

A LITERATURE REVIEW OF ARTS AND HOMELESSNESS



This literature review, by Phyllida Shaw, surveys published writing on homelessness and the arts.

It provides evidence of how the arts can produce positive outcomes for people who are or have been homeless. [Read the full report.](#)

Artforms



The review shows that participants in arts activities increase their:

WELLBEING

Arts activities that result in improvements in physical and mental health and wellbeing.

- Help achieve physical, mental and social wellbeing. (McGinty & Ebringer, 2011)
- Help to overcome trauma. (Ricciardi, 2018)
- Promote feelings of happiness, pleasure, health, comfort and balance. (Knestaut et al, 2010)

AGENCY

Activities that help people find a creative voice and identity, and the chance to be seen and heard as someone other than a homeless person.

- Increase agency and control. (Davidson, 2007)
- Help to develop a creative voice and an alternative identity. (Coyne, 2018, Novak, 2018)
- Create opportunities for co-production. (Kelly, 2017)

Countries



RESILIENCE

Activities that increase participants' sense of belonging and togetherness and help to build the resilience they need to survive.

- Help achieve physical, mental and social wellbeing. (McGinty & Ebringer, 2011)
- Help to overcome trauma. (Ricciardi, 2018)
- Increase resilience. (Thomas, Gray, McGinty and Ebringer, 2011)

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Activities through which participants acquire or enhance existing knowledge and skills, whether through formal or informal learning.

- Create learning environments. (Feen-Calligan, 2016)
- Teach transferable skills. (Pleace and Brotherton, 2015)
- Help communicate their situation. (Brown and Jeanneret, 2015))