



2010-2011

**SYMPHONIES
EDUCATION**
PROGRAM REPORT



Measuredoutcome

Bridging the information gap in the non-profit sector



A MEASURE OF SUCCESS:



The Contribution of Symphony Education Programs in Canada (Year Two Study Results)

Every year, Canadian orchestras expose thousands of young people to classical music. For many youth this is the first, and sometimes only, time they will visit a concert hall and experience live orchestral music. For others, this is a transformative moment when they realize their future lies in the making of music. Most fall somewhere in the middle, playing an instrument in school, enjoying the occasional concert or having a small selection of the classics on their music players.

In the second year of research by Measuredoutcome.org™, in conjunction with eight Canadian orchestras, it was revealed that students, teachers and musicians overwhelmingly shared a view that exposure to live symphonic music was a valuable educational opportunity.

Responses to the Symphony education programs remained very positive through the second year of the Measure of Success study, and appreciation for the educational opportunity was consistently high. Variations in responses were minimal, which is remarkable considering the survey responses and symphony participation increased considerably from the first year of the study.¹

Though there are many positive attributes to exposing young people to live classical music, specific outcomes remain largely intangible and notoriously difficult to quantify. To help address this challenge, during the 2010/11 concert season, eight orchestras, including the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, the National Arts Centre Orchestra, Orchestra London, the Ottawa Symphony Orchestra, Tafelmusik, the Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra collaborated in collecting common feedback regarding the impact of educational concerts. Though these orchestras vary greatly in size, reach and resources, they all share a common interest in delivering the best possible enrichment experience.



Photo Credit: John Loper for the TSO





HOW DOES EXPOSURE TO CLASSICAL MUSIC ENRICH STUDENTS?

Research participants identified six areas of benefit:

1. Enrichment of Music Curriculum - At their most practical level, student concerts and the associated curriculum materials support teachers in their effort to deliver the education curriculum, as required by the Ministries of Education in all provinces.² This investment by symphonies becomes more critical as education budgets are tightened.

2. Enhancement of Non-Music Curriculum - Students who participate in music programs do better in other subjects. The positive correlation between exposure to music and success in other disciplines - especially math and science - has been well-documented.³

3. Music as Metaphor - Educators use the symphony experience to illustrate key learning skills. Orchestras provide an excellent example of what can be achieved through teamwork, specialization, leadership and practice.

4. Etiquette Skills - Many teachers noted that the student concerts provided them with an opportunity to teach social skills and etiquette.

5. Context for Learning - Concerts can provide a context for learning in other, unrelated subjects. Many orchestras have created innovative programs through which history, science, English and other curriculum are delivered through music.⁴

6. Supporting Arts Institutions - Several survey participants have noted that student concerts should not be viewed as a means of audience development. This being said, performances introduce students to important arts institutions in their communities. Students and their families may build a relationship with the orchestra as a result of this early experience.

The data and brief case studies in this report outline findings in the second year of an ongoing, multi-year study. This study examines the approaches taken by symphonies to support student learning, and provides a snap shot of how these efforts are received by students and teachers.

1. Symphony survey participation rose 33% in 2011, from 6 to 8 participants. Adult/Teacher participation rose 35%, while student participation shifted noticeably, gaining a 132% increase in 2011. In 2011, the survey had 147 individual students and 46 classes answering the survey. Assuming a national average of 28 students per class, this brings the total student participation in the survey to 1,288. There are a number of possible explanations for this shift in survey use. The trend will be tracked and analysed over the course of the 2011/12 survey and report.

2. In all cases, symphonies provide teachers with a variety of online curriculum support resource materials. As well, some symphonies send musicians into the schools before and after performances to mentor students and to reinforce the performance experience.

3. Though not specific to exposure to symphonic music, some studies of note include: Fiske, E. (Ed.), (1999) *Champions for Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*. The President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, U.S.A. Roberston, P., (2007) "Presenting the Case for Music", Music Research Institute, U.K. Winner, E., Hetland, L., (2000) "The Arts in Education: Evaluating the Evidence for a Causal Link", *The Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol. 34, 3-10.

4. Many orchestras have found ways to introduce non-music curriculum into programs. (See Galileo Case Study) Also see the Learning Through the Arts report for an excellent analysis of arts based academic support programs and a detailed overview of arts education research. Upitis, R., Smithrim, K., (2003), "Learning Through the Arts: National Assessment 1999-2002", Royal Conservatory of Music.



REPORT FINDINGS

Over the course of the 2010/11 performance season, 151 teachers, 1,288 students and 22 performers in six cities responded to Measuredoutcome.org surveys online. In 2011, the student survey was used predominantly by teachers in a classroom setting, leading to a remarkable increase in student participation rates.

By collaborating with partners across the country, orchestras provided a broad picture of the impact of symphony education programs in small and large communities. Some highlights of this year's findings are as follows:

Overall Response

99% of adults and students were very happy with the symphony education programs.

87% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the program is a good way for students to learn.

96% of teachers plan to attend the symphony program again in the coming year. The majority of those who do not plan on attending again cite budgetary reasons.

50% of attendees had participated in the education programs at the symphony four or more times.

What an amazing opportunity for our families. I always receive such positive feedback about this event, and I am so happy you offer these sessions for children to develop a love for music at a young age. ~ Educator

Highly engaged teachers are key to the success of the programs. Once teachers have recognized the value of attending symphony performances, they are more likely to bring students in the future, make extensive use of curriculum materials, access other programs provided by symphonies to enrich the experience, and advocate within the school system for greater access to arts programs.⁵ Concurrently, these teachers demand variety in programming. Orchestras must constantly innovate if they expect continued support from these key educational leaders.

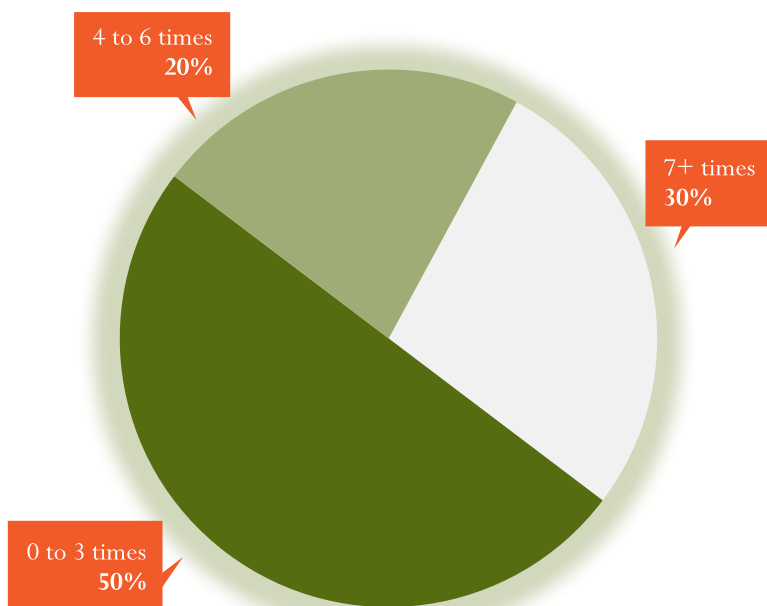
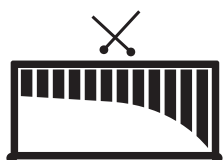
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⁵ Analysis of highly engaged teachers who bring students to concerts on a regular basis may be of value for future research. Their input would be of value in further developing programs and assessing the impact on students.

Half of the education concerts are attended by relative newcomers to the symphony education programs.



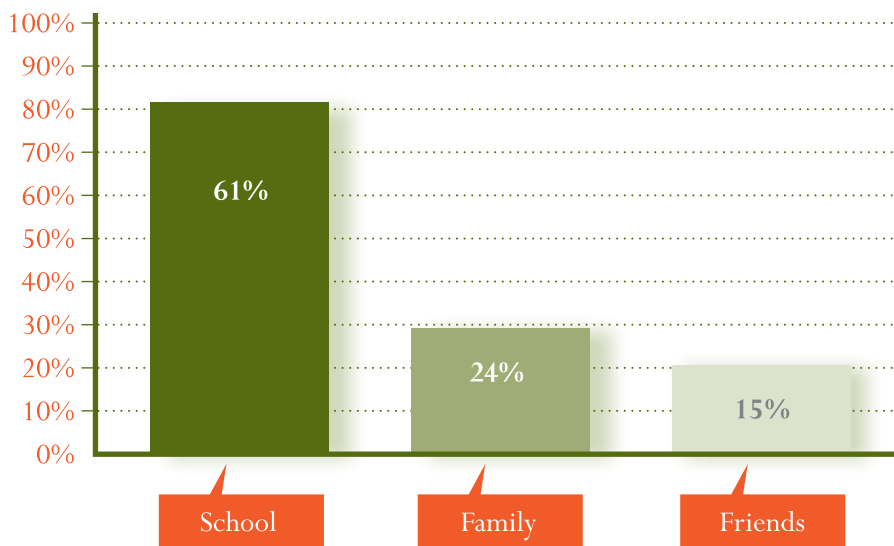
HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BROUGHT STUDENTS TO A SYMPHONY PERFORMANCE IN THE PAST?

Many times, the kids will speak of concert memories a number of years after the fact. ~ Educator



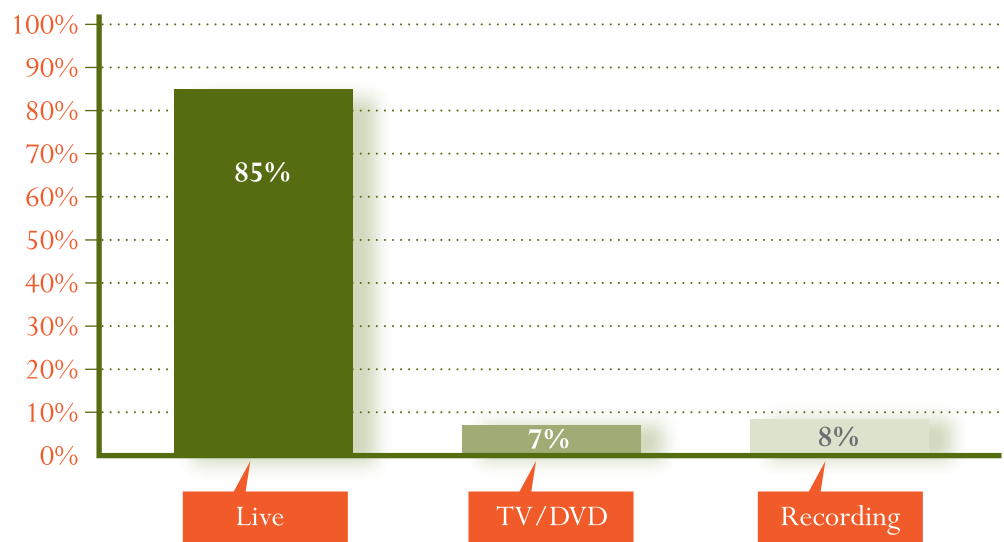
WHO HAVE YOU ATTENDED CONCERTS WITH?

For a majority of young people, symphony education programs are their first and only exposure to live music performances:



HOW WOULD YOU PREFER TO HEAR A PERFORMANCE?

Once exposed to a live concert, young people display an overwhelming preference to hear music performed live, as opposed to recorded. This post-concert response from students is particularly noteworthy, considering they are living in an age of instant digital entertainment and video games:



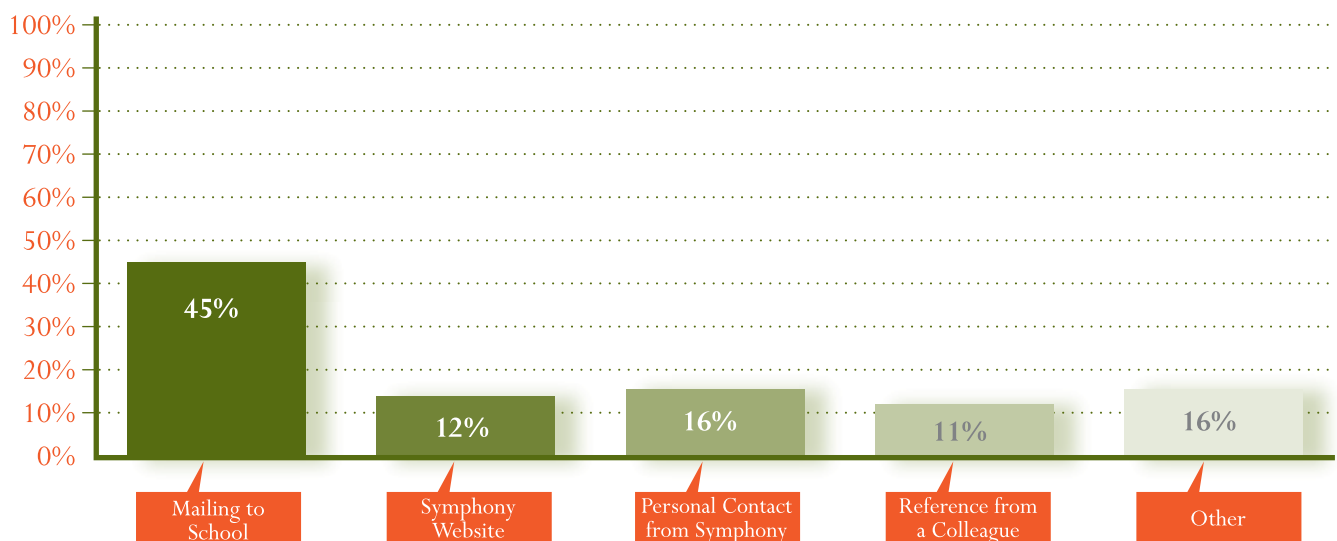
Outreach

Marketing and communication of the educational programs is key to their success. A majority of attendees, 45%, responded to a symphony mailing to the school. Only 12% found out through the symphony website, and a mere 11%

knew of the programming through word of mouth. Symphonies must still rely on labour-intensive physical mailings to communicate directly with educators. In a few isolated cases, orchestras have been able to negotiate bulk ticketing directly

with school boards. This provides a consistency for orchestras while making it possible for students to receive bulk ticket rates.

HOW DID YOUR SCHOOL HEAR ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE?



Curriculum Materials

Orchestras put significant resources into the development of curriculum support material. Use of support materials prior to the performances and familiarity with the program through listening to CD's and podcasts can make a tangible difference to the quality of experience at the performance. However, demands on teachers, along with their lack of musical knowledge and inconsistent symphony staff experience in writing curriculum can limit the value of the materials.

The highlights of the pieces were explained well relating to rhythm, melody, themes, background, etc. It helped the students in their listening. The CD was very appreciated. ~ Educator

62% of teachers used the provided educational Study Guide material.

Podcasts

Of those teachers, 17% used the online podcasts offered by certain symphonies. Those who did use podcasts found them to be "invaluable". Most podcasts were used in a classroom setting as a teaching aid. Teacher education, along with improvements to curriculum materials that ensure alignment with Ministry of Education guidelines, can only increase the value of programs.

I love your educational material! I think it is very relevant and offers many opportunities for expanding into other subject areas. Homeroom teachers always appreciate that, as it keeps students focused and gives teachers chances for collecting additional marks. ~ Educator



Student Engagement

Study participants commented that students are most engaged when they recognize the music being played, and when they are given an opportunity to directly interact with the orchestra. One participating orchestra invited students to bring their recorders to the performance and play along with certain pieces – another invited students to ask questions to the orchestra members directly.

I enjoyed the whole concert, and especially enjoyed the music that we recognized. ~ Student

When students are engaged and feel respected, they are more open to new experiences and learning.

The beginning warm up sounded like my Playstation 3 turning on. I was very impressed because I am a gamer and not many things take note of how important gamers are to this world. ~ Student



Rowdy Behaviour

Repeated comments also noted that rowdy students were a major detractor from the overall experience. Educators, performers and students commented that unruly behaviour from other groups detracted from their experience.

Teachers need to teach and really stress the importance of proper audience behaviour with their students. ~ Educator

Overview

Overall, both the student and adult respondents were very positive regarding their experience attending a symphony concert. Ongoing results show a solid consensus that the programs deliver high quality music education, support the curriculum and enhance the children's learning experience and abilities.



CASE STUDY:

Success with Multimedia and Remote Program Reach:
The Toronto Symphony Orchestra - How the Gimquat Found Her Song

In an effort to reach students in the classroom, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra created their first-ever multimedia resource guide. This guide presented Platypus Theatre's *How the Gimquat Found Her Song* and included a live action/animated DVD of the concert (which featured the TSO), a CD of the music heard in the performance, flashcards of the instruments of the orchestra and in-depth lesson plans for use in Kindergarten to Grade 5 classrooms that aligned with the 2009 Ontario Arts Curriculum. When the orchestra presented *How the Gimquat Found Her Song* as part of its student concert series in the winter of 2011, this in-demand resource found a home in many classrooms across the Greater Toronto Area that can be used repeatedly for years to come. Thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor, specific high-risk and area-based schools received a free copy of this guide.

How the Gimquat Found Her Song will also be presented as a Student Concert during the TSO's annual Northern Residency in the fall of 2011. As an investment in these northern communities, the TSO has been able to provide every elementary school in Northern Ontario with a free copy of this multimedia resource guide in advance of the concert. For those students unable to attend, or who live in more remote areas, the resource guide ensures that they are still able to experience a full orchestra concert in the classroom.



CASE STUDY:

Innovative Multi-media and Multi- Disciplinary Programming: *Tafelmusik's Galileo Project*

Can music from the 17th Century be relevant to young people today? It can if you are Toronto-based orchestra, Tafelmusik. In 2009, Tafelmusik launched *The Galileo Project: Music of the Spheres*. The program was created to coincide with the International Year of Astronomy, marking the 400th anniversary of the first use of a telescope by Galileo Galilei.

The program includes music from the time of Galileo by composers Monteverdi and Merula, together with astronomically-themed music by baroque composers such as Rameau, Handel, Zelenka, and Bach. The story is told through the eyes of Halley's Comet (Hal), and students are interactively engaged as they learn about the workings of our solar system and explore the exciting developments the comet discovers on its visits to earth, including the making of the first violins for popular music, the first oboes and bassoons playing for the Sun King, Louis XIV, and the sublime music of the era. Educational support materials provided by Tafelmusik include an overview of baroque instruments and music, as well as a history of Galileo, information on the solar system, and materials on the science of optics and design of telescopes. The orchestra also provides various student worksheets and curriculum specific evaluation tools, as well as a CD of the music in the performance.

Two versions of *The Galileo Project* were produced in order to be appropriate for both adult audiences and school groups.

The Galileo Project is currently traveling the globe, and Tafelmusik will be launching a new program, *The Quest for Arundo Donax* for home audiences in 2012. In recognition of their contribution, the International Astronomical Union named a new asteroid "Tafelmusik" in honor of the orchestra.



Photo Credit: John Loper for the TSO



TSO ~ photo credit: John Loper



Tafelmusik Education Programs



Tafelmusik The Galileo Project: Music of the Spheres ~ photo credit Glenn Davidson



CASE STUDY:

Reaching Beyond the Performance Hall:
Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra – Musical
Camps for Kids



Launched in 2010, the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra's *Musical Camp for Kids* brings music education out of the concert hall and into the community.

Working with shelters, marginalised neighbourhoods and social support agencies, CPO performers are traveling into their community as solo artists, duets and trios to engage and educate children and their families. Artists not only perform, they also bring with them a Tickle Trunk of various instruments, including traditional percussion instruments like Shakers, Cymbals and Triangles, as well as a variety of more unusual instruments that resonate with children from various ethnicities and cultures.

The program varies according to the interests and age group of the audience. Some performances include CPO's popular *Petting Zoo* program, or CPO's *Compose Your Own Music*, and most feature a Canadian repertoire. Specific interactive elements include instrument demonstrations, the opportunity to try mini instruments and practice rhythm with percussion instruments, as well as dancing and singing.

Through *Musical Camps for Kids*, the CPO is working to enhance their community at large, and reach out of the concert hall to give every child the opportunity to learn, listen and appreciate expressive orchestral repertoire in an educational setting that makes classical music fun and approachable.



CASE STUDY:

Educating all Ages Though Interactive Programs:
Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra - *Back to School*



Larger orchestras in Canada, such as the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, have the capacity to provide multiple educational programs. This creates a continuum of opportunities for all ages. The *Nursery Notes* program features a traveling music ensemble joined by puppet Symphony Sam. Through Sam and the musicians, the children are introduced to music basics and orchestral instruments. The *Back to School* program provides similar ensemble presentations in schools by WSO musicians featuring music from the Renaissance period to current movie themes for K-8 children.

By introducing students to orchestral instruments, symphony musicians, and a variety of music in their own schools, they are better prepared to attend the *Adventures in Music* educational concert series with the whole orchestra. Every year 19,000 students attend specially developed student concerts at the Centennial Concert Hall. In addition, up to 1,500 students experience the thrill of making music with the WSO on stage through singing, recorder groups and movement performances.

For those young people who have now caught the symphony bug, the WSO continues to offer programs through to the university level including discounted ticket prices through the *Soundcheck* program.



CPO Musical Camps for Kids
~ photo credit Ellen Bruce



CPO Musical Camps for Kids
~ photo credit Ellen Bruce



WSO ~ photo credit Chronic Creative



WSO Adventures in Music with student performers ~ photo credit Chronic Creative



WHAT THE PERFORMERS SAY

My students really appreciated the presentation on instruments and they were surprised by the sounds that came out of the openings of each instrument. The piccolo impressed several others and the boys preferred the tuba! Some students were fascinated by the theatre set. All in all, both my classes appreciated their outing to the concert. Thank you. ~ Educator

What do performers think about educational programming? In 2011, 48 performers from four symphonies participated in the performer survey. Here are some highlights:

56 % of performers said that their choice to become a musician was influenced by attending a student performance when they were young.

95 % believed that educational programming was a good way for children to learn.

Participating performers also identified several ways in which educational programs could be improved. Most involve the need for increased resources for education, a common theme amongst Canadian orchestras.

Many of these children, especially the inner-city, low-income kids, have had little or no exposure to live music, and it is truly special that we are able to enrich their lives in this manner. ~ Performer

Some specific suggestions from performers include:

- Increasing the variety of music selected for student performances, specifically to include a greater repertoire of music which would be familiar to young people. This request was mirrored by both the teachers and the students who attended the concerts.
- Expanding opportunities for more students to experience the symphony.
- Building deeper bonds with students and schools through follow-up visits, where performers visit schools and mentor youth.

The feedback we received from teachers and students is always highly positive. But certainly the most frequent one comes from parents who say, "I didn't think I would like this, but I loved it. Thank you." ~ Performer

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Photo Credit: Losevsky Pavel / Shutterstock.com

Opportunities for Enrichment

Study participants made several recommendations for ways that education programs could be enhanced. Some common themes include the following:

Development of Participatory Educational Experiences – Repeatedly, study participants – educators, students and performers – emphasized the positive impact of participatory symphony experiences. Examples include engaging students by answering direct questions to the orchestra members, providing hands-on experiences by introducing students to specific musical instruments, and allowing them to physically participate in the concert.

“The instrument demonstrations are the most valuable, because many children don’t even know the names of the instruments or what they look like. When they hear them played, they are able to make that connection”

~ Performer

Communication with Educators – The more orchestras and educators work together as partners, the better the results. Strong, long-term relationships with teachers and school and board administrators are essential for effective programming. Some orchestras have been successful in ensuring a match with curriculum requirements, as they time concerts to fit with school schedules and music modules, and negotiate long-term bulk ticket sales with boards of education.

Collaboration Between Symphonies – Opportunities exist for cooperation in the delivery of classical music programs. Collaboration between symphonies allows for the sharing of resources and best practices. Sharing material for Teachers Study Guides and podcasts, for example, would be beneficial on both a financial and human resource level. This matter will be further developed and explored in upcoming studies.

Collaboration With Educational Partners – This is achieved in many ways including the development of complementary programming, shared marketing and package offers. As shown by the *Tafelmusik Galileo Project*, working with unlikely partners can lead to extraordinary creative and commercial success.

Addressing Poor Behavior – Rowdy, disruptive audience members detract from the overall concert experience. This consistent feedback allows symphonies the opportunity to develop proactive best practices in working with schools to emphasise concert etiquette and develop appropriate responses to consistently poor behavior.

Conductor Training – Conductors who are passionate about student concerts are critical to the success of educational programming. Unfortunately, there are few opportunities for young conductors to improve their techniques in working with young audiences. Professional development opportunities would enhance the quality of educational programming for all students.

Financial Resources – The single greatest barrier to students attending education concerts is financial. The case for educational programming needs to be integrated and well-articulated within orchestras and among external stakeholders in order to ensure continued high quality programming and access for students from low income households.

NEXT STEPS

Do you represent an orchestra or other arts education stakeholder that would like to participate in ongoing research with your colleagues? This study provides a framework for ongoing collaborative program evaluation. Participation by symphony education programs will lead to more robust results that show long-term trends and provide orchestras with best practices, professional development and benchmarking opportunities.

Please contact Rebecca Thomas at rthomas@measuredoutcome.org, 416 487-9114, if your organization would like to become involved in this research.



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