

FULL AND DETAILED SUMMARY

‘Art and Resilience in Child Trauma’

Art and Resilience in Traumatized Children

Coordinating institution	Innocence in Danger (IID), Germany
Academic partner	University of Koblenz
Funding	Bild hilft – A Heart for Children
Project lead	Prof. Dr. Daniela Braun, University of Koblenz
Scientific support	Dr Catherine Kaiser Hylla, Dr Claudia von Faust, Dipl. Soz.Päd. Verena Mueller Doetsch
Study period	2010 to 2013 (3 consecutive years)
Original language	English (translation and summary in French)
Translation/Abstract	Produced by Claude, Anthropic’s AI — 2025

This document constitutes a comprehensive, accurate and detailed summary of the scientific report published by the University of Koblenz in cooperation with Innocence in Danger. It presents the theoretical foundations, methodology, results and conclusions of this longitudinal study on the effect of arts weeks on the development of resilience in traumatized children placed in child protection institutions.

1. Introduction and general context

Many children are confronted, from a very young age, with profoundly threatening and uncontrollable events that plunge them into fear, helplessness and terror. These events include physical violence, sexual abuse, neglect, accidents, parental drug or alcohol addiction, and/or the breakdown of the family unit. These traumatic experiences represent a major potential risk to the future development of the children concerned (Werner, 2008; Reddemann & Dehner-Rau, 2008).

The ability to adapt successfully to new life situations, rather than ‘breaking down’ in the face of extremely difficult conditions, is referred to in research as the concept of resilience (Wittchen & Hoyer, 2006; Wustmann, 2011). This concept lies at the heart of the ‘Art and Resilience’ (KuRe) project.

1.1 The KuRe project — Origins and objectives

As part of the KuRe project (Kunst und Resilienz — Art and Resilience), traumatized children living mainly in child protection facilities in Germany have been given the opportunity to take part in annual art weeks. These weeks are organized by the international association Innocence in Danger (IID), founded in 1999 in Paris.

Innocence in Danger is a global movement combating sexual violence against children, particularly the dissemination of child pornography via new media. The association has been represented in Germany since 2003. The KuRe project was funded by Bild hilft 'Ein Herz für Kinder' (A Heart for Children).

Central hypothesis of the project: Participation in the art weeks strengthens children's psychological resilience, that is, their inner capacity to cope with adversity.

1.2 Three fundamental hypotheses

- The art weeks have lasting effects on various areas of life and on the children's daily lives.
 - Art is a developmental resource for traumatised children.
 - The effects of the art weeks are also perceived by the children's educational support network.
-

2. Theoretical foundations

2.1 Residential youth care (Stationäre Jugendhilfe)

The project was primarily carried out with children placed in child protection institutions (residential youth care). In Germany, around 30,000 children and young people are placed in such facilities each year, which is nearly 87 per day according to the Federal Statistical Office.

The difference between ordinary residential groups and therapeutic residential groups lies not in the duration of care, but in its nature: the children staying there have experienced various types of trauma. The work requires a professional understanding of the phenomena of trauma, cognitive distortions, crises and relational dynamics, as well as the individual resources of each child.

Operational definition of trauma in children (Scheuer-English, 2002): *"It is a single or repeated experience that causes psychological injury exceeding the child's physical and mental capacities, evoking fear of death or annihilation, without the child being able to find protection or help from anyone."*

Trauma always occurs within relational contexts involving close or familiar people and leads to relationship and attachment disorders. Specialised therapies (physical therapy, play therapy, art therapy, movement therapy) are necessary to help children overcome their trauma.

2.2 Art and creativity

2.2.1 Definitions and issues

Art, in its broadest sense, refers to any developed human activity based on knowledge, practice, perception and intuition—whether it be the art of healing, the art of speech, or the fine arts. In its narrower, contemporary sense, art is a human cultural product, the result of creative processes, which differs from craftsmanship in that it is free from any specific utilitarian function. Its meaning arises from the interaction between the work, the artist and the viewer, without any single interpretation being imposed. Art therefore remains fundamentally

open and polysemic: it is precisely this ambiguity that fosters communication, expression and encounter.

Systematic research into creativity began in the United States in the 1950s, initially driven by political and economic imperatives (the post-Sputnik ‘space race’). It was Joy Paul Guilford who laid down the founding principle as early as 1950: every human being is creative, and this creativity can and must be explored. Subsequently, creativity was recognised within the field of psychotherapy (Moreno) as a resource for psychological change and growth, before being illuminated by neuroscience in the late 1990s (Hüther).

The creative process unfolds in five distinct phases, which are not linear and vary from person to person: (1) the **preparatory phase**, characterised by an openness to coincidences and non-judgemental gathering; (2) the **incubation phase**, where the gathered elements are recombined, transformed and modified; (3) the **illumination phase**, the ‘eureka’ moment where a solution suddenly emerges; (4) the **production phase**, where the solution is put into practice; and (5) the **verification phase**, where the result is assessed for its relevance.

The educational significance of these two concepts is fundamental in the context of this study. Creativity is an **adaptive skill**: it enables one to cope with new or difficult situations, to reconstruct one’s perception of reality, and to develop a sense **of self-efficacy** — the belief that one is capable of acting and influencing one’s own situation. Creative processes lead to a changed perception of reality, broaden one’s understanding of one’s own resources, and produce experiences of success with lasting effects on self-esteem. For traumatised children, art thus constitutes a direct therapeutic resource.

2.2.2 The importance of artistic activity in childhood

According to John Dewey, art is a necessary experience in a child’s life, as it links external experiences to internal feelings and thoughts. Every child begins to draw and paint as soon as they can hold a pencil. Children’s drawings have a narrative dimension: they show interpretations of the world from the child’s perspective with a subtlety that children cannot yet express verbally.

Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises every child’s right to full participation in cultural and artistic life. The German Bundestag has expressly called for the promotion of artistic and cultural activities for all children and young people, regardless of their social or cultural background.

2.2.3 Promoting creativity according to Moreno and Mollenhauer

Jacob Levy Moreno developed a theory according to which the capacity for human self-organisation develops through the support of creativity and spontaneity. Spontaneity is ‘a new reaction to an old situation or an appropriate response to a new’ (Moreno, 1989). Creativity and spontaneity are interdependent and constitute fundamental individual resources.

Mollenhauer, for his part, describes a reflexive process of the ego that begins with aesthetic sensations and is accompanied by a focused self-awareness of one’s own abilities, needs and experiences. He refers to this process as ‘thematic becoming’ and emphasises that varied aesthetic materials, which the child can shape and modify, enable the emergence of creative thinking.

2.3 Resilience — Concept and research

2.3.1 Definition of the concept

The word resilience is derived from the Latin ‘resilire’ (to bounce back, not to adhere). In the field of developmental psychology, resilience refers to ‘psychological resistance to biological, psychological and psychosocial developmental risks’ (Wustmann, 2011). Resilience is now understood as a dynamic and situational concept (state), capable of changing throughout life, rather than as a stable personality trait.

Definition by Welter-Enderlin (2006): “Resilience is the ability of individuals to overcome life-cycle crises by drawing on personal and socially transmitted resources, and to use these as a driving force for development.”

2.3.2 Research on resilience — The Kauai study

Research into resilience, which developed within the context of developmental psychopathology in the 1970s, is notably exemplified by the Kauai Longitudinal Study conducted by Emmy Werner and Ruth Smith on the Hawaiian island of Kauai.

KAUAI LONGITUDINAL STUDY — Werner & Smith (1955–1995)	
Location	Kauai Island, Hawaii, United States
Duration	40 years (from birth to adulthood)
Team	Paediatricians, psychologists, social workers
Total sample	698 children born in 1955
Children living in poverty	Approximately 54%
‘High-risk’ children	~30% (with 4 or more risk factors)
‘High-risk’ children with problems	129 children with severe learning or behavioural difficulties
‘Resilient’ children (surprise)	72 children (32 boys, 40 girls) despite high risks
Age measurements	1, 2, 10, 18, 32 and 40 years
Main conclusion	The positive effects in resilient children were still measurable at 40 years of age (lower rates of divorce and unemployment)

2.3.3 Protective factors according to Lösel & Bender (2008)

The Kauai study and similar studies identified the main protective factors promoting resilience:

- A stable emotional relationship with at least one parent or parental figure
- An emotionally positive, supportive and structured upbringing
- Models of constructive behaviour in the face of stress
- Social support outside the family
- Sustainable social responsibilities
- Temperamental characteristics (flexibility, kindness)
- Cognitive skills (at least average intelligence)
- Experiences of self-efficacy and a positive self-concept
- Experiences of meaning and structure in one’s own development

2.3.4 The six key factors of resilience according to Fröhlich-Gildhoff & Rönna-Böse

Six protective factors have been found to be particularly decisive for the development of resilience:

Factor	Description
1. Self-awareness	A comprehensive and accurate perception of one's own emotions and thoughts; self-reflection
2. Self-control	Ability to regulate internal states, and to control their intensity and duration
3. Self-efficacy	Subjective confidence in one's ability to solve new or difficult tasks using one's own skills
4. Social competence	Empathy, communication, non-aggressive behavioural strategies, self-assertion
5. Stress management	Ability to assess and manage stressful situations using appropriate strategies
6. Problem-solving	Appropriate decision-making in difficult situations; proactive behaviour

2.3.5 Developing resilience — Insights from neuroscience

Gerald Hüther (2008) provides a crucial neuroscientific insight: the neural connections that determine thought, feeling and action processes in the human brain are plastic and can change throughout life. New experiences, particularly those gained through active problem-solving, can alter neural structures and strengthen resilience in the long term.

Hüther also emphasises that 'never later in life is a person as open to new experiences, as curious, as enthusiastic, as eager to learn and as creative as during early childhood'. Kormann (2007) considers the first ten years of life to be the most favourable period for the development of resilience.

2.3.6 The three sources of resilience according to Daniel & Wassell (2002)

Children draw on three complementary sources of resilience:

- I HAVE (basic security): "I have people who love me and help me." — Rooted in Bowlby's attachment theory: a secure base that allows the child to actively explore their environment.
- I AM (self-esteem): "I am a loving person and I treat myself and others with respect." — Reinforced by experiences of competence.
- I CAN (self-efficacy): "I can find ways to solve problems and control myself." — The belief that one can influence and control certain situations through one's own behaviour.

2.4 Art and resilience — The theoretical link

Creativity is a central element in the development of resilience: children can develop their resilience through creative processes, and conversely, develop creative skills through challenges, when they are encouraged to seek, find and apply their own problem-solving strategies.

Art therapy, pioneered in particular by C.G. Jung, who encouraged his patients to paint, has long been shown to have a positive effect on individuals. The beneficial effects of art are realised in safe spaces where the quality of the work is not subject to judgement, and where respect for the individual creative act is guaranteed. In such contexts, artistic creation can become a resource for mental, spiritual and social development.

3. Scientific objectives of the project

The scientific support for the art weeks has two main objectives:

3.1 Evaluation of the art weeks

The first study aims to evaluate the art weeks themselves. The central questions are:

- Do the arts weeks have a lasting impact on the child's self-image?
- How are the arts weeks rated by the participating children and their carers?
- Has the child developed new interests as a result of the arts week?
- Are any observed changes reported by the child's educational support network?

3.2 Study of the effects on the development of resilience

The second study examines in greater detail the effects of arts weeks on the development of resilience in traumatised children. This longitudinal study (2010–2012) seeks to answer five questions:

- Do the arts weeks have an effect on the various areas of life or personal capacities linked to resilience?
 - Does a comparison group (without an arts week) allow us to isolate the effects specific to the intervention?
 - Are there specific differences between the groups that took part in different arts weeks?
 - Do the longitudinal case studies reveal a lasting effect on resilience-related abilities?
 - Do short-term effects persist in the long term?
-

4. Project structure

4.1 Organisation and implementation of the arts weeks

The arts weeks are organised by the IID association. They take place at various venues in Germany and Switzerland and last a full week. Three to four independent professional artists take part, offering workshops in a variety of artistic disciplines:

- Photography workshop (several artists, including Raphael Faux and Karl Anton Koenigs)
- Graffiti (Justin McMahon)
- Comic book drawing (Oliver Preston)
- Neoprene work — bag making (Thomas Renaud)

- Painting (Franck Cazenave, Pia von Aulock)
- Videography and film production (Louis von Adelsheim, Jonas Schweitzer-Faust, Victorie Duchatelle)
- Sculpture and plaster and clay art (Julia Schrader, Greg Hold)
- Music (Johannes Schlichting)
- Printing techniques (Lesley Schulze)
- Radio production and sound design (Martin Löscher)
- Jewellery (Jasmin La Marca)
- Drama (Alexe Limbach, Karl-Heinz Zmugg)
- Creative design (Yves)

4.2 Participating institutions

The participating institutions are located in North Rhine-Westphalia, Berlin and Rhineland-Palatinate:

- Janusz-Korczak House (Kaiserswerther Diakonie, Düsseldorf) — residential group for 9 children
- Jugendhilfe Anna-Stiftung (Cologne) — 36 places for children aged 0 to 18
- KiD Facheinrichtung (Düsseldorf) — specialist assessment for children aged 4 to 12 in crisis
- KiDo 1 & 2 and DiKo groups (Graf Recke Foundation, Düsseldorf) — 7 girls and boys traumatised by violence (aged 6–13)
- Metropolis Group (Wadzeck Foundation, Berlin) — curative education in small groups
- Frieda Group (VJB Jugend und Familie gGmbH, Berlin) — educational and therapeutic care (ages 6–13)
- Control group: HKJ Rheinland-Pfalz gGmbH — non-participating residential groups
- Private participants: children receiving outpatient care or formerly in care

5. Scientific methodology

5.1 Study 1 — Evaluation of the arts weeks

5.1.1 Procedure and timetable

The children and their accompanying adults were interviewed on two occasions: before the first arts week (pre-survey, 2010) and after each arts week (post-survey). Additional reference points who did not participate in the arts week were also interviewed, in order to obtain an unbiased perspective on any changes.

Group	2010	2011	2012
Adelsheim – Summer	8 children	8 children	7 children
Adelsheim – Autumn	9 children	—	—
Gstaad (Switzerland)	8 children	5 children	4 children
Lake Ruppin (Berlin)	—	—	9 children

5.1.2 Sample — Group characteristics

Adelsheim_Summer group: 8 children (aged 6–12, M = 9.00, SD = 2.00) living in two different institutions in North Rhine-Westphalia. The length of stay ranged from a few weeks to several years.

Adelsheim_Autumn group: 9 children (aged 8–13, M = 9.86, SD = 1.29), of whom 7 were living in a care home in North Rhine-Westphalia and 2 were living with their parents. The length of stay in care ranged from 8 months to 6 years.

Gstaad Group: 8 children (aged 7–15, M = 10.75, SD = 2.39), of whom 4 were in care and 4 were living with their parents or in foster care. International arts week involving English-speaking artists and French-speaking children.

Ruppiner See group: 9 children (aged 6–10, M = 8.38, SD = 1.32), of whom 6 were from two Berlin institutions and 3 were living with their parents.

5.1.3 Qualitative and quantitative assessment methods

The assessment is based on data from transcribed oral interviews, as well as written data collected from the children and their adult caregivers. The data analysis is primarily qualitative (qualitative content analysis according to Mayring, 2000). Questions that could be answered with ‘yes’ or ‘no’ were subject to preliminary quantitative analysis, with graphical representation and a chi-square (χ^2) statistical test to compare response frequencies between groups.

5.2 Study 2 — Effects on the development of resilience

5.2.1 Longitudinal design

A longitudinal study was conducted between 2010 and 2012 with four measurement points (T1: pre-survey before the first arts week; T2, T3, T4: post-surveys after each successive arts week). A control group of children not participating in any arts weeks was surveyed at the same time points.

5.2.2 Categorisation system for measuring resilience

Five main categories were operationalised based on the protective factors identified in the literature (notably the Kauai study):

Category	Questions assessed
A — Self-concept	Sports interests, strengths and weaknesses in sport, hobbies, compatibility with other children, academic skills, specific strengths and weaknesses
B — Self-esteem	Self-assessment, image as perceived by friends, parents and teachers
C — Art and creativity	Perception of art, artistic activities undertaken regularly, enthusiasm, emotional expression through art
D — Self-efficacy	Ability to solve problems independently, to ask for help, willingness to pursue goals, active vs passive strategies
E — Future plans and desires	Hedonistic/illusory desires vs. anticipation of what is desirable vs. pragmatic orientation towards the future
F — Sense of social integration	Number of significant people in the inner circle (family, friends, others) and the outer circle

For each category, specific assessment rules were defined to describe the state at each measurement point (strong, moderate, weak) and to evaluate the change between two measurement points (++ very positive, + positive, = stable, - negative, -- very negative).

6. Selected results

6.1 Results of the evaluation of the arts weeks (2010–2012)

6.1.1 Sustainability of effects — What is missing after the arts week

In each year of the evaluation (2010, 2011, 2012), almost all the children interviewed, several weeks after the arts week, stated that they felt something was missing. In 2010, only 2 out of 25 children answered in the negative. In 2011 and 2012, the result was similar.

The dominant and recurring finding: people are missed above all else. In all three groups and across all three years, the artists, organisers and the cook were the people most frequently mentioned — and this result was almost unanimous: in 2010, almost all the children said they missed one or more people. The other categories of loss identified in the study (the place, artistic activities, shared activities, positive emotions) play a far less prominent role.

This result can be explained by the living circumstances of the participating children: most reside in child protection institutions (group accommodation). In their daily lives, the conditions necessary for stable, attentive and ongoing relationships with adults are structurally difficult to achieve — unfavourable staff-to-child ratios, time constraints, staff turnover. The art week temporarily offers a high staff-to-child ratio, a warm, constant and respectful adult presence: artists who give genuine attention to each child, a cook who looks after the group. What the children *are* actually *missing*, therefore, is above all **stable role models and caring adults who have given them genuine and sustained attention**. It is not the artistic activity itself that is most lacking—it is the human connection that it made possible. This finding constitutes a major clinical and educational insight: it reveals an emotional and relational void in the daily lives of these traumatised children, which the art weeks temporarily fill.

It is noteworthy that the lack of artistic activities is cited almost exclusively by the children who took part in the Adelsheim (castle) weeks, whilst the lack of shared activities is mentioned exclusively by the children in the Gstaad group — which reflects the different focus of these two types of weeks.

6.1.2 New interests pursued since the arts week

In 2010, a significant result ($\chi^2 = 7.22$, $p < .03$, large effect $\hat{w}^2 = 0.29$) distinguished the Adelsheim_Summer group from the other two groups: all 8 children in this group stated that they had incorporated new activities into their daily lives since the arts week (mainly artistic activities: photography, painting, keyboard/piano, etc.). In contrast, the majority of children in the Gstaad group did not report any new interests they had taken up.

This difference can be explained by the stronger artistic focus of the Adelsheim weeks, in contrast to the Gstaad week, which placed great emphasis on spectacular but difficult-to-replicate activities (toboggan run, rock climbing, etc.).

6.1.3 Perceived changes in the child's life

In 2010, 17 out of 25 children (68%) reported perceived changes since the arts week. These changes were invariably positive and concerned:

- Social behaviour (e.g. 'I argue less', 'I've stopped lying')
- Social integration (e.g. "I've made new friends")
- Well-being (e.g. "I'm more relaxed", "I enjoy life more")
- The discovery of new skills (e.g. "I'm more musical", "I now know how to take photos")

These results were consistently repeated in 2011 and 2012, confirming the stability of the positive effect over several years.

6.1.4 Children's evaluation of the arts weeks

The motivation to participate is dominated by the anticipation of enjoyment and positive emotions ("having fun"), as well as by curiosity. Artistic activities as a direct motivation are mentioned spontaneously by only 3 children across all groups — which can be explained by the fact that "having fun" implicitly includes expectations related to the art workshops.

Fears expressed before the week mainly concern the possibility of conflict, violence or exclusion (BF1), potential accidents (BF2) and bad behaviour (BF3). These fears almost always prove to be unfounded: conflicts are minimal, and there is no violence.

The feedback received after the arts week is very positive for 100% of the children surveyed each year. Artistic activities are most frequently cited by the Adelsheim groups; joint activities (excursions) are mentioned more often by the Gstaad group. Criticisms are rare and mainly concern minor arguments between children.

6.2 Results of the study on the development of resilience

6.2.1 Changes in resilience indicators (self-assessment, 2010)

The analysis covers the 17 children in the Adelsheim_Summer (K1–K8) and Adelsheim_Autumn (K17–K25) groups for whom data are available at both measurement points. The results by category are as follows:

Category	Positive change	Stable	Negative
A — Self-concept	Minority	—	Dominant (2x +)
B — Self-esteem ★	9 out of 17 children	6 out of 17 children	2/17 children
C — Art and creativity ★	7 out of 17 children	5 out of 17 children	5/17 children
D — Self-efficacy	5 out of 17 children	—	10 out of 17 children
E — Future plans	Balanced	Balanced	Balanced

★ = significantly more positive results than in the control group

6.2.2 Comparison with the control group — Specific effects of the arts weeks

The comparison with the control group (children who did not take part in the arts weeks) allows us to isolate the effects specific to the intervention. The key results are as follows:

Self-esteem (category B): Children who took part in the arts weeks showed a marked improvement in their self-esteem, whereas no significant change was observed in the control group. This is one of the clearest and most robust effects of the study.

Art and creativity (category C): A more positive picture emerges among children who took part in the arts weeks, particularly in the Adelsheim_Summer group. The control group presents a mixed picture (positive and negative). The increase in creative activity in daily life is significantly more pronounced among participants.

Self-concept (category A): Negative changes are observed in both groups (with and without the arts week), suggesting that these changes result more from general developmental factors than from the specific effect of the arts weeks.

Sense of social integration (category F): A positive increase in the sense of social integration is observed in both art groups (Adelsheim_Summer and Adelsheim_Autumn): more significant people are cited within the inner circle after the art week. This trend is, however, also observable in the control group, albeit with some nuances.

6.2.3 Longitudinal case studies — Development over 3 years (2010–2012)

The longitudinal case study focuses on the 7 children from the Adelsheim_Summer group who participated in all surveys (K1, K2, K3, K5, K6, K7, K8). It highlights individual trends across 4 measurement points (T1 to T4).

Child	Self-esteem	Art/Creativity	Self-efficacy	Self-concept	Tendency
K1	Negative → Positive (Q3) → Negative (Q4)	↗ sustained (Q3-Q4)	↗ then ↘	↗ then ↘	Mixed
K2	Stable positive (T1-T3) → Negative (T4)	Stable (high)	Low → high (T3-T4)	↗ sustained	Somewhat +
K3	Negative → Positive (T3) → maintained (T4)	↗ after Q2 → sustained	Moderate stable	↗ then stable	Positive +
K7	Negative → Positive (T2) → maintained (T3-T4)	Fluctuating → high	↗ sustained	↘ (T1→T2)	Positive +
K8	Negative → Positive (T2) → maintained (T3-T4)	Low → high (sustained)	Low → medium	Stable	Positive ++

Of the 8 children in the Adelsheim_Summer group, 5 show positive trends in the transition from T1 to T2. Some positive effects fade over time, whilst others are maintained, making the question of sustainability fundamentally individual.

6.2.4 A notable qualitative finding: self-perception vs. external perception

Throughout the study, the children’s self-assessments consistently diverged from the assessments made by educational specialists: the children perceived their own development more positively than the adults. This finding is interpreted as a future resource for the children, to be valued and encouraged within institutions.

7. Methodological difficulties

7.1 Data collection

Of the 25 children who took part in the first ‘artistic weeks’ in 2010, only 8 could be included in the full set of research interviews. This high attrition rate (68%) is due to the children’s frequent changes of residence during the project (return to their families, transfer to another institution), which made follow-up interviews impossible.

7.2 Data interpretation

The heterogeneity of the groups of children (aged 7 to 15 in 2010) and the multitude of life events that occurred make it difficult to distinguish general developmental effects from those specific to the arts weeks. Individual circumstances (return to family, crises, change of institution) may have masked or amplified the effects.

7.3 Adult respondents

Each adult interviewed was responsible for several children at the same time, which may have influenced their assessments in a non-independent manner. Furthermore, the phenomena of selective perception and intersubjectivity may have biased the external assessments of the children.

8. General conclusion

Although the children participating in the arts weeks come from different institutions, have individual backgrounds and belong to the 8–12 age group, the accompanying study clearly shows that all the children involved benefited from the arts weeks.

8.1 Consolidated results

1. Improved self-esteem: This is the most robust and consistent effect. All the children had relatively low levels of self-esteem before the project began, but this improved despite individual fluctuations. Compared to the control group, children who took part in the art weeks are more likely to emerge with increased self-esteem.

2. Integration of art and creativity into daily life: Children in the continuous participation group initially showed a sharp increase in the integration of artistic activities into their daily lives, which levelled off over time. Interviews revealed, however, that the children regard these activities as natural and no longer spontaneously associate them with the term ‘art’ — which partly explains the apparent decline in the figures.

3. Development of resilience — non-linear but positive results: The longitudinal analysis shows fundamentally positive, though non-linear, results. Each child’s resilience development cycle exhibits ups and downs linked to individual crises. A link between the art weeks, the new experiences gained and the development of personal skills can be demonstrated.

4. Behaviour during the arts weeks: During the arts weeks, the children’s behaviour was perceived by the teaching assistants as significantly less challenging than usual — which is a result in itself.

5. Adelsheim vs. Gstaad weeks — a key lesson: Arts weeks centred on artistic practices (Adelsheim) generate more measurable effects on the development of skills and lasting

interests than weeks featuring numerous spectacular activities that cannot be replicated by the children in their everyday institutional lives (Gstaad).

8.2 Authors' recommendations

- Intensify recurring arts programmes in youth care institutions to reinforce lasting effects.
- Prioritise artistic forms that children can replicate with limited material and financial resources.
- Recognise artistic activities led by professional artists as a fully-fledged methodological approach in residential youth care, distinct from art therapy.
- Incorporate this approach into fee negotiations with child protection institutions.
- Promote children's more positive self-perception as a resource to be encouraged within institutions.
- For children who have taken part in just one week of artistic activities, positive effects are also observable — access should not be limited to regular participants alone.

9. Key bibliographical references cited in the study

The authors cite an extensive body of scientific literature. The main references are as follows:

- Bowlby, J. (2008). Attachment Theory.
- Braun, D. et al. (2013). Art, creativity and child development.
- Daniel, B. & Wassell, S. (2002). Assessing and Promoting Resilience in Vulnerable Children.
- Dewey, J. (1988). Art as Experience.
- Fröhlich-Gildhoff, K. & Rönna-Böse, M. (2009). Resilience. Munich: Reinhardt.
- Hüther, G. (2008). Resilience and new neurobiological findings.
- Laucht, M. et al. (2000). The Mannheim Risk Factors Study.
- Lösel, F. & Bender, D. (2008). Resilience and protective factors — a synthesis.
- Moreno, J.L. (1991). Psychodrama, spontaneity and creativity.
- Opp, G. & Fingerle, M. (2008). What Strengthens Children. Munich: Reinhardt.
- Schleiffer, R. (2009). Attachment theory in the context of residential care.
- Werner, E.E. & Smith, R.S. (1989, 1992, 2008). The Kauai Longitudinal Study — Vulnerable but Invincible.
- Wustmann, C. (2004, 2011). Resilience. Withstanding and strengthening. Weinheim: Beltz.
- Zander, M. (2010, 2011). Promoting resilience — theory and practice.

— End of summary —

Document produced for Innocence in Danger, France — 2025