifically to them, such as introducing family-friendly hangout activities
- Particularly for interactive events, it requires promotion to aid awareness

Note

- Most parents do not spontaneously recall performing groups' page despite they have liked the page after participation

"Some mums will share good post-exam activities, including entertainment and leisure activities. If I am interested in a certain program, I will click on the link or search for it. Better if the post enclose link and poster, information is abundant in this way."

Family-friendly Arts participant

Important information channel Information channel mentioned











Offline promotion channels + suggestions

Offline materials are usually delivered via third parties (schools/ institutions). Overall, offline information channels for parents are limited.



Offline channels

			
MTR ad/ billboards	Brochure onsite	Brochure offsite (arts institutions)	School teachers' recommendation
			

Potential touchpoint

Art classes

- Leverage art institutions as parents and students visit usually on a regular basis
- Art groups shall consider sending posters to these centres for effective distribution



Note

- Limited reachability and impact as families visit art centres only after a show



"The schoolteacher showed a poster to my daughter who was 12-13 years old that time. So she came back and said she wanted to watch."

Family-friendly Arts participant

 Important information channel  Information channel mentioned

Poster design

Cartoon, and colorful posters appeal to most kids. Satisfy their parents by visualizing stage setting, story message and age requirement.

Featuring object



Cartoon

“Cute cartoon with face, especially a princess.”



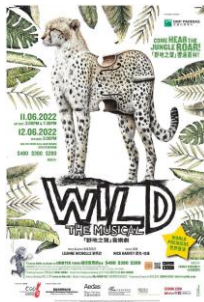
Real stage setting (esp. art tech shows)

“Beautiful stage settings printed on posters are appealing.”



Big animal

“Kids who are too young might be afraid of big animals.”



Story



Call out the message

“Protect animals is attractive. Respect lives is a key educational message for kids to learn, which is also important to parents as well.”

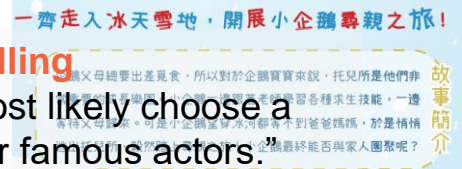


Well-known plays



Great story-telling

“Kids would most likely choose a good story over famous actors.”



Design



Rich and bright colour



Too edgy/ Feels high-tech

“Technology suits adults more, children dislike edgy designs.”



Information



Age information



A good show for family participation shall be entertaining and educational at the same time. Yet from the groups' perspective, it has to tackle the upfront hurdle – low awareness.

Engaging

- An interesting script is the backbone for a good family-friendly show. A twist in plots could draw audience attention and intention of further watching.
- Bold body movements of performers are also eye-catching.
- Lastly, encouraging audience to participate in format such as singing altogether/ standing up could bring more fun and engagement

Entertaining

- Perception of the level of entertainment is highly subjective. Parents would prioritise shows they know already and find them interesting
- Opportunities lay within demonstrating nice stage effects, such as beautiful backdrop, nice-looking characters and stage effects. Such visuals might convince parents

Educational

- Carefully strike a balance between educational and difficult-to-understand. The latter also defeats the “entertaining” component.
- Message should be relevant to kids (e.g. filial piety)



“I am confident with classic kids plays. They should be good and easy to understand. Often times, I study the materials to prepare myself with the show context, so that I could grasp the message easier.”

Family-friendly Arts participant

Group purchase and instant price cut are the most appealing to parents, as compared to year-round ticket set.

Well-received approaches

Parent-kid sessions (親子專場)

- The concept sounds new to all parents and addresses one of their biggest desires – me time
- They are comfortable letting kids alone if they are being taken care like in the playgroups

Group purchase (團體購票)

- Group discounts can encourage parents to ask each other and purchase together
- Some would ask via online chat group, echoing previous findings
- Discount is the key, group participation is not a concern

Credit card offers

- Straightforward – instant price cut

Approaches with concerns

Year-round ticket set (全年套票)

- Bulk purchase implies risk as parents cannot foresee whether kids are up for shows on the scheduled date

Early bird

- Parents are fine with purchasing tickets shortly after release (~2 weeks)
- Major hindrances happen upon low awareness

Pricing for shows performed by kids


- Resonating among kids
- Parents concern more about the quality and thus, expect a lower price to justify the possibly less impressive show





“I like it because I got no chance to watch shows that suit me. I always watch with family and kids.”


Family-friendly Arts participant

Most respondents lack motivation to keep the relation with performing groups/ performers. But they appreciate tangible objects to remind them of good show experiences.

-  Follow/ like on social media
 - Participants are open to following social media account
 - The spark happens within the theatre (i.e. very shortly after the show)

-  Recommend to friends/ other parents/ school
 - Parents' group would be one of the main information channels
 - Kids would also disseminate news and share experience with peers

-  Suggestion– Photobooth/ Souvenir
 - Photobooth spreads words in social media.
 - A token of memory helps to recall the experience after the show. Merchandises like storybook help to continue the conversation at home.
 - Souvenirs also serve as an incentive to “like” and “follow” on social media

-  Post-show questionnaire
 - Most do not fill in questionnaire as their hands are tied with kids

Implications

- Despite yearning for interaction within the theatre, demand for off-site and long-term engagement is significantly lower than other show-goers.
- Most audience have hesitation to like/ follow/ give feedback to specific performing groups

The presence of performing groups is weaker among parents, “good show” comes as a strong memory point.

A respondent who has impressive experience with “Arabian Dreams(天方夜譚)” would keep the poster. The example pinpoints the importance of souvenirs as a token of memory.

Most respondents enjoy the learning/ creation process from interactive sessions. Collaborations and new topics need to be designed prudently.

Well-received approaches

Workshop

- Overall, the concept is well-picked up as it provides new exposure and reward
 - Tangible reward: self-made craftwork; intangible: knowledge
 - More information on the workshop outcome is needed as it helps to justify the price
- **Informative sessions**
 - Sharing sessions are educational as kids can know more about stage performance. It also cultivates their empathy.
 - Exhibition is a feasible format, as long as the theme matches kids' interest



"Poster image appears to be appealing but I need more information what is the outcome. If it is just a 15-minute session and cannot work with hands-on while the price is higher than a ticket, I don't feel right."

Family-friendly Arts participant



"I attended 'Sherlock Holmes' by Springtime. After the show, Ko Chi-sum shared with the audience how the group strive to make the show happen amid COVID. It can let me kid to understand the effort."

Family-friendly Arts participant

Approaches are appealing to specific groups

Cross-category collaboration

- Matching context and dynamics/ vibrancy is important

Art-tech

- Bauhaus Magic Flute is tested in groups.
- Parents of younger kids like the idea as audience can play with props while it may not suit kids >10 years old

Deep/ Societal topics

- Some concerns over the difficulty in understanding
- Some respondents find it beneficial to convey an educational message (e.g. environmental protection) through arts

Chinese art

- Very few families have attended Chinese arts performance (Xiqu, music, dance)
- Promotion and information channel is more confined compared to Western music

Good collaboration

- Chinese music performance with Chinese medicine illustration in the middle
- Playgroup (Song&play 唱遊) with drama



For family-friendly programs, small/medium groups are no less competitive than the larger ones as group size is not an important consideration factor.

Promotion – offline

- School campaigns
 - Promotion in schools to educate students on what arts participation is like prepares them for actual participation
 - Performance-related contests inspire students to learn more about performing arts
 - Expand capacity by collaborating with other S/M performing groups for large-scale events
- Public campaigns
 - Provide post-show workshops
- Poster
 - Distribute at places where parents and students visit often (e.g. schools/ tuition centers)
 - Including comprehensive information (esp. age limit)
 - Enable further research by providing QR code
 - Grasp the essentials of appealing posters aforementioned

Promotion – online

- Social media page promotion
 - YouTube advertisement on channels targeting kids
 - Feature themselves on web pages targeting parents
 - Keep updating their own page
- Online information
 - Information shall be comprehensive and able to deliver confidence on shows
 - Include QR code for more information

Topics

Use well-known stories/ songs to add hints of familiarity to the performance

Respondent profile

Demographics						Arts participation overview		
Gender	Age	Marital status; have kids	Occupation	Education level	Monthly household income	No. of arts event participated with kids in past 1 year	Genres participated with kids and frequency	
R1	F	41	Married/ 7, 9 Years	Design	Associate or equivalent	\$60,000- \$69,999	6	Cantonese drama 1 time Non-Cantonese drama 1 time; Puppet 1 time; Orchestral music 1 time; Chamber music 1 time; Chinese music 1 time
R2	F	36	Married/ 5 Years	Housewife	Bachelor	\$80,000- \$89,999	4	Cantonese musical 1 time; Orchestral music 1 time; Choir 1 time
R3	F	40	Married/ 4, 6 Years	Trading	Bachelor	\$30,000- \$39,999	2	Choir 1 time; Ballet 1 time
R4	M	41	Married/ 6, 10 Years	Trading	Master	\$70,000- \$79,999	2	Orchestral Music 1 time; Ballet 1 time
R5	F	38	Married/ 7 Years	Education	Bachelor	\$50,000- \$59,999	3	Cantonese Drama 2 times; Ballet 1 time
R6	M	45	Married/ 14 Years	Engineering	Associate or equivalent	\$50,000- \$59,999	2	Chinese Dance 1 time; Dance theatre 1 time

Definition:

“Past 1 year” refers to period from Jul 2021 to Jun 2022

Photo credits

Art-mate.net

1 image on slide 106, retrieved from
<https://www.art-mate.net/>



Time Out Hong Kong (Discover Hong Kong)

1 image on slide 107, retrieved from
<https://www.discoverhongkong.com/hk-tc/explore/arts/arts-by-the-harbour.html>



The Theatre Wonderland on Facebook (Facebook)

1 image on slide 106, retrieved from
<https://www.facebook.com/thetheatrewonderland/>



仙菲婭 (Facebook)

1 image on slide 107, retrieved from
<https://www.facebook.com/hashtag/%E8%B7%AF%E6%AF%94%E5%92%8C%E5%AB%B2%E5%AB%B2%E7%9A%84%E9%90%B5%E8%B7%AF5%E8%99%9F/>



IAC (HKSAR Government)

1 image on slide 108, retrieved from
<https://www.info.gov.hk/gia/general/202206/08/P2022060800325.htm>



Stalker Theatre (Australia) (Leisure and Cultural Services Department)

1 image on slide 108, retrieved from
<https://www.lcsd.gov.hk/tc/stth/programmes/stth35a/celebration.html>



Urbtix

1 image on slide 106, retrieved from
<https://www.urbtix.hk/>



International Arts Carnival (Youtube)

2 images on slide 112, retrieved from
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Vtn0knO9Ek>

