

FACT SHEET

Why arts for children and youth

- A high level of arts involvement narrows the achievement gap between students from low and high socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Students with high levels of involvement in the arts drop out of school by grade 10 at a rate of 1.4%, compared to 4.8% for others.
- Students who take four years or more of arts classes while in high school score 90 to 100 points higher on their SATs than students who take only one-half year or less.
- High-risk youth involved in the court system, who subsequently participate in arts programs, are half as likely to have new court referrals.

Why arts organizations working with children and youth need more support

- The Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC), the state's arts agency, had its fiscal year 2003 budget cut by 62 percent, from \$19.1 million to \$7.3 million. This was the largest percentage cut of any agency in Massachusetts and any state arts agency in the country. While funding in 2007 rebounded to \$12.3 million, it is still only 64 percent of its funding level in 2002.
- The City of Boston has eliminated its grant program to local arts organizations, including those serving youth, from its general fund. Boston also eliminated its Safe Neighborhood Youth Fund, which supported after-school programs, a third of which were arts-focused.
- As a result of the federal No Child Left Behind Act, greater emphasis has been placed on preparing students for MCAS, which tests English and math. School resources are increasingly being directed to these tested subjects, while subjects such as arts, and even the sciences, which are not tested, receive less focus.

Why a strategy to engage more individual donors

- Recent corporate mergers are likely to result in reduced funding for local nonprofits, including small arts organizations.
- Foundation endowments have not fully recovered to their 2000 levels due to volatility in the stock market. Foundation giving nationwide was down 8 percent (10 percent when adjusted for inflation) between 2002 and 2003.
- An article in *The New York Times* (June 19, 2004), "Soft Financing Causes Arts Groups to Make Hard Choices," points to individual giving as the only area in arts-focused philanthropy that is likely to increase.
- Giving USA, a nonprofit group that studies philanthropy, states that in 2005 donations to cultural groups accounted for 5.2% of U.S. individual philanthropy, down from 8.1% a decade before (*The Wall Street Journal*, October 14, 2006).
- Americans who earn between \$25,000 and \$200,000 donate on average one percent of their wealth, while wealthy Americans, with incomes between \$200,000 and \$10 million, donate on average less than half of one percent. There are over 62,000 households in the Boston metropolitan area earning more than \$200,000 a year.
- Individual giving made up 76% of the \$248 billion in charitable contributions in the United States in 2004.