

## News

# How we kill creativity in New Zealand schools

Our education system effectively stifles children's natural curiosity about the world, according to a new report from the University of Auckland.

The Centre for Arts and Social Transformation at the University of Auckland's Faculty of Education and Social Work has released its first report on the state of creativity in New Zealand schools, *Replanting Creativity: During Post-Normal Times*.

Based on four years of work, the quantitative study measures eleven dimensions of what makes a creative environment in primary and secondary schools. Across all school levels, children have declining opportunities to play with ideas, the report concludes.

As children progress through school there are fewer chances for collaboration, for working outside or across discipline boundaries, and for taking risks and problem solving. The end result is that schooling fails to create the kind of citizens we so urgently need to succeed in the post-normal world we live in, the report says.

Professor Peter O'Connor, who led the research, believes the results confirm the suspicion that decades of neglect of the arts in New Zealand schools has stripped life and colour from our schools.

'The arts and creativity have disappeared from schools as part of deliberate government policies for decades and this has serious implications for the future of work, democratic citizenship and for student well-being.'

He sees this as a systemic failing brought about by decades of focus on literacy and numeracy at the expense of everything else schools could and should do.

The full report can now be accessed at:

<https://www.teritotoi.org/replanting-creativity-during-post-normal-times/>

