



The Creative Skills Podcast  
Bonus Episode: Exploring **MixedUp** at Home

## Transcript

### Quick Links:

- Creative Skills Online: [www.starcatchers.org.uk/creative-skills-online](http://www.starcatchers.org.uk/creative-skills-online)
- More about Mixed Up: <https://starcatchers.org.uk/work/mixed-up>
- Mixed Up, 5-6th June 2021: <https://www.imagnate.org.uk/festival>

All our resources are free to access, and feedback is vital for us to keep doing what we do.

If you have any thoughts, please do fill in our short survey here:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CreativeSkillsOnline>

You can enter each month to be entered into a prize draw where you could win £50 worth of materials for your setting

---

Get in touch:

Catherine Wilson, Early Years Coordinator  
Email: [catherine.wilson@starcatchers.org.uk](mailto:catherine.wilson@starcatchers.org.uk)

## **Heather Armstrong (00:05)**

Welcome to this special bonus episode of Starcatchers Creative Skills Online. I'm Heather Armstrong.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> June, Starcatchers' show "Mixed Up" will be available to view online as part of the Imagine Children's Festival. "Mixed Up" is an interactive experience for 3–8-year-olds exploring a mix of emotions and feelings through painting, music, and dance.

In this bonus podcast, we'll cover how you can create the "Mixed Up" experience at home with your wee ones.

If you're listening to this podcast after the 6<sup>th</sup> June, head to Starcatchers website and sign up for our newsletter to find out when the "Mixed Up" film will be available next.

"Mixed Up" by Katy Wilson, was originally commissioned by Imagine and Starcatchers to be a live performance that took place in playgrounds, followed by an interactive workshop so wee ones could get the most out of the experience. Due to ever changing COVID restrictions, Katy and the creative team decided to take an innovative approach: create a beautiful, energetic and inspiring film, and support teachers, parents and carers so you can create the "Mixed Up" experience wherever you are.

When I watched the "Mixed Up" film I was *so* excited, because straight away I could see loads of opportunities for wee ones to be inspired to move, to express themselves, and to start to explore their emotions.

And please remember, first and foremost it's about having fun with your wee ones – if any of the ideas are stressful for you or for your children, skip it or try again another day. The "Mixed Up" film might be online for a limited time but loads of the ideas can be explored time and time again.

Before you watch the film together, have a rummage around and see if you can find some chalk, some scarves or ribbons or streamers, and if you happen to have a confetti cannon, then that would be absolutely amazing! For extra dramatic tension, hide them all in a box and tell your wee ones there is a surprise inside.

When you watch the film, get it up on a TV or a big screen if you can. Shut the curtains, make sure the volume is at a good level because the visuals and music are so important – we really want to make this feel like a special event. Some children might want to make tickets or pretend to be staff in a cinema or theatre – anything that builds the excitement.

The reason this theatricality is so important is because it gets wee one's imaginations working, and it heightens their enjoyment – once you get that excitement going, any

activities or learning you add to the experience become so much more meaningful and so much more engaging.

The film itself is about 16 minutes long – you will watch the dancers explore a range of emotions, and towards the end you'll see the male dancer look into the camera and smile when he notices you all watching. As he beckons everyone and the pink graphics appear, this is your moment to get up and start dancing – and if you have a confetti cannon this is the time to set it off!

Maybe your wee ones will want to try some of the dance moves they've seen or explore body percussion or the beatboxing – this is a time to be free and explore whatever grabs you. As the adult in the room, you'll be their number one role model, so get stuck in – as I say so often, you don't need to be Beyoncé, just give it a go.

Remember those chinks and streamers or scarves I asked you to look out? Take them outside and extend the fun! When we did a trial run, all Katy had to say was "Let's have a dance with the chalk!" and that invitation, coming straight after seeing the film, was more than enough to get everyone moving and chalking.

The nice thing about chalk is that you can use whole body movements and create some BIG visual art as you dance.

Scarves, ribbons and streamers can be a really great way of inspiring everyone to move in loads of different ways, and if you're a wee bit self-conscious then you end up focussing on the way the streamer moves instead of worrying about how you look.

And if you do find that you need a few ideas up your sleeve to get started, don't worry! We've written Wee Inspirations ideas cards especially for "Mixed Up". The Wee Inspirations are like scaffolding – ideas to support and extend the fun.

There are loads of ideas and variations, but you don't need to do them all in one day! See what your wee ones are interested in and take it from there. You can always revisit some of the ideas another time.

Because I'm a big child development geek, I also get really excited about all the benefits of the different activities, but I cannot stress enough, the fun has to come first – what I'm about to talk about is just all the awesome stuff that's happening in the background.

A good sense of rhythm supports both literacy and numeracy, so things like body percussion and dance are great, fun ways to develop that innate sense of rhythm. And you'll notice in the "Mixed Up" Body Percussion card, we talk about giving it a go and using phrases like "I love how hard you're working" that support growth mindset. It's

less about getting things “right”, and more about encouraging giving it a go, and learning from mistakes.

The beatboxing in the film uses plosives – all those P, T, K kind of sounds – essentially Bigg Taj has given us a really cool way to explore and support speech development! How awesome is that?

But I think the biggest impact for me is the way “Mixed Up” deals with different emotions.

When it comes to dealing with strong emotions, you may be familiar with the phrase “you need to name it to tame it” – once you recognise or name how you’re feeling, you can find ways to express it appropriately, and those feelings can be processed over time.

Two things can really help children with that process:

One is the opportunity to learn about and explore the concept of different emotions. This works best at a time when they’re calm and enjoying themselves, rather than turning it into a big serious lesson. Sometimes the best conversations and the deepest connections happen when we take the pressure off – chatting about how the dancers might have been feeling at different points can be a gentle way to start exploring emotional literacy.

The second thing that can help is giving children lots of different ways to express themselves non-verbally as well as verbally. If you think about feelings, the clues in the name, you feel them in your body, physically – so it makes sense that physical expression, whether its dancing, or mark making or physically making noise – can help process those feelings and change the way you feel for the better.

We hope you enjoy exploring the “Mixed Up” experience with your wee ones – and let us know how you get on! Starcatchers is on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#), and we always love to hear from you.

**Catherine Wilson (06:25)**

Thank you so much for listening.

The Creative Skills podcast was hosted by Heather Armstrong. To find out more about “Mixed Up” or our Wee Inspirations look at [www.imaginate.org.uk](http://www.imaginate.org.uk) or [www.starcatchers.org.uk](http://www.starcatchers.org.uk)

Our intro music is “Watermelon” from “Mixed Up” with beat-boxing by Bigg Taj, sound recording by Alfie Vale and music by Barney Strachan.

The Creative Skills Podcast is part of Starcatcher's Creative Skills programme: training for the ELC workforce in Scotland funded by the Scottish Government. To find out more head to [www.starcatchers.org.uk](http://www.starcatchers.org.uk) and click on "Training and Development".