

An abstract artwork featuring layered colors and textures. The top portion is a white, fibrous material. Below it, a dark blue layer is partially covered by a reddish-brown layer on the left and a yellow-green layer on the right. The bottom portion is a brown, fibrous material. The overall effect is one of depth and texture, with the colors appearing to be applied in a way that creates a sense of movement and flow.

Arts Therapies:
tackling health inequalities *together* with people with
learning disabilities in practice & research

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Art Therapist

Clinical Academic Fellow

The Arts Therapies

- Art*
- Music*
- Drama*
- Dance-Movement



**regulated in the UK by the HCPC & part of the AHP umbrella in the NHS*



“But will there be enough depth?”



'...a condition of arrested development of the mind, which is especially characterized by impairment of skills manifested during the developmental period.' (WHO, 1992: 226)

Spactic ↙



~~Normal~~
Normalie ↙



Special Needs School

Main stream school

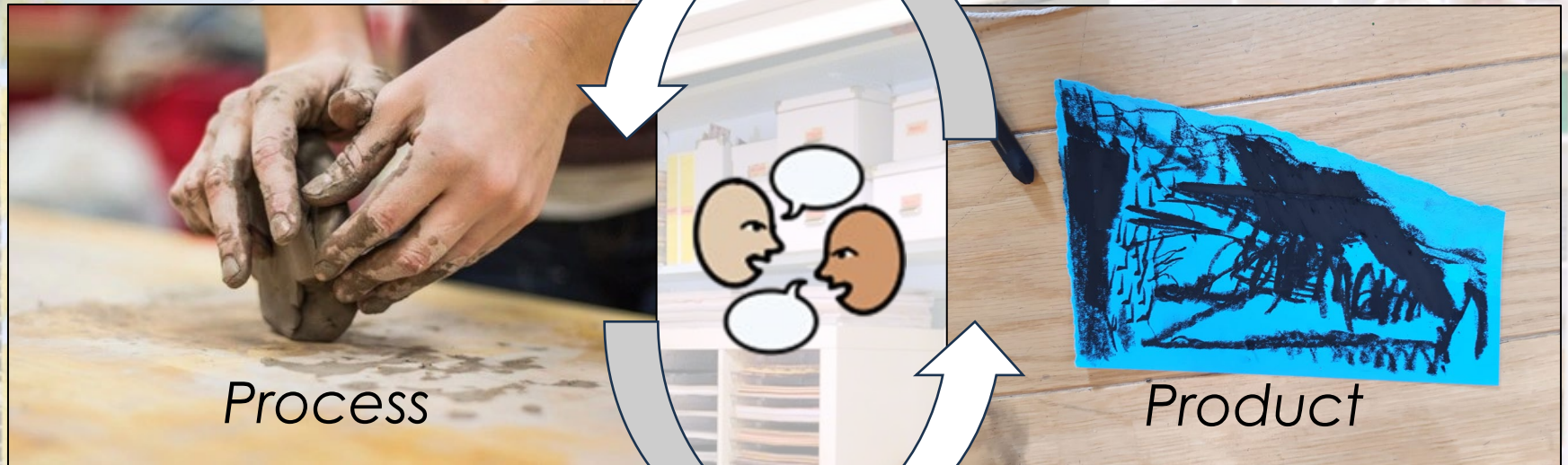
Arts Therapies and....



Health Inequalities

- **Communication** (individual)
- **Coping** (local / community)
- **Collaboration** (system)

An alternative form of communication....



“Getting the emotion and feelings out.”

“you just experiment with art, with art materials and stuff”

“just being able to...express, because if you don't express it and you keep it inside it just gets worse and worse...”

...in the art room

A coping tool...

"...the confidence side of it, so building my confidence up."

growth of personal resources

"my independence I would say. So being independent to come into the art room on my own."

"It's helped me a lot to do art more. ... I've got a big box. Full of stuff."

meaningful activity

"Learn a bit about art and drawing together."

skill acquisition

"My mind feels a lot relaxed and everything...I tend to concentrate."

symptom reduction

"I kinda learned ...that it's important to support myself"

gaining insight

"I'm doing more now...I speak to people."

social engagement

"I get on better with people outside. I feel calmer."

...in everyday life

An accessible way to collaborate....



Voices
A WORLD FORUM FOR MUSIC THERAPY

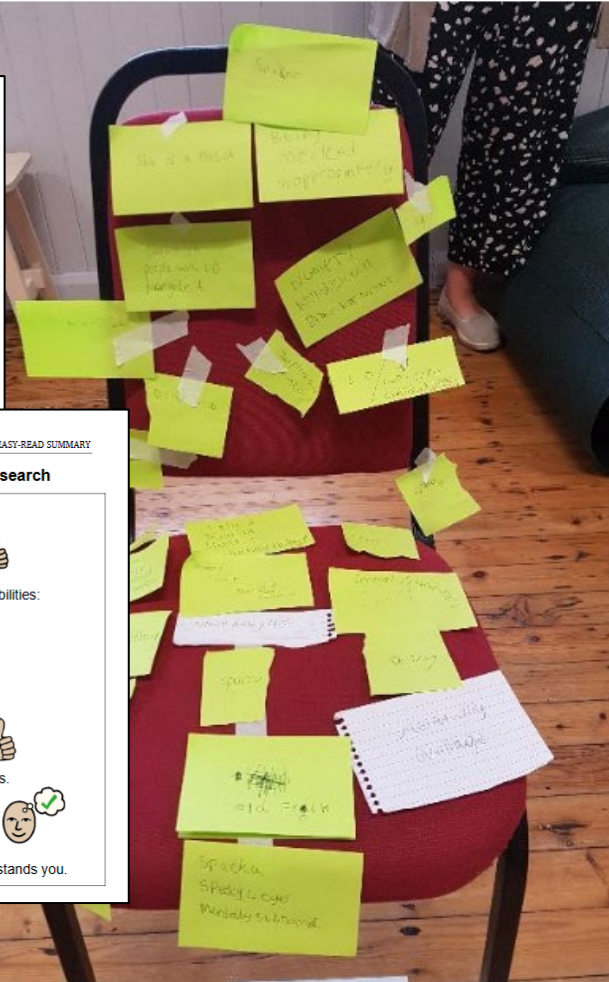
RESEARCH | PEER REVIEWED

Un-Labeling the Language:

Exploring Labels, Jargon and Power through Participatory Arts Research with Arts Therapists and People with Learning Disabilities

Nicki Power^{1*}, Emma Millard^{2,3}, Artists and Activists at The Lawnmowers Independent Theatre Company⁴, Catherine Carr^{1,2}

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- Spaker
- Numpty
- Numbskull
- Brainless no one
- God's little children
- Mongoloid
- Retard
- Disabled
- Spastic
- Nonse
- Bitch
- Idiot
- Intellectually disabled
- Mentally subnormal
- Backward
- Slow
- Bootlicker
- Can't do nothing
- Imbecile
- Thicko
- Neurodivergent

VOICES: A WORLD FORUM FOR MUSIC THERAPY | EASY-READ SUMMARY

Recommendations for Health Services and Research

We had some ideas to help include more people with learning disabilities:

- For people who cannot read or write, making a video helps.
- For people who can read a little, an easy-read summary helps.
- When talking, use simple words and check the person understands you.

...in academia (research)

An accessible way to collaborate....



...in academia (research)

Ripples of change

through academic coproduction



Individual

System

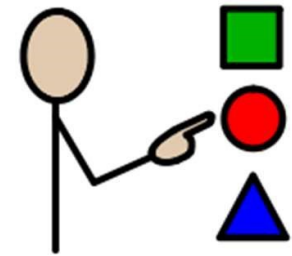
An accessible way to collaborate....

Learning Disabilities in Tower Hamlets, Newham and City and Hackney

Draft Report
May 2023

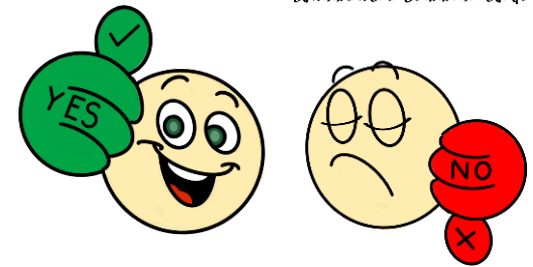


An accessible way to collaborate....

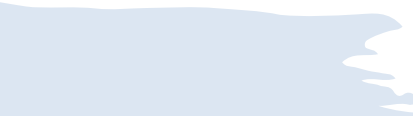


Lawnmowers Communi-cards

Lawnmowers Communi-cards



...in system change



What are the
magic ingredients
in the
'Lawnmowers–Power' Effect?



The 16.59 to Kings-Cross

Out of nowhere,
tears come.

Hot

stinging

the corners of my eyes

My chin quivers and I shape my mouth into an 'O'.

A loud exhale.

Touched by the stories you gave to me so freely.

A guided short-cut made the metro walk safer.

"You're the guest, you don't lift a finger" as tea is made for me.

A series of delicate pencil patterns worked on all evening
now mine.

A disc of life stories rapped to dance beats

an Ode to Nicki

a 'Power' ballad of belly-laugh

a bar of posh chocolate

a delicate feather-petal carnation

to take away.

I am taking so much more
with me as I travel south.

Thank you





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Resources

Grounding Exercise Video:

[The 5-4-3-2-1 Method: A Grounding Exercise to Manage Anxiety – YouTube](#)

Breathing Video:

[RELAX AND BREATHE: Do Nothing for 10 Minutes – YouTube](#)

Five finger breathing:

[Five Finger Breathing | a simple guided breathing exercise for kids - YouTube](#)

What are the Arts Therapies:

[What are arts and creative therapies? – Mind](#)

A career in Arts Therapies:

[Art, Music or Drama Therapist - learning-disability \(hee.nhs.uk\)](#)

Creative Activities (not just for children):

[Home | CAT Corner - Creative Therapies](#)

Co-written Academic Paper with Easy-Read Summary – Power, language & labels:

<https://voices.no/index.php/voices/article/view/3391>