



THE SHAPE OF THINGS 2016 TOUR REPORT

THE SHAPE OF THINGS 2016

The Shape of Things was created by Scottish designer and theatre maker Ailie Cohen and Marc Mac Lochlainn, from Galway based Branar Theatre in September 2016 following development phases in 2014/15.

The Shape of Things is a beautiful, tactile and bilingual performance for very young children aged between 6 months - 2 years and their parents, exploring shapes, textures and environments, accompanied by beautiful music, created by Galway based musician Miquel Barcelo.

Set in a soft and tactile environment, Starcatchers and Branar tell this interactive story through puppetry, object theatre, music and sound.

TOUR

In Autumn 2016, The Shape of Things embarked on a tour of Scotland and Ireland, visiting the following communities and venues:

SCOTLAND

Platform
Paisley Arts Centre
Festival Theatre
Beacon Arts Centre
Hamilton Town House
Eastgate Arts Centre
Macrobert Arts Centre
Cumnock Town Hall
St Cuthbert's
Thornhill Community Centre
Gracefield Arts Centre
The Brunton
Falkirk Town Hall
Universal Hall, Findhorn
Dundee Rep

Glasgow
Renfrewshire
Edinburgh
Greenock
South Lanarkshire
Scottish Borders
Stirling
East Ayrshire
Dumfries & Galloway
Dumfries & Galloway
Dumfries & Galloway
Musseburgh
Falkirk
Moray
Dundee



IRELAND

Babaró International Children's Festival
Mermaid Arts Centre
Roscommon Arts Centre
Linenhall Arts Centre
Coolock Library
Riverbank Arts Centre
The Lab

Galway
Bray
Roscommon
Castlebar
Dublin
Newbridge
Dublin



THE TOUR IN NUMBERS

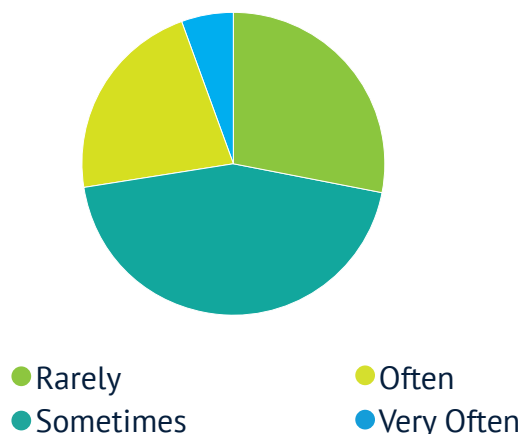


FEEDBACK OVERVIEW

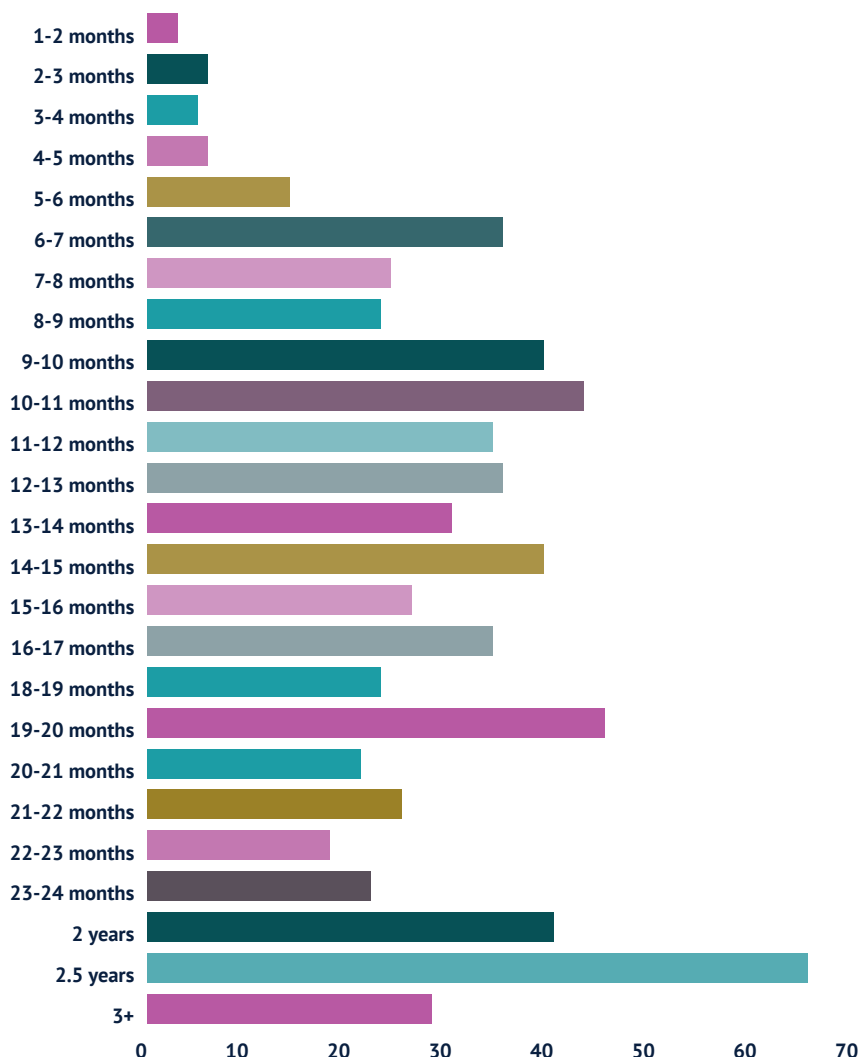
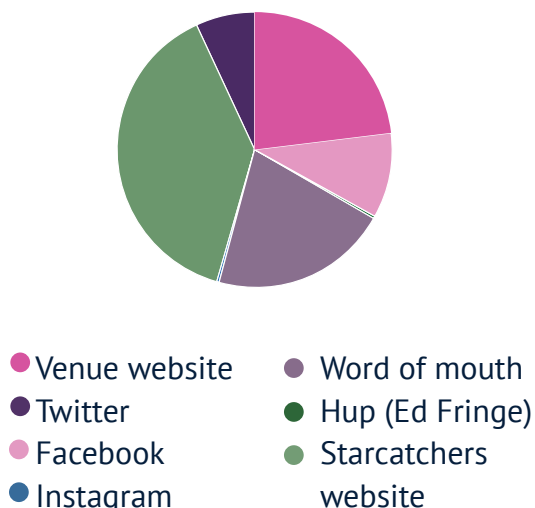
We asked audiences to complete a short survey about their experiences directly after the performances. **555** people completed the survey.

How regularly do you attend arts of cultural experiences with your baby?

How old is the child you've brought with you today?



How did you find out about the Shape of Things?



PRESS



EDINBURGH GUIDE

12.10.16

Now in its 10th year, Scottish based company Starcatchers specialises in creative performances for babies, toddlers and young children and their carers. For this latest show, they have teamed up with Irish children's theatre company Branar Téatar to create a mix of puppetry and music that encourages curiosity and exploration in *The Shape of Things*.

The two performers Saras Feijoo and Helen Gregg are dressed in elfin outfits in the same muted colours of green and violet of the soft tented set where squidgy cuboid shapes are strung from the its centre and inside which the audience of wee people and their parents and carers sit. The gorgeous gentle music from Miquel Barcelo starts off the equally gentle action that is perfectly pitched to the aimed at age group, although it seemed that the babies around 1year old were particularly responsive.

For the 30 minutes of the show's duration, soft square and triangular shapes, that latterly become the puppet forms of Cubert the cube and Triantán the triangle, each live and belong in their own space. Then comes the new kid on the block – a circle! Where does it go? With sensitive invention, and repetition so loved by small children, Gregg and Feijoo gently interact with their audience, creating magic.

It is a great gift to be able to adapt concepts so that they are understood by very small children while entertaining them. The premise of this trilingual piece is about belonging, inclusion and the value of being part of things, a message that the adults can pick up on but what matters most is what the wee ones relate to. The tinies in the audience in the Lafayette Bar of the Festival Theatre were totally enthralled by this beautifully tailored, tactile delight of a show. A pleasure to see!

[LINK](#)



BROADWAY BABY

17.10.16

Children are often said to be the most “difficult”—or, to put it another way, most honest—theatre audience performers are ever likely to face: they're not “adult” enough to hide their boredom or loss of interest. Equally, though, they can be the most involved, if the show holds their attention. This is something Scottish company Starcatchers know very well, having spent most of the last decade creating performances specifically aimed at (arguably) the most challenging children's audience imaginable—babies and toddlers.

The Shape of Things, created by Starcatchers' Ailie Cohen with Marc Mac Lochlainn of Irish children's theatre company Branar Téatar, uses a mix of puppetry, music and staging to successfully hold the attention of an audience of children aged between six and 24 months (although those who seemed to enjoy the show most appeared to be around 12 months old). The audience is sat underneath a tree-like giant umbrella (which is actually made out of a parachute) from which hang strings of soft cubes and triangles. Our hosts—Saras Feijoo and Helen Gregg—are dressed

like elves, the colours of their outfits matching those of their surroundings. Miguel Barcelo's gentle music immediately creates a relaxing, curious atmosphere, in which the constantly smiling Feijoo and Gregg instantly form a connection with their young audience.

The "story", as such, is uncomplicated and gently repeated; squares and triangles are discovered, admired and then moved to one of three "homes" around the tent—the third becoming useful once an unexpected circle appears on the scene. However, any suggestion that this show is just about definition and difference is soon undermined by the genuinely attention-grabbing appearance of two puppets, Cubert the cube and Triantán the triangle who, while clearly different, end up playing and having a great time together.

As performers, Feijoo and Gregg are relaxed and, while towering over their audience, remain friendly and welcoming, expertly ensuring that the necessary repetitions are unforced and grounded in the world of the show. And, of course, they are then the perfect hosts during the 10 minutes of interactive soft play that follows the half-hour performance, which enables many of the toddlers to finally touch, hold and explore the shapes they'd been keenly reaching out to for most of the duration!

Undoubtedly a warm, well-balanced production with genuine appeal for its intended audience.
[LINK](#)



REVIEWS HUB
22.10.16

Branar Children's Theatre, in partnership with Scottish-based Starcatchers, provide a beguiling experience for both early years audiences and their parents as part of this year's Baboró children's theatre festival. Greeted by our two performers, Saras Feijóo and Helen Gregg, in the foyer, the audience is led into a circular yurt-style environment set up in the auditorium of the Mick Lally Theatre and sit on soft mats while Feijóo and Gregg introduces us to "hairy squishy" square objects and blue shiny triangles until a very surprising discovery of a stray velvety circle lead to a magical cave area where all kinds of unpredictable transformations take place.

This piece keeps the attention of a notoriously fickle audience throughout by building itself slowly through the introduction of all its different elements and then using them to earn satisfying yet subtly executed coups de théâtre. Feijóo and Gregg strike a balance between engaging with all the rapt upturned faces in this comfortable, but quasi-mountainous environment and playing together in the mode of the classic Laurel and Hardy-esque comedy duo – good-natured Gregg is constantly the butt of mischievous Feijóo's jokes. Miguel Barceló's charmingly quirky soundtrack creates an atmosphere of play, then drum rolls us to moments of dramatic impact, when new shapes are discovered or combined and transformed into moments of understated clowning and puppetry, from which two new and rather adorable "performers" emerge.

The need to develop younger audiences for theatre has been recognised and is currently promoted by the Irish Arts Council. With this show, Cohen and Mac Lochlainn go far beyond the remit of teaching children about shapes to creating a very high-quality early experience of theatre-going for these young Galway citizens, setting the bar high for future theatre visits.

[LINK](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA RESPONSES



Anne-Marie
► **Starcatchers**

11 October at 14:21 · 🌐

Just in from Seeing The Shape of Things and what can I say!!! Totally amazing!!! I brought my 18 month old Daughter Thea and she avsolutely loved it. The show held her completel attention the entire time. There's a perfect pace to the story too with things changing exactly at the right time. I brought Thea to see Hup last year when she was 12 weeks old and couldn't wait to bring her to see this. We were not disappointed at all!! Your shows have been exactly age appropriate for her and seem to be growing with her so i can only hope there is another one next year 😊


Starcatchers

1 Comment




Love


Comment


Share


Hootlet


Message

Starcatchers was mentioned in a post.



Roscommon Arts Centre shared Nurture's Best Creche's photo.

28 October at 12:19 · 🌐

Thank you **Branar**, **Starcatchers** and **Nurture's Best Creche** for a wonderful morning with **#shapeofthings**. What a fantastic way to start a bank holiday weekend!





⚙️
Follow

Norah having fun at The Shape of Things by **@StarcatchersUK**



RETWEET

1

LIKES

3



3:54 AM - 13 Oct 2016

↩️ 1
🔄 1
❤️ 3
⋮





Follow

17 likes

14w

gillie_wall **#starcatchers**
#theshapeofthings
fionamac1204 Beautiful girl!
katyraew Sweetie
lalabelles1988 This looks cool Gill! 🍷 🍷

❤️
Add a comment...



What magical fun with **@igniteMYAH** **@StarcatchersUK** **@universahall** - great to be part of the creative & learning experience for our young ones



🔄 1
❤️ 4
⋮



Following

Great fun with the lovely folks and the brilliant bambinos @StarcatchersUK The Shape Of Things #theatre #kidstheatre #Scotland



RETWEETS 2 LIKES 3

6:40 AM - 12 Oct 2016



Moray Youth Arts Hub
@IgniteMYAH

Follow

Youth Arts Ambassador @OfficialReade attends @StarcatchersUK 'The Shape of Things' to learn about theatre for little ones #igniteMYAH



RETWEETS 5 LIKES 5

8:54 AM - 27 Nov 2016



Following

We loved @StarcatchersUK The Shape of Things - interactive creativity toddler style - Cubert was our favourite



RETWEETS 3 LIKES 4

8:24 AM - 15 Oct 2016



Following

Lovely family day out in Findhorn. Delicious lunch at #thebakehouse and we all loved @StarcatchersUK @universalhall



RETWEETS 4 LIKES 4

9:00 AM - 26 Nov 2016

IMAGES





TRAILER

FEEDBACK | SCOTTISH VENUE BREAKDOWNS PLATFORM | GLASGOW

25 people answered our survey

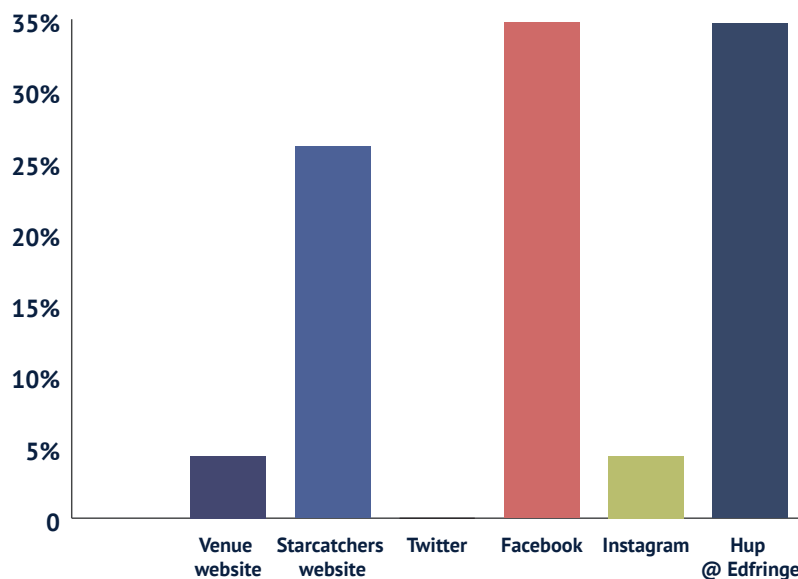
POSTCODE BREAKDOWN



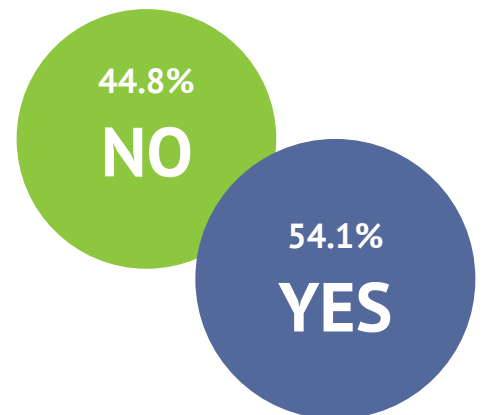
HOW REGULARLY DO YOU ATTEND ARTS OR CULTURAL EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR BABY?



HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE SHAPE OF THINGS?



HAVE YOU VISITED THIS VENUE BEFORE?



DID YOUR CHILD ENJOY THE PERFORMANCE?

"Couldn't believe how quiet and attentive she was today!"

"Lyra usually gets distracted quickly but she was entranced throughout!"

"Surprised she maintained her focus. Performers involved all the babies and children. Age appropriate, fun and educational."

"She loved it. This is our third Starcatchers performance, She always enjoys them and is very engaged."

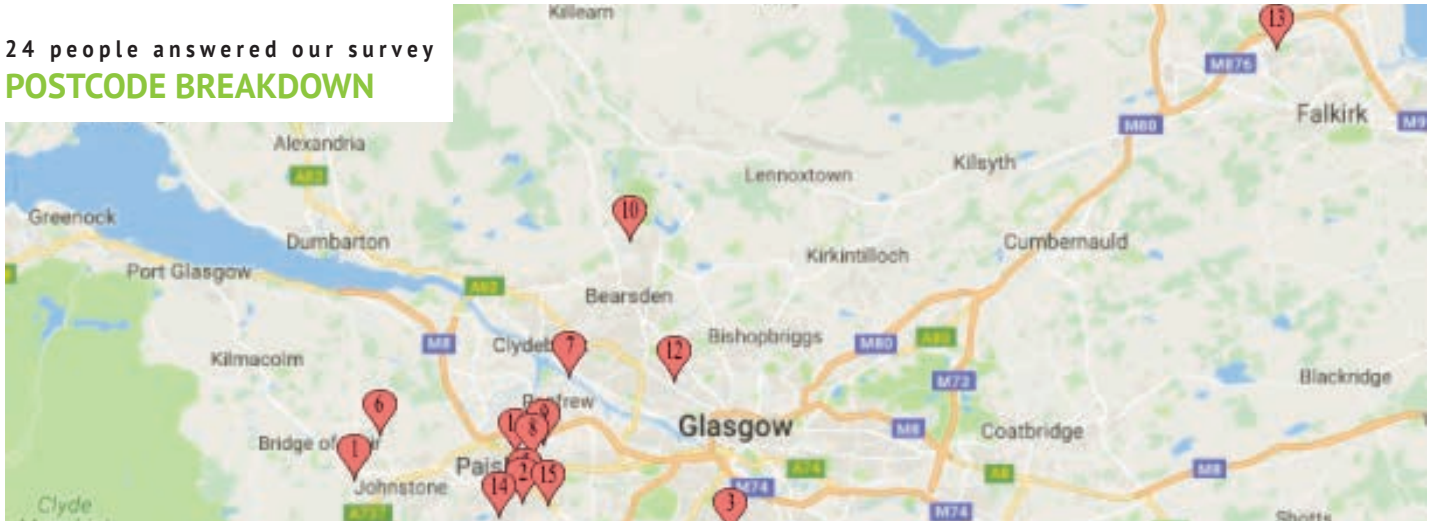
WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST?

"The use of simple sounds, shape and language in a very beautiful and magical way. Educating children through their imaginations."

"Quality! Simple story with great props. Interactive. Funny!"

PAISLEY ARTS CENTRE | RENFREWSHIRE

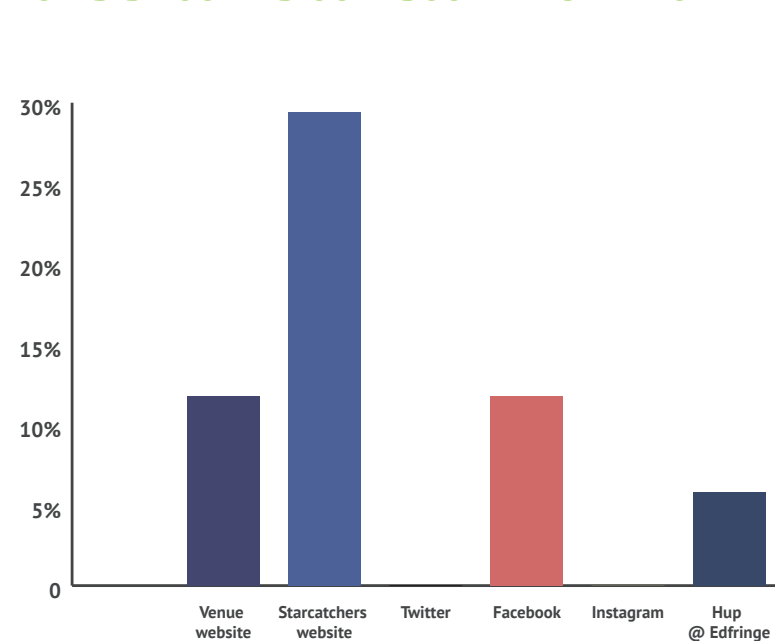
24 people answered our survey
POSTCODE BREAKDOWN



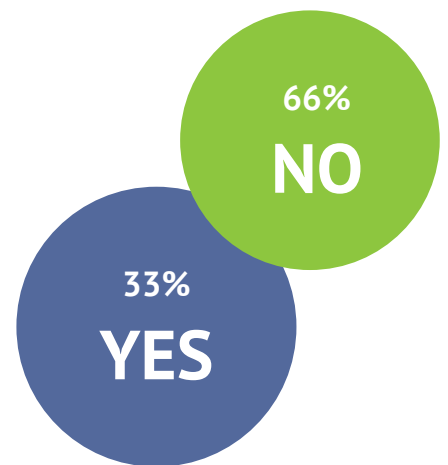
HOW REGULARLY DO YOU ATTEND ARTS OR CULTURAL EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR BABY?



HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE SHAPE OF THINGS?



HAVE YOU VISITED THIS VENUE BEFORE?



DID YOUR CHILD ENJOY THE PERFORMANCE?

“Engaged, wonderment, excitement. Held his attention well.”

“Both were engaged with performance. Older child laughing, younger child looked serious though took it all in”

“Loved it. Couldn’t keep her still. She wanted to explore everything”

WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST?

“Visually lovely, good performance, very inviting and comfy environment”

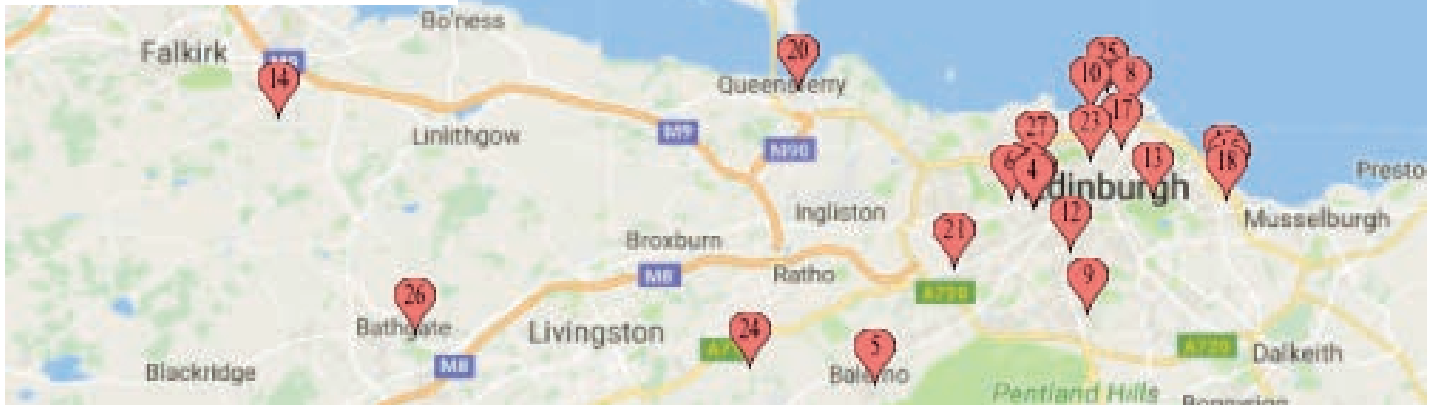
“Really liked the sitting round performance area and the music”

“The fact that he loved it. Level of language appropriate for babies.”

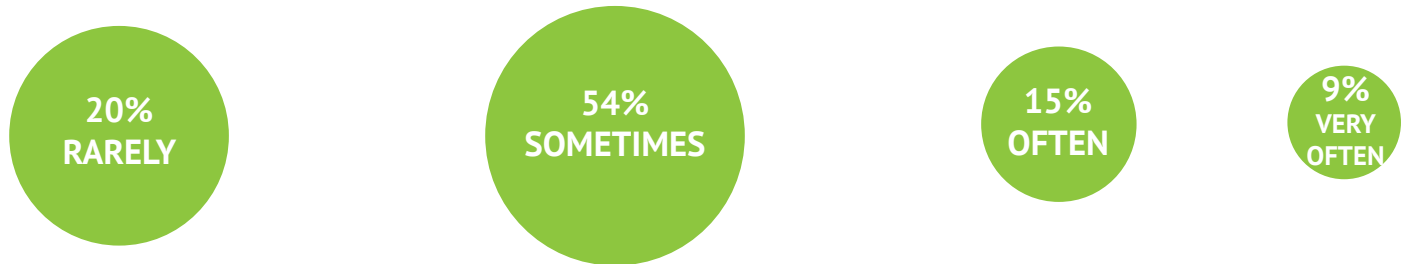
“Very original, different and interesting”

FESTIVAL THEATRE | EDINBURGH

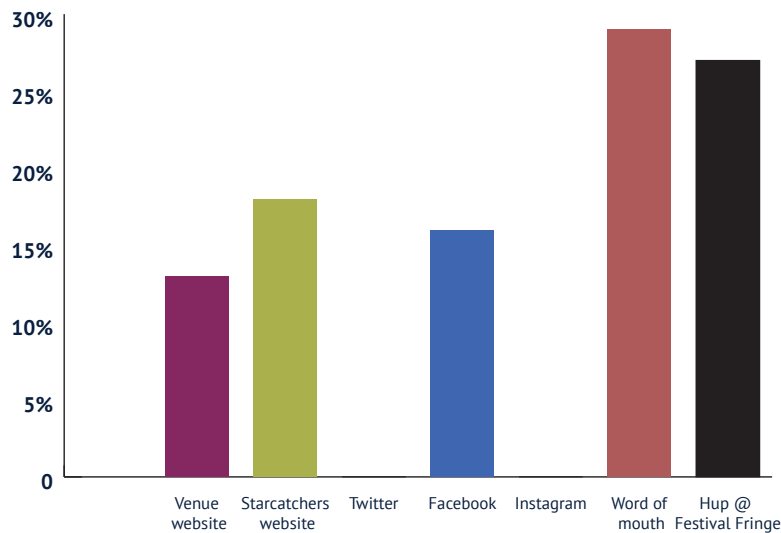
44 people answered our survey
POSTCODE BREAKDOWN



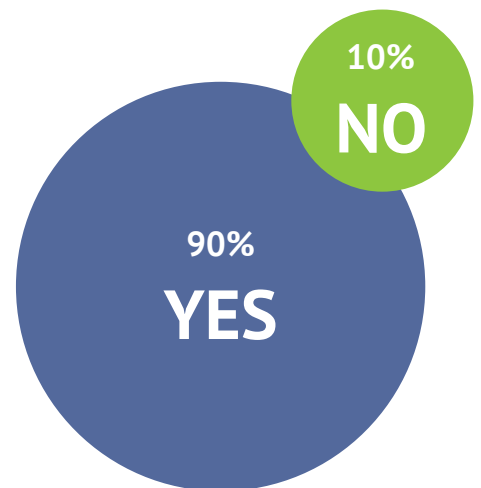
HOW REGULARLY DO YOU ATTEND ARTS OR CULTURAL EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR BABY?



HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE SHAPE OF THINGS?



HAVE YOU VISITED THIS VENUE BEFORE?



DID YOUR CHILD ENJOY THE PERFORMANCE?

“Yes she enjoyed it, was very interested in the shapes changing and found the performers funny”
“Really really enjoyed it. Captivated.”
“Kept his attention well. Thanks. Baby and mum enjoyed it very much”

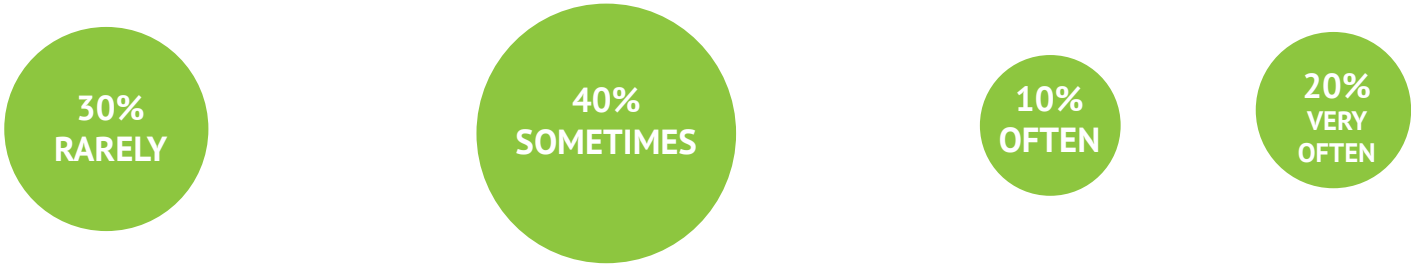
WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST?

“The performers, set and theme were really engaging, sensitive and beautiful. Loved filling in a circle and handmade aspect.”
“I loved seeing all the babies/toddlers enjoying themselves”

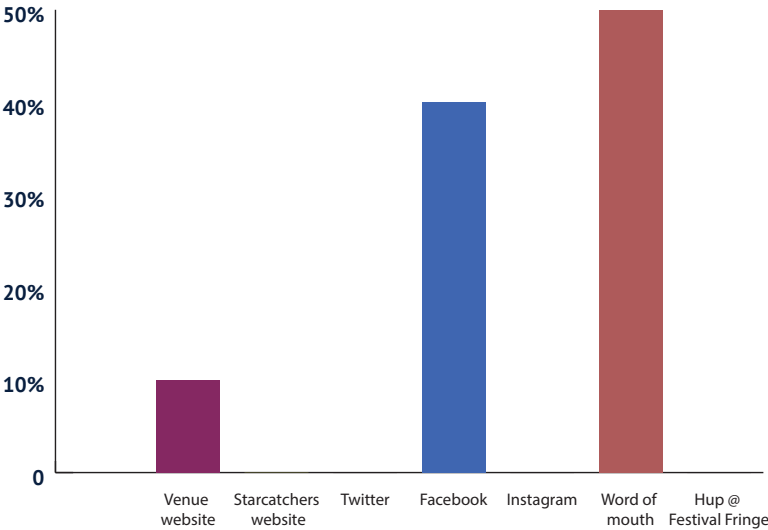
BEACON ARTS CENTRE | INVERCLYDE



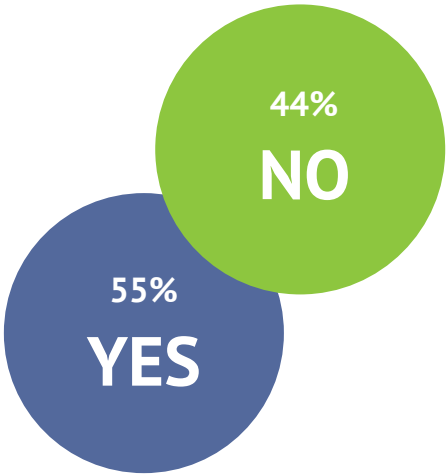
HOW REGULARLY DO YOU ATTEND ARTS OR CULTURAL EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR BABY?



HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE SHAPE OF THINGS?



HAVE YOU VISITED THIS VENUE BEFORE?



DID YOUR CHILD ENJOY THE PERFORMANCE?

“Enjoyed very much. Unusually shy but interacted well with performers.”
“Very engaged, mesmerised, focused excited, happy.”

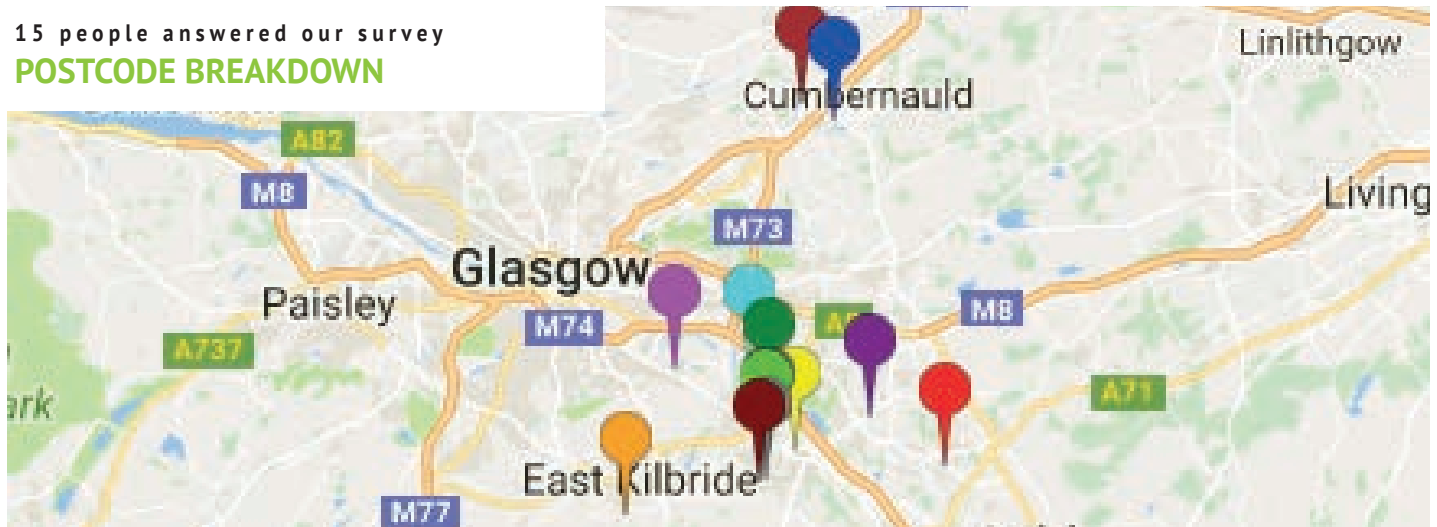
WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST?

“I” found it very relaxing. I could sit back while the baby enjoyed the show.”
“It was excellent, the performers were perfect. Length and content were great”
“Very funny, loved the banter and all the lights and decorations.”

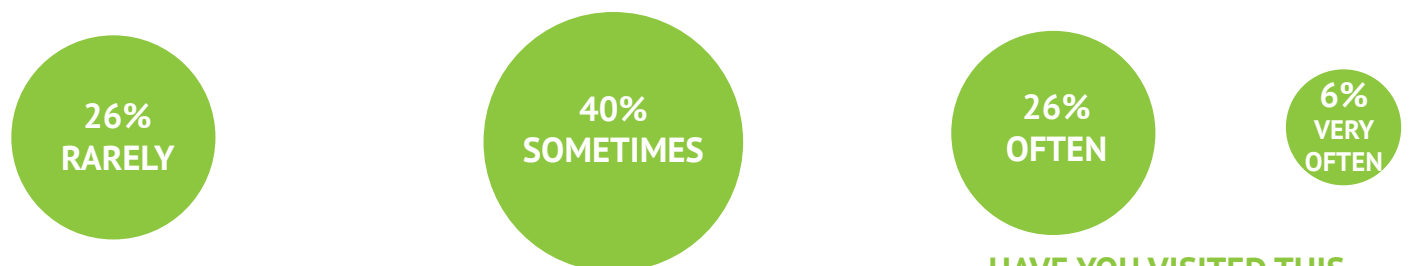
HAMILTON TOWN HOUSE | SOUTH LANARKSHIRE

15 people answered our survey

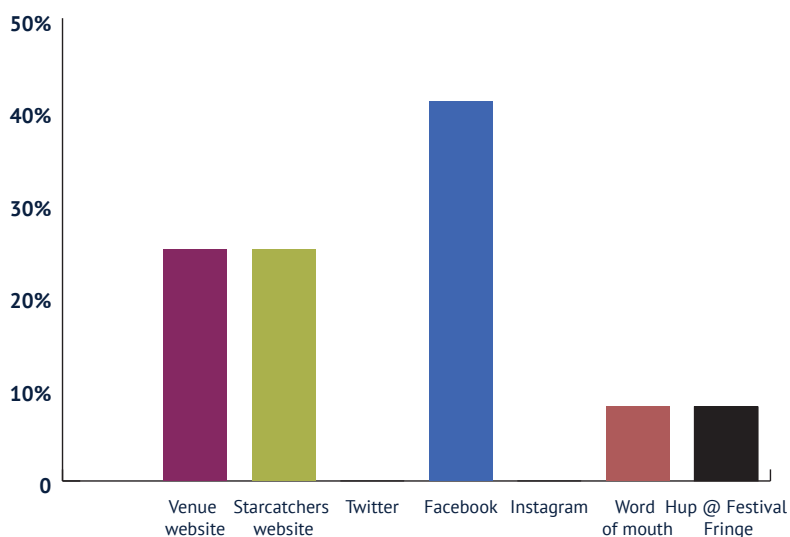
POSTCODE BREAKDOWN



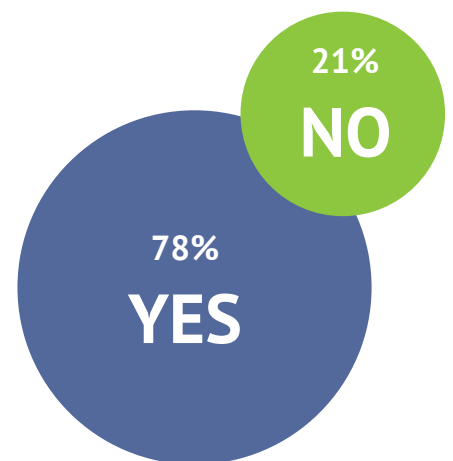
HOW REGULARLY DO YOU ATTEND ARTS OR CULTURAL EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR BABY?



HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE SHAPE OF THINGS?



HAVE YOU VISITED THIS VENUE BEFORE?



DID YOUR CHILD ENJOY THE PERFORMANCE?

“Very well received, kids enjoyed it and sat well”

“Fascinated by shapes and movement”

WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST?

“Perfectly aimed at babies and toddlers, kept their attention

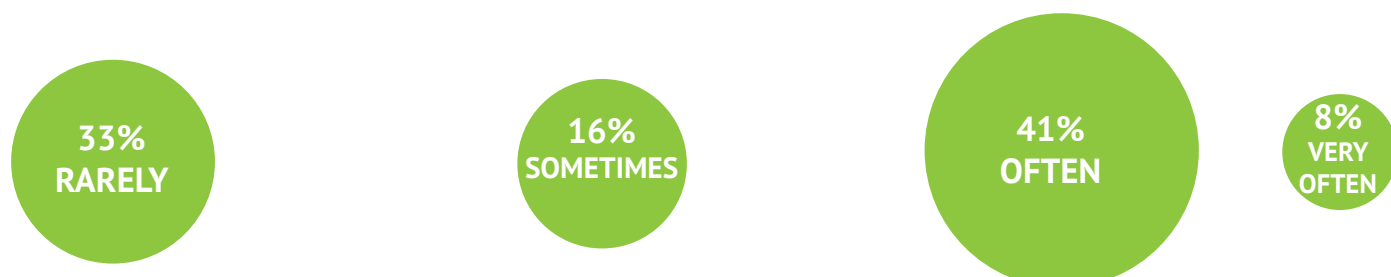
“Yes nice music. Enjoyed learning some words in gaelic”

“yes! Just as good as Hup that we came to see last year”

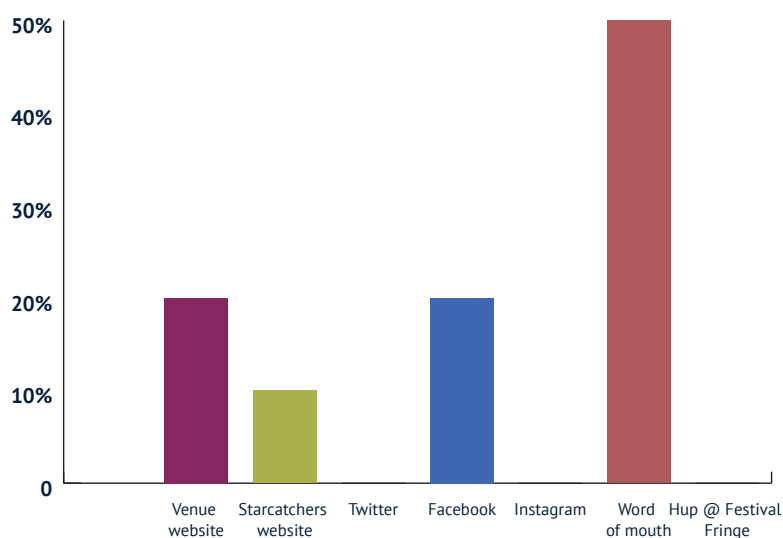
EASTGATE ARTS CENTRE | SCOTTISH BORDERS



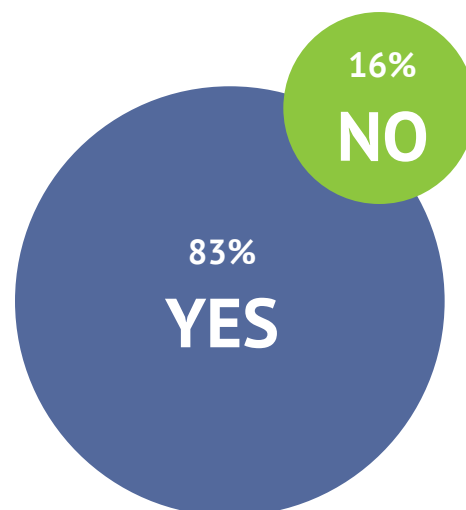
HOW REGULARLY DO YOU ATTEND ARTS OR CULTURAL EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR BABY?



HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE SHAPE OF THINGS?



HAVE YOU VISITED THIS VENUE BEFORE?



DID YOUR CHILD ENJOY THE PERFORMANCE?

“they were very engaged and found it very funny”

“he was reaching for, smiling and squeaking at the shapes”

“He loved it! Completely absorbed throughout”

WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST?

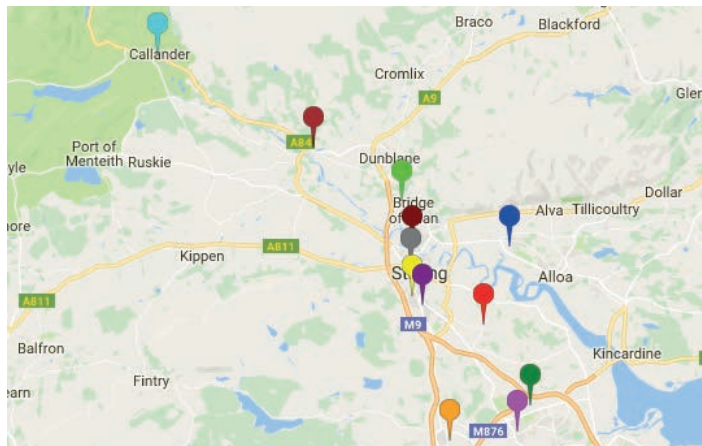
“clever use of simple prop. Good length. Good music and not too loud for little children.”

“the performers were great with kids!”

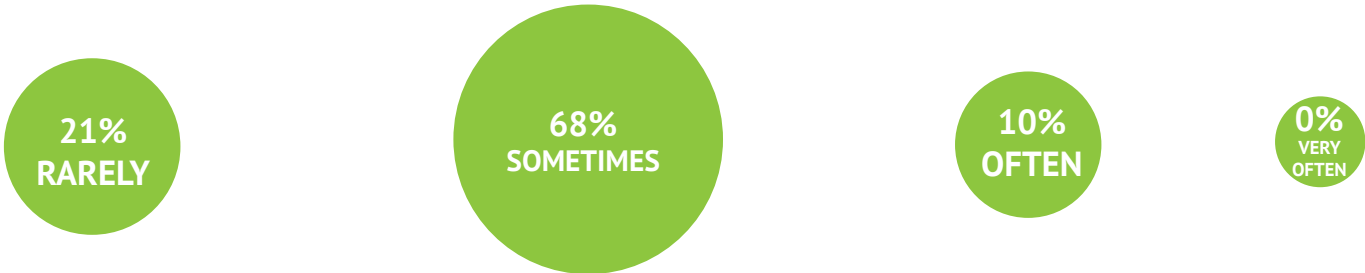
MACROBERT ARTS CENTRE | STIRLING

19 people answered our survey

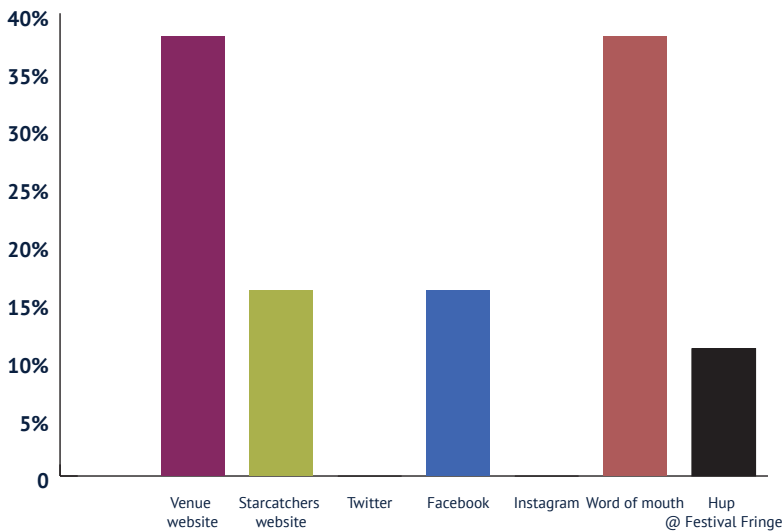
POSTCODE BREAKDOWN



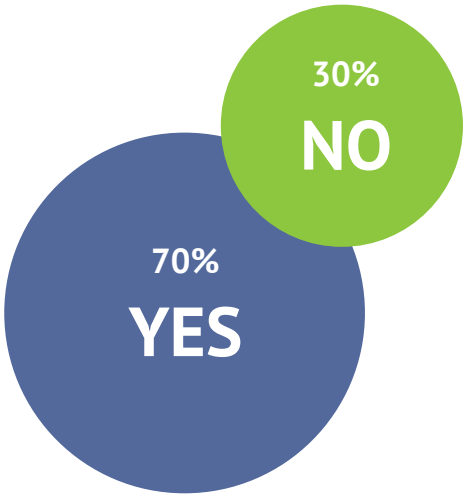
HOW REGULARLY DO YOU ATTEND ARTS OR CULTURAL EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR BABY?



HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE SHAPE OF THINGS?



HAVE YOU VISITED THIS VENUE BEFORE?



DID YOUR CHILD ENJOY THE PERFORMANCE?

“Asked to come back again tomorrow”
“we think so, she seemed engaged and curious”
“wary at first but soon appeared to be having a good time!”

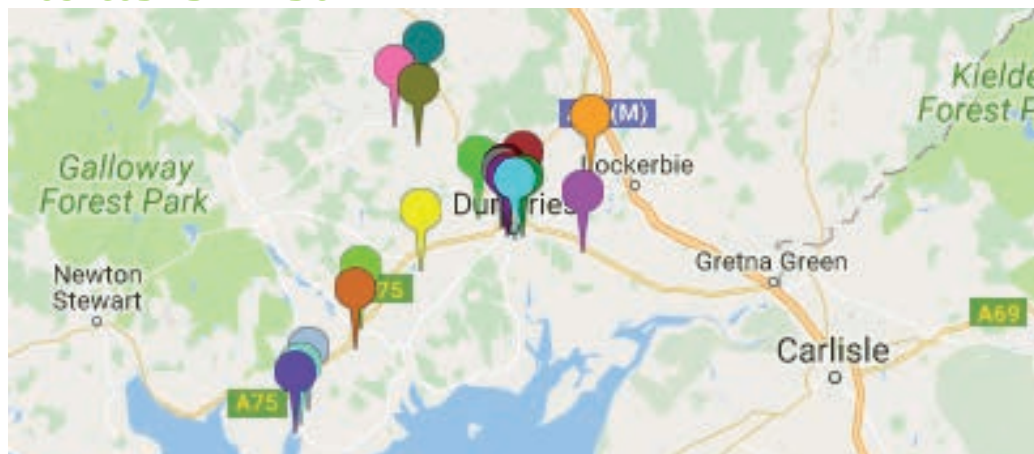
WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST?

“Simple and easy to understand for children, whilst introducing them to the 3 shapes”
“The music was fab. Props and actors were bright and very expressive”

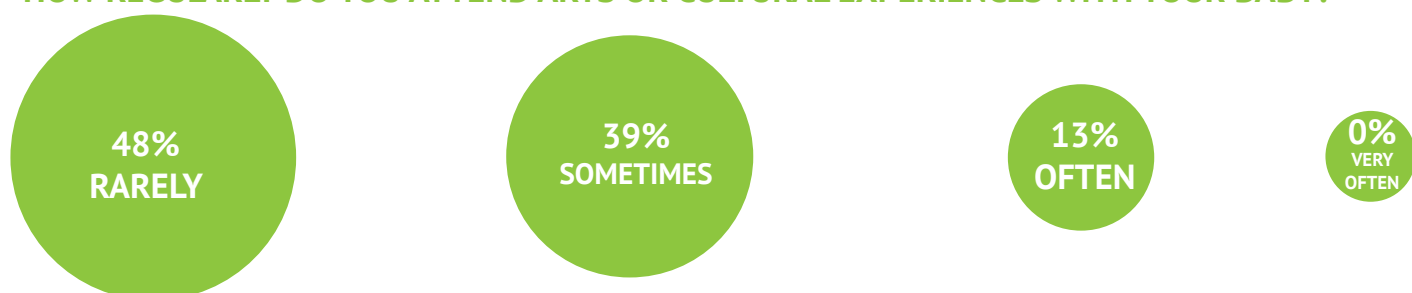
DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY

23 people answered our survey

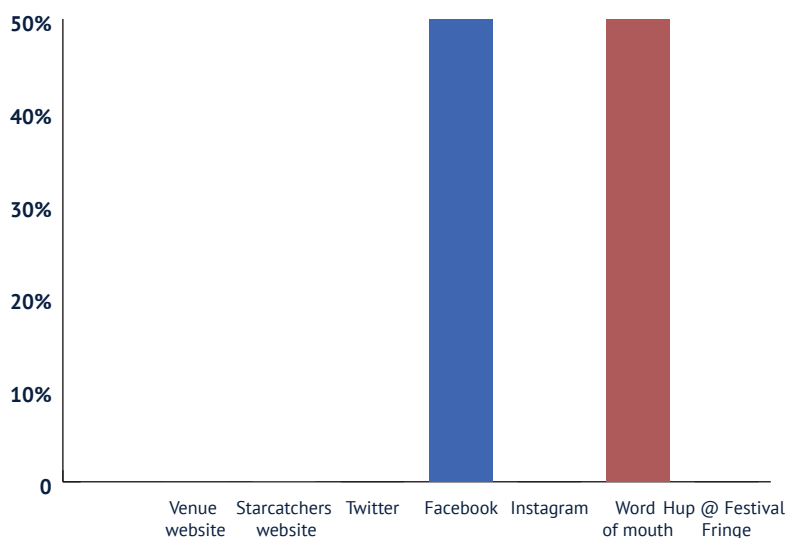
POSTCODE BREAKDOWN



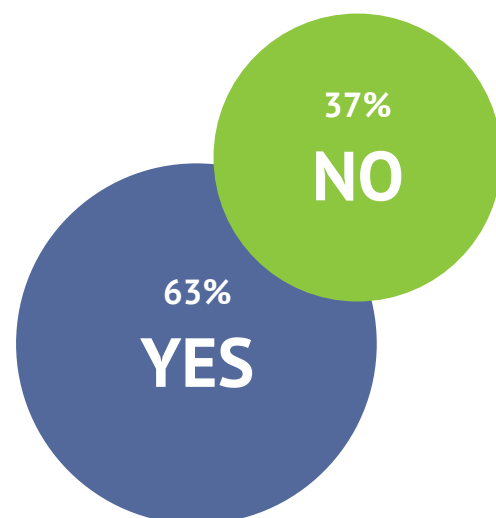
HOW REGULARLY DO YOU ATTEND ARTS OR CULTURAL EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR BABY?



HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE SHAPE OF THINGS?



HAVE YOU VISITED THIS VENUE BEFORE?



DID YOUR CHILD ENJOY THE PERFORMANCE?

- "Engaged and enjoyed the experience. Just correct length of time"
- "Yes she really enjoyed it. Really wonderful"
- "She was very engaged, captivated by it. Very happy I brought her."
- "I have never seen her so still and amazed and her reaction was great."

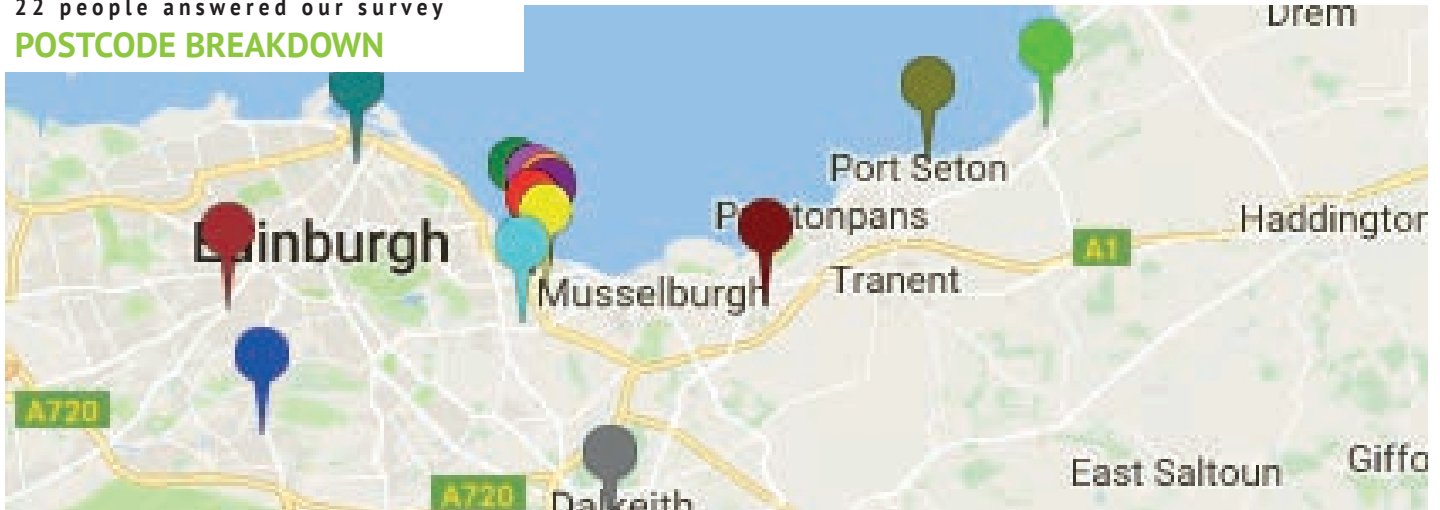
WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST?

- "It was good - amazing what can be achieved from such a simple concept"
- "Yes, felt it was very appropriate developmentally wise and catered for age range babies-2 years"

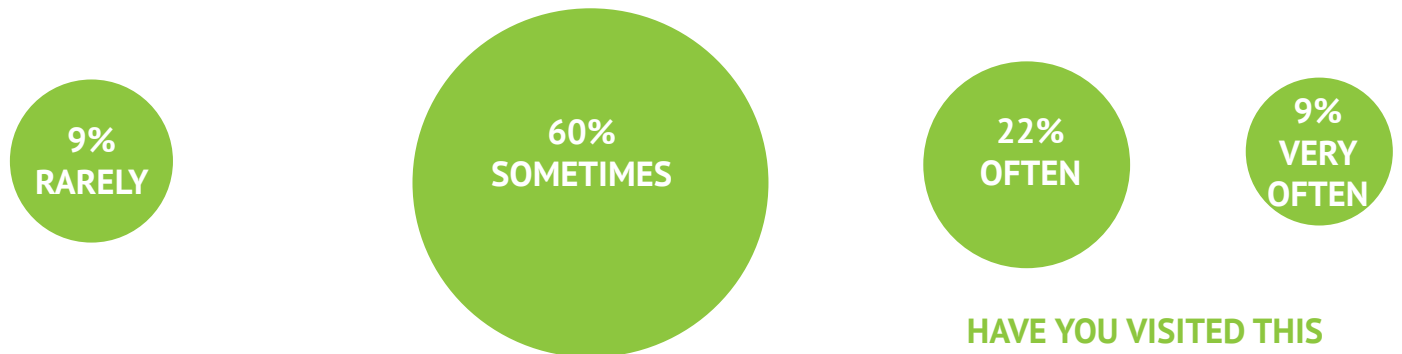
THE BRUNTON | MUSSELBURGH

22 people answered our survey

POSTCODE BREAKDOWN

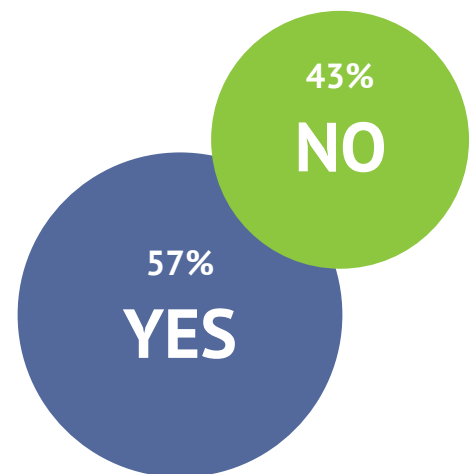
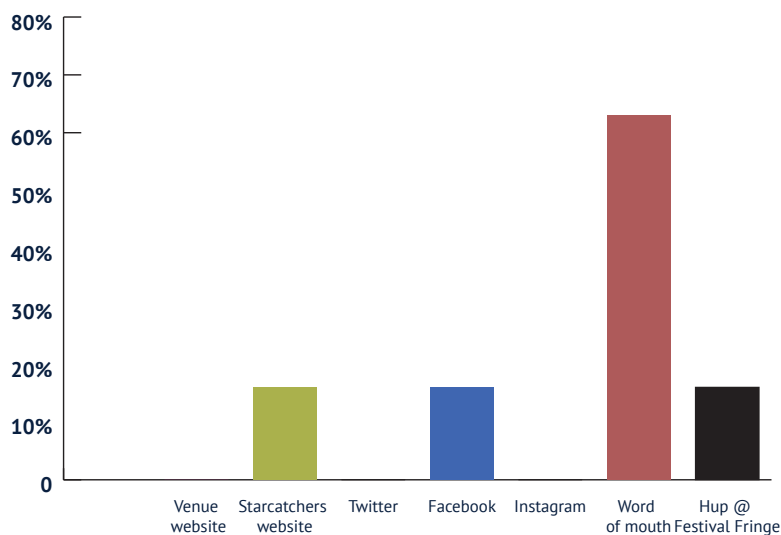


HOW REGULARLY DO YOU ATTEND ARTS OR CULTURAL EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR BABY?



HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE SHAPE OF THINGS?

HAVE YOU VISITED THIS VENUE BEFORE?



DID YOUR CHILD ENJOY THE PERFORMANCE?

"He enjoyed. Mostly music, bright lights, interaction"

"Baffled and fascinated"

"Absolutely fantastic. She loved it"

WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST?

"I enjoyed watching my child during the show"

"Quite gentle but also different things to stimulate, keep engaged"

"I loved how the performers engaged directly with the children"

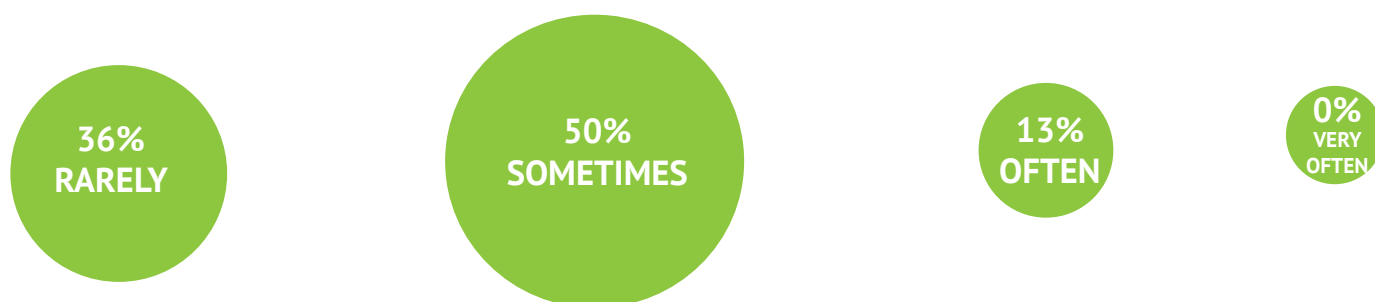
FALKIRK TOWN HALL | FALKIRK

22 people answered our survey

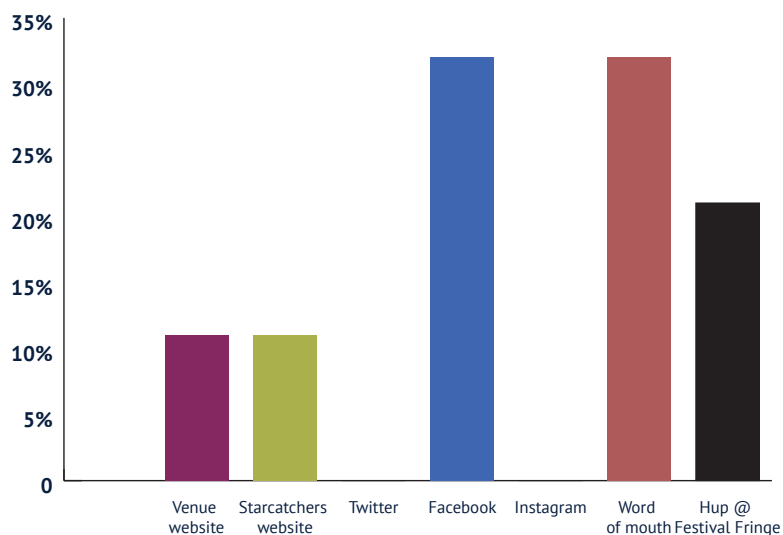
POSTCODE BREAKDOWN



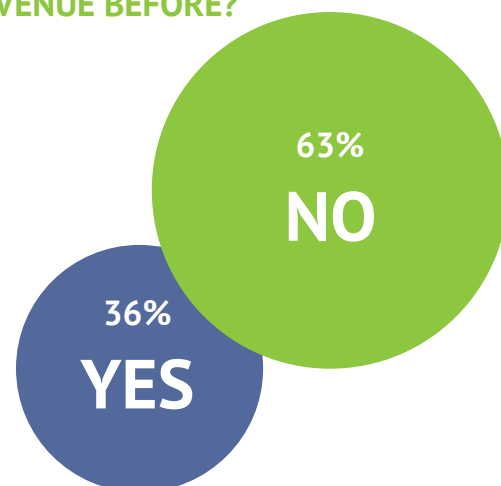
HOW REGULARLY DO YOU ATTEND ARTS OR CULTURAL EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR BABY?



HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE SHAPE OF THINGS?



HAVE YOU VISITED THIS VENUE BEFORE?



DID YOUR CHILD ENJOY THE PERFORMANCE?

“engrossed, loved it! Fascinated”

“Yes loved watching performance intently”

“Much more responsive as he was older. Loves the lights and songs.”

WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST?

“Was quiet and not too loud. Good size of shapes for little hands”

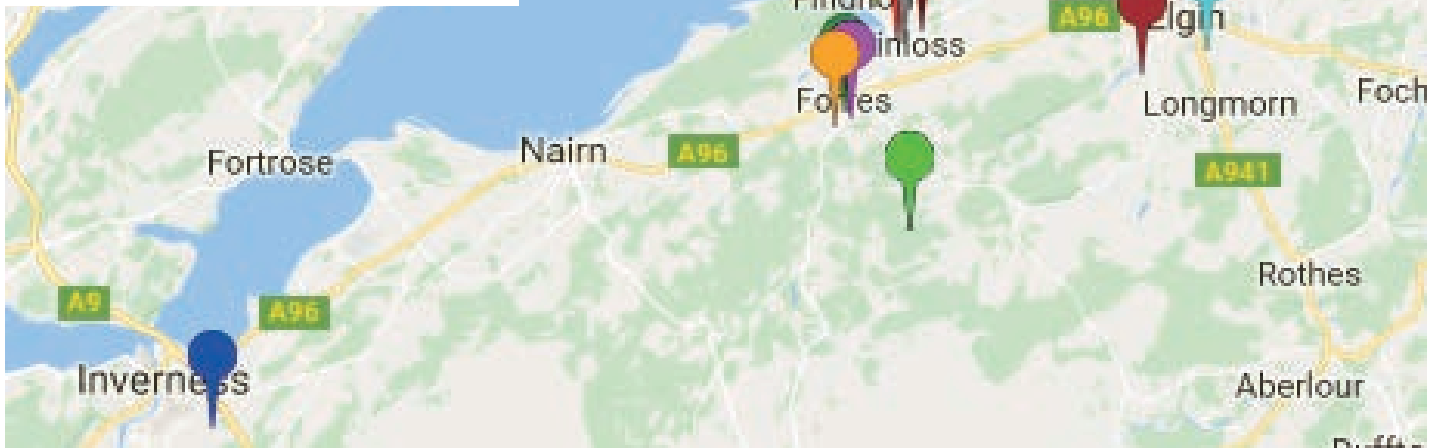
“Nicely repetitive, educational, lovely colours, mood lightly, relaxing, engaging actors”

“I really enjoyed it. I loved the use of languages costumes and props, entertainers were superb!”

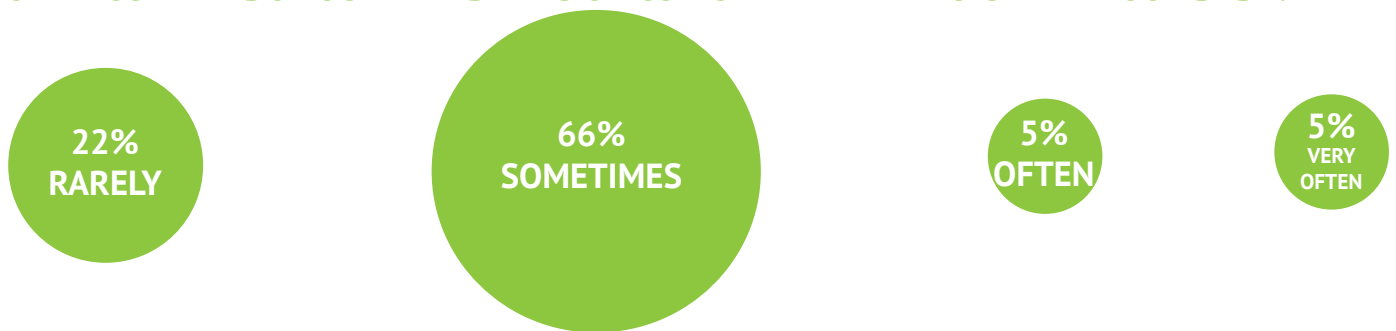
FINDHORN | MORAY

18 people answered our survey

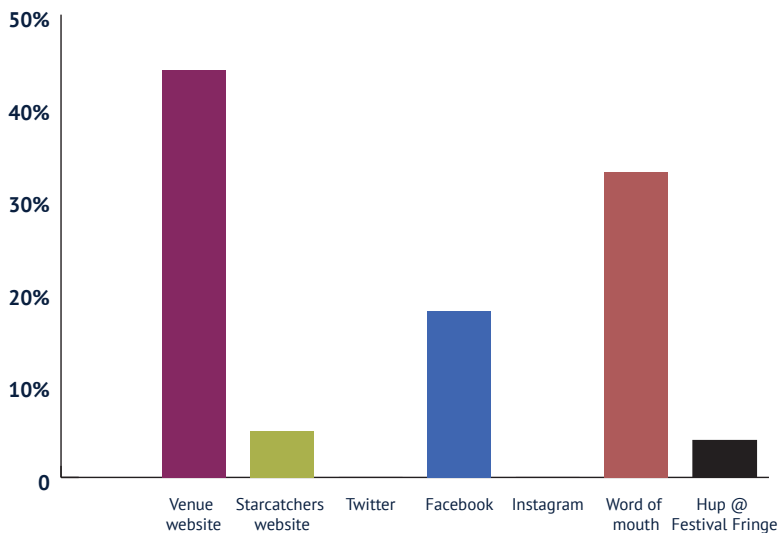
POSTCODE BREAKDOWN



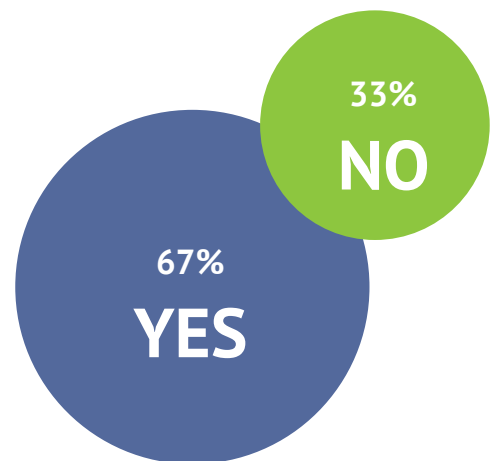
HOW REGULARLY DO YOU ATTEND ARTS OR CULTURAL EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR BABY?



HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE SHAPE OF THINGS?



HAVE YOU VISITED THIS VENUE BEFORE?



DID YOUR CHILD ENJOY THE PERFORMANCE?

"She said 'that's funny'"

"He loved it - smiling, really engaged - he sat still in amazement for longest time ever!"

"Very engaged, smiling at actors, watching everything going on"

WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST?

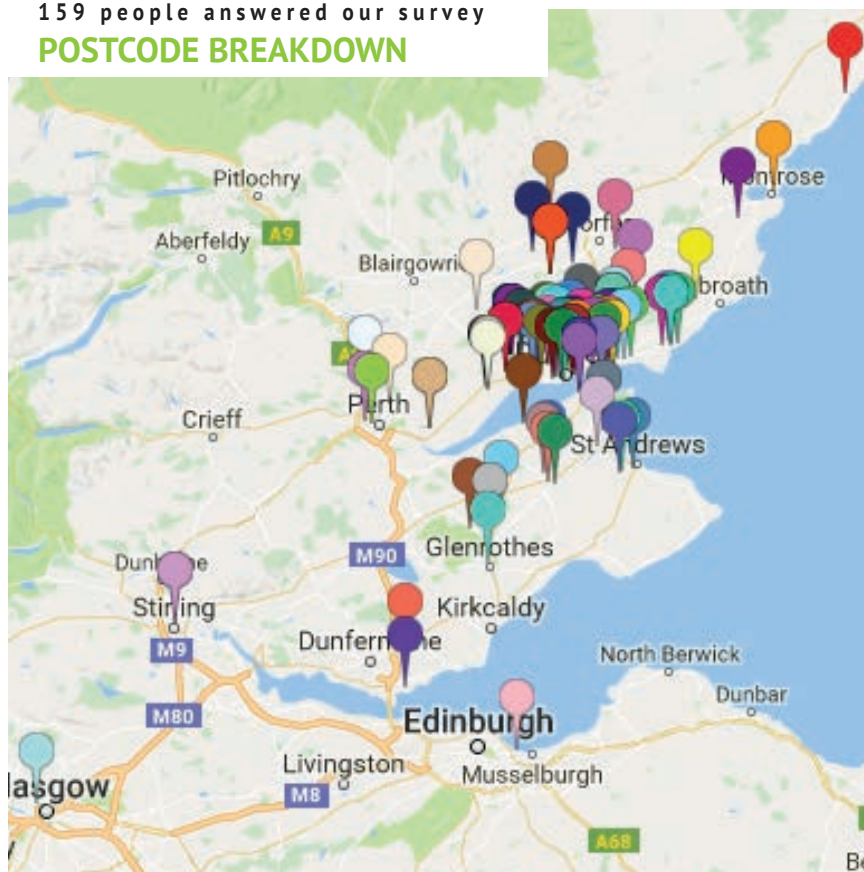
"Informal and interactive. Perfect length of time."

"I really liked all the different music, actions, props, engagement of performers."

"Amazing! Beautiful set - perfectly apt for her age -"

DUNDEE REP | DUNDEE

159 people answered our survey
POSTCODE BREAKDOWN



HOW REGULARLY DO YOU ATTEND ARTS OR CULTURAL EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR BABY?

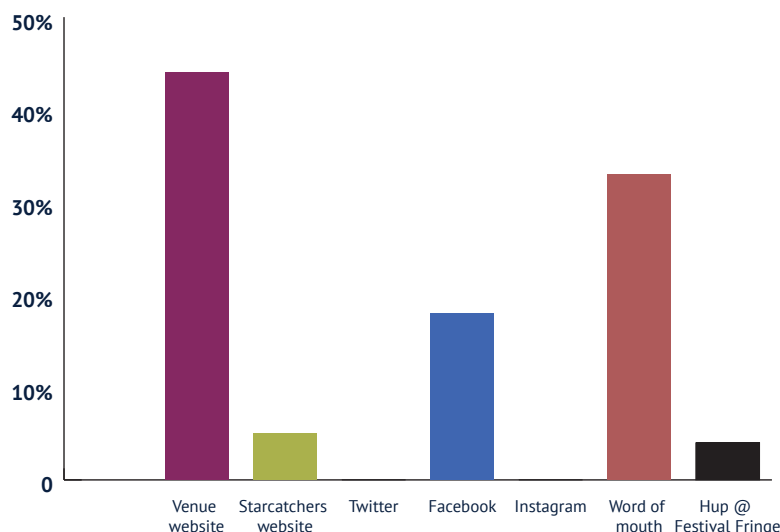
22%
RARELY

50%
SOMETIMES

22%
OFTEN

6%
VERY OFTEN

HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE SHAPE OF THINGS?



HAVE YOU VISITED THIS VENUE BEFORE?

22%
NO

78%
YES

DID YOUR CHILD ENJOY THE PERFORMANCE?

"He was very concentrated during the show and I think he loved the show"

"Loved it! She's very observant and there was so much for her to see"

"He was a little overwhelmed and he loved it, loved the dangling lights and shapes"

"Captivated a lot from start, very engaged throughout watching shapes and performers"

WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST?

"Enjoyed the music and performances. Liked bilingual aspect."

"Really enjoyed it. Simple, clear, visual and musical. Great stuff. Price was excellent too!"

"I loved it, it was so beautiful with lights and fabrics - and interactive. Loved the language element too."

FEEDBACK | IRISH VENUE BREAKDOWN

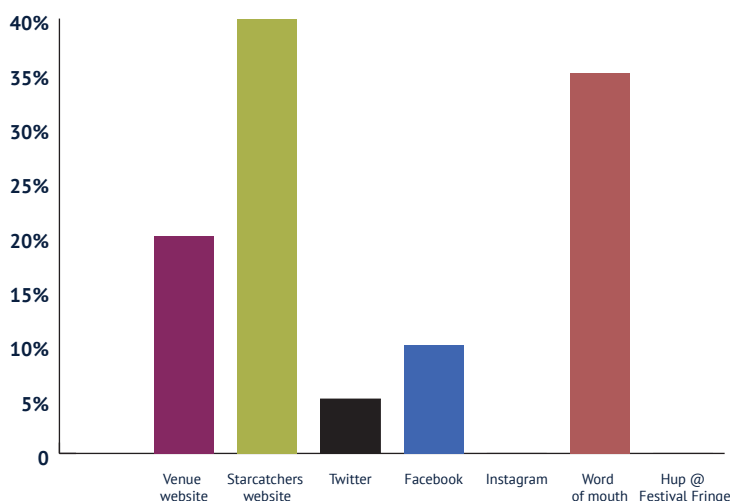
BABORO INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL FOR CHILDREN | GALWAY

18 people answered our survey

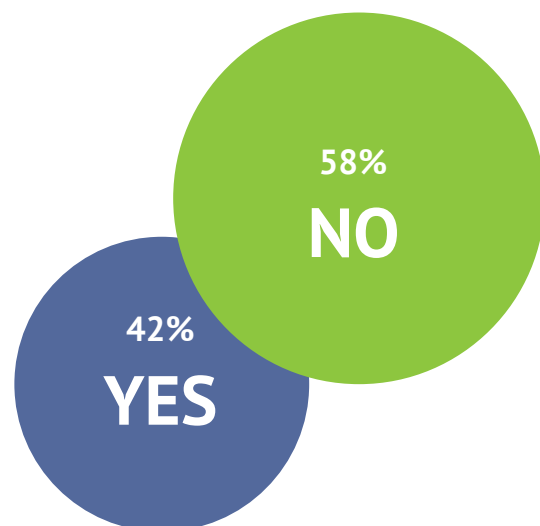
HOW REGULARLY DO YOU ATTEND ARTS OR CULTURAL EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR BABY?



HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE SHAPE OF THINGS?



HAVE YOU VISITED THIS VENUE BEFORE?



DID YOUR CHILD ENJOY THE PERFORMANCE?

“Very well. Bobbed to the music”

“Loved it. Very engaged and interested and entertained”

“Loved it. Perfect environment and atmosphere coaxed her gently from her sleep”.

“enthralled. Much less nervous/more relaxed than usual”

“Yes! Young babies seemed very happy too!”

WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST?

“yes, music fab. Soft calm. Lovely energy off performers. I want this space in my house!

“great that emsly could take part at a very young age”

“amazing performances. Very age appropriate. Loved it!”

“yes, gentle, liked the trilingual aspect (which worked for non-verbal audiences) helpful staff, worked well with children’s need”

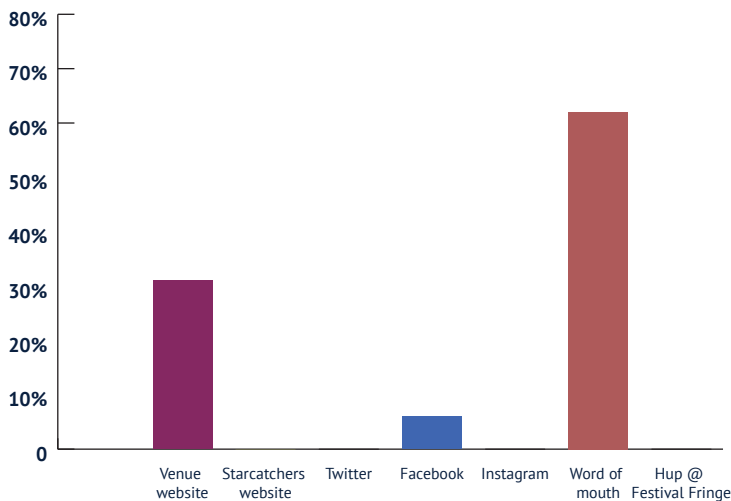
MERMAID ARTS CENTRE | BRAY

24 people answered our survey

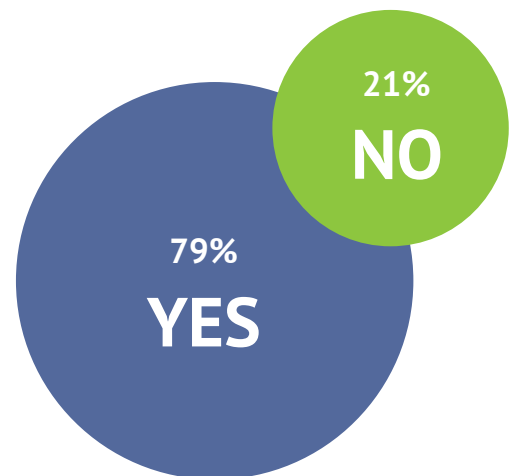
HOW REGULARLY DO YOU ATTEND ARTS OR CULTURAL EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR BABY?



HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE SHAPE OF THINGS?



HAVE YOU VISITED THIS VENUE BEFORE?



DID YOUR CHILD ENJOY THE PERFORMANCE?

- “Absorbed, interested, enjoyed it a lot”
- “love it, calm and in awe, wonderment”
- “Enrapt, interacting, responsive. Yes, enjoyed!”
- “He loved it. Was fascinated - very content - sat quietly.”

WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST?

- Theme behind basic shape exploration around difference and fitting in...deep for adults too!”
- “Music and expressive non verbal actions”
- “Looking at the reaction of the children and my grandson”
- “Actors engaged well with the children --”

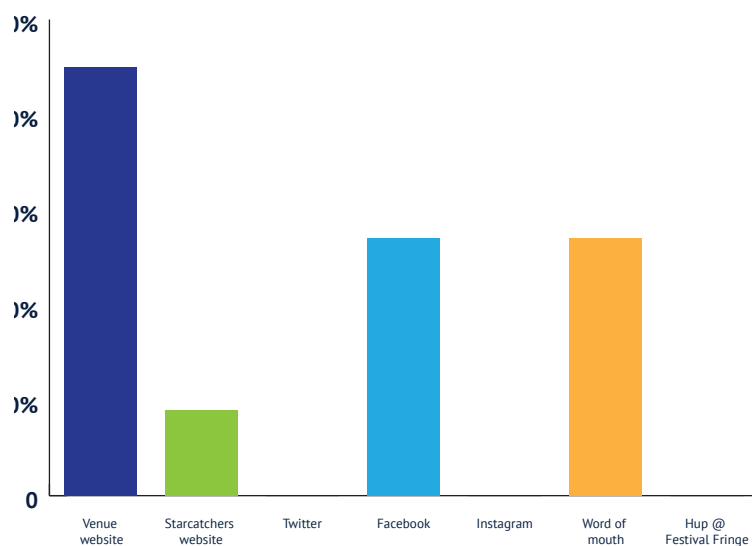
LINENHALL ARTS CENTRE | CASTLEBAR

24 people answered our survey

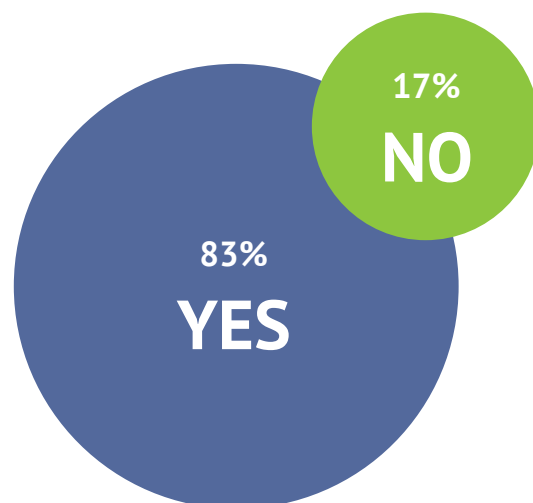
HOW REGULARLY DO YOU ATTEND ARTS OR CULTURAL EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR BABY?



HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT THE SHAPE OF THINGS?



HAVE YOU VISITED THIS VENUE BEFORE?



DID YOUR CHILD ENJOY THE PERFORMANCE?

- “Loved it. Wanted to hold shapes.”
- “She loved it, fascinated and got into it more (laughing) towards end”
- “Loved it, perfect interaction and time”.
- “He was so engaged”

WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST?

- “Very relaxed, loved seeing them enjoying themselves”
- “The interactive parts with the actors were excellent”
- “Absolutely everything. Thank you so much. It was so relaxing and wonderful”
- “Fun for children and adults”

REMAINING VENUES

From the remaining Irish venues at Roscommon, Coolock and Kildare not enough audience members completed the survey to present reliable data.