

KIDS

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KINO  
SWEDEN

## Children's Cinema Toolbox



# KIDS KINO

## Introduction to Kids Kino: A Model for Inspiring National Initiatives

This translated document from Kids Kino Sweden aims to provide inspiration for cinema networks and stakeholders interested in expanding opportunities for young audiences. Originating in Sweden, Kids Kino is an initiative created by Filmregionerna and Riksföreningen Biograferna to increase children's access to quality cinema experiences through a dedicated network of cinemas. With the support of the 4th KIDS Regio Forum, which gathered professionals from across Europe to explore best practices for children's cinema, this resource is now available in English to offer insights that can guide similar efforts in other countries.

While this material reflects the Swedish experience, it is intended as a reference to inspire national or regional networks tailored to local contexts. Kids Kino Sweden's mission is focused on local engagement and the needs of Swedish children, yet its practices and principles highlight ways cinemas everywhere can celebrate young audiences, diversify film offerings, and enhance audience participation.

Kids Kino – The Children's Cinema Network aims to celebrate and elevate young audiences, widen the range of films and increase audience participation for children and young audiences.

Kids Kino is an initiative from Filmregionerna and Riksföreningen Biograferna in Sweden.

## How it works in Sweden

Kids Kino aims to celebrate and elevate young audiences, widen the range of films and increase audience participation for children and young audiences.

With simple, fun and concrete tips and tools, together we can share good & crazy ideas, learn new things, get inspired and get audience development tips specifically targeting young audiences.

Children's audiences are valuable and this should be recognized.

Criteria to be part of the network:

- Our repertoire consists of at least one children's film each operative week or ...
- We make recurring initiatives for children's audiences
- We have read and signed the Kids Kino manifesto
- We will participate in at least one network meeting a year, either virtually or physically.

## THE KIDS KINO MANIFEST:

- Young audiences should feel welcome, included and encouraged to participate
- We create awesome film experiences for children and young people
- We understand children's need for several and diverse type of stories
- Every child can recognize and identify with our film programme
- We see and treat children and young people as we see and treat all of our audiences – with warmth, respect and a passion for film
- We listen to and work with our young audiences

# THE TOOL BOX

Here you can find inspiring tips and concepts, ranging from how to treat young audiences to concrete tips on different events and screenings.

## THE CINEMA

### FOYER/SCREEN/KIOSK/ACCESSIBILITY

How is your cinema adapted for younger audiences? Here you will find a series of suggestions from cinemas that, with smaller or greater changes and renovations, can make your cinema more adapted to this target audience.

#### **The Box Office**

Meet the young visitor at their level. Either simply put a step by the ticket desk so that the children themselves can reach, or lower a section of the ticket desk where staff can work seated and meet the children at their eye level.

#### **Stair railings**

Have railings at two levels, making sure children can also reach.

#### **Presentation**

Based on the possibilities of your cinema, try and create a playful space in part of the foyer, or perhaps an adjacent room. Furnish with a books/games/crafts section, cushions and pennants. Place posters and/or digital screens at a lower height to be eye level with children. The more you enhance their experience before and after the film, the more they will want to come back.

#### **Kiosk**

How do you present your snacks/sweets at your concession stand? Do you keep all the products behind the counter? If you present the snacks/sweets on the way to the ticket desk you will not only increase sales, but you also make it easier for the cinema goers to choose and speed up queues at busy toddler screenings.

Don't forget to evaluate and perhaps change up your kiosk assortment from time to time.

Fruit is also a popular snack, is it possible for your cinema kiosk to offer fresh or dried fruit? Locally sourced and/or organic products can also be a way to make your range stand out.

## Ticket prices

Working with discounts, child prices, monthly passes, seasonal tickets and film club memberships are all ways to entice the cinema goer to come back more regularly. During school holidays some local municipalities are willing to offer children subsidized cinema tickets. Get in touch with the Arts & Culture unit in your municipality and offer to collaborate.

## Accessibility

How accessible is your cinema? Many public organizations and some private companies require any premises they book to be accessible. Perhaps your municipality wants to arrange school cinema or book a children's event at your venue. Having accessible premises helps to ensure that more people can work in and visit your organization. Examples of accessibility are having a hearing loop, offering audio description and many other things.

Accessible premises mean that people with disabilities can enter the building, move around the premises and that it is possible to evacuate the premises in case of an emergency.

# THE AUDIENCE

## AUDIENCE TREATMENT/DEVELOPMENT

How do you meet your young audience? Remember to communicate not only with the parents, but to see and speak to the children. A cinema staff member greeting the audience before the film with a very short presentation about how the cinema visit works is an effort well worth it.

## Film tips

On our web page you will find contact details and links to distributors that work with films for children and young audiences. It is also important to listen to the younger audience – families' taste in films are important inputs for your programming. Show films from countries other than your own and the English language countries to widen the perspectives of your audience.



## Marketing – Merch around the film

Many children's films brings about products of different kinds. Ask the distributor what merch they have attached to a specific title or look to see what's available to buy. These items can be used for local competitions or giveaways on site or in social media.

## Trailer

Don't forget to show trailers for upcoming children's films before other films with a similar target audience. Nothing will sell a cinema title as effectively as a trailer for an upcoming film on the cinema screen.

## Diploma – First Cinema Visit

Create your cinema's own diploma for first time cinema visitors. Diplomas are often displayed on the walls of children's bedrooms for years and are something to be proud of.

## Cinema Mascot

Do you have a provincial animal or a figure that's extra popular in your area? Do not underestimate the popularity in a mascot that can attend different premieres or during school holidays. You can create your own mascot that can hand out sweets, take selfies or just mess around with the kids.

## Collaborate with local Theatre companies/Cosplay clubs/Circus schools

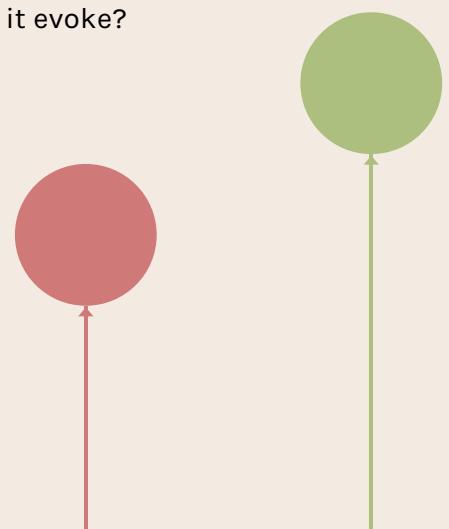
Create a unique event with participants dressed up in the theme of the film at a premiere.

## How does cinema work?

At screenings with a very young audience – make a short introduction, a playful hello to greet everyone, and tell them about how cinema works. The light from the projector hits the screen, the film comes to life and everybody wave at the projectionist who is starting the film.

## Review note

Give grown ups tips on how to talk about a film after a screening, making sure the conversation doesn't just center around if it was good or bad. What was the film about? What feelings did it evoke?



## EVENTS/CONCEPTS

Here is a list of suggestions divided into age groups, all of which require different amounts of work in marketing, programming, timing, commitment etc. Put the workload at a level you can manage both in terms of time and money. Apply for funding to create events, find natural partnerships.

Be available to young members of your target audience - if they are interested, let them arrange events together with you at the cinema.

### ALL AGES

#### Opening Night Party

Roll out the red carpet regardless of age group. The younger the audience, the more balloons you'll need!



#### Film Talk/Director's Visit

Watch the film and have a conversation with, for example, the film's director or actors afterwards. Think about the format and talk it through with the guest beforehand, making sure that children's questions and perspectives are included and encouraged.

#### Film Festival

Organize a Children's or Youth Film Festival during a weekend or a school holiday.

#### Film Club

Starting a Film Club can be a way to reach a new audience. Collaborate with an after school club, educational organization or create your own concept.

#### Film Camp/Create films – show on the big screen

Collaborate with any filmmaking organizations in your local area. Make a film in a day, a weekend or a week, screen it at the cinema.

#### Half Term Cinema

Make the most of the school holidays with screenings of films for children and young people. Many people are off work at this time and not everyone goes travelling. Fill their holidays with magical film trips instead.



## Birthday Parties/Children's Parties

Many people book a local leisure- or play-centre to host a party, but birthday cake, film and popcorn is a combination that's hard to beat.

## Activity linked to the theme of the film

If you show a children's film based on a book, collaborate with the library – they can do a story reading and then the children come to see the film. If you show Fireman Sam, collaborate with the emergency services who can show off a fire engine and the children can try to put out a fire. If Pippi Longstocking is on the repertoire perhaps the children will be greeted by a horse and Pippi outside the cinema? If an anime film is premiering, collaborate with a cosplay club who can dress up as the characters in the actual film. For young children's screenings, bring out the bouquet of helium balloons, a long table with paper and crayons where busy little fingers can create nice drawings.

## Film Quiz

Make a simple quiz about the film, either digitally or on paper, perhaps in the form of a quiz walk. Organize a competition in connection with the quiz.

## Internships at the cinema

Do you have the time and opportunity to offer work experience, summer jobs, holiday jobs at the cinema for youths? Collaborate with the local municipality with regards to summer holidays and school internships. You will have a young person on site to whom you can ask questions about what they like and what they and their friends would like to see at the cinema.

## Parent and Baby Screenings

This is aimed at parents on parental leave, but perhaps they also have other children and will come to other screenings. Babies grow up fast and will soon be little cinema goers in their own right. If possible, collaborate with a local parent group and let them help with the programming. Find out what day and time suits the parent group best. As a rule, the babies' older siblings will be at preschool or school and morning times 10.00-13.00 will work best.

## Popcorn Included

Set a fixed ticket price for children that includes a small popcorn. Much appreciated by the large young popcorn-loving cinema audience.

## AUDIENCES 2-6 YEARS

### Drawing/Painting/Crafts in the foyer/ Face Painting

Linked to the theme of the film.

### Toddler Cinema

For the youngest children who may visit the cinema for the very first time!

### After Preschool

Come straight from preschool and be gripped by the magic of cinema.

### Singalong

Is there anything better than singing along?

### Book + Film

Read a book before the film screening – maybe the book the film is based on, perhaps another book by the same author. Collaborate with the local library.

### Outside Drawing

Do you have asphalt or paving outside the cinema? Buy street crayons and let the children be inspired by the film before or after they've seen it and decorate the pavement outside the cinema.

## AUDIENCES 7-12 YEARS

### Parent-free cinema

Children can watch films on their own without parents, but with increased adult presence by cinema staff.

### Breakfast cinema

Children receive a snack-pack to enjoy during their film and parents receive a breakfast-kit to enjoy at their screening.

### Jukebox Cinema

Visitors can book their own private screening or slot to play video games on the big screen.

### Film Quiz

Host a competition in collaboration with a local or regional club, the municipality, a leisure centre, etc. before a specific film.

### TV series

Screen an episode or two from a popular TV series.

## AUDIENCES 13-18 YEARS

### Film Marathon

Screen a popular film series over a period, either during one whole day or a few consecutive days.

### All-nighter

Show films all night, let the target audience have input in the programming and set up. Nights connected to public holidays are popular.

### E-sport events

Organise cups in different video games. There are many associations involved in TV and computer games and the initiative needs to come from them.

## THE FILMSPOTTERS

### THE FILMSPOTTERS – A CHILDREN'S CINEMA INITIATIVE

The purpose of The Filmspotters is to get children to see more films at the cinema and to create a really great cinema experience. Any cinema who wants to participate in this project will receive 100-200 Filmspotter booklets to hand out to children. The idea is that any child with a booklet should see five films at the cinema and for each visit receive a stamp from you. The Filmspotter booklet is the children's own 'review booklet'. Once the child has seen and reviewed the fifth film, they will receive a Filmspotter Kit containing lots of fun things – a nice little goody bag where the cinema itself can also supplement with its own flyers, popcorn etc...

### Does your cinema want to join?

You get the Filmspotters-kit sent to you with content to distribute to the children. A handbook will also be sent to each cinema. It should be easy and fun to participate!

The project is aimed at cinemas that are part of Riksföreningen Biograferna (The Swedish Cinema Association). The project is supported by the Swedish Film Institute.



# SCHOOL CINEMA

School Cinema means that children and young people watch films at their local cinema during school hours. School cinema has been operating in Sweden since the late 1910s.

## Five arguments for school cinema

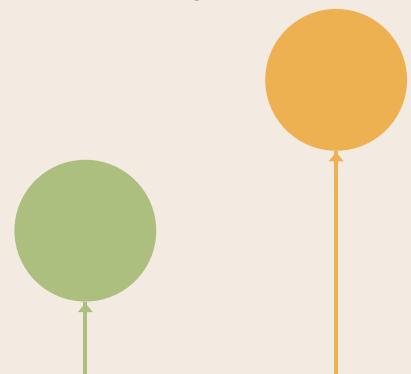
- Film contributes to our understanding of ourselves and others
- School cinema is a gateway to understanding the language of film in an age where moving images are an increasing part of young people's everyday lives
- Film pedagogy makes film an effective learning tool that both brings knowledge to life and develops critical thinking skills
- School cinema provides a shared experience with opportunities for discussion on a wide range of topics
- School cinema involves children and young people in the cultural life of their local cinema and allows them to share our common cultural heritage

## Who can organize school cinema?

School cinema is organized locally by each individual school, cinema or municipality. Who you should contact to organize school cinema or register your class for a screening differs in different parts of the country. Talk to the person responsible for culture and/or film in your municipality or contact your regional film organization. The Swedish Film Institute also supports school cinema in various ways.

## Inspirational films

The Swedish Film Institute has produced a series of films to inspire people to start up and participate in school cinema. The films show how school cinema expands the world and touches people of all ages. They are free to use in meetings, websites and social media in connection with school cinema information and can also be downloaded for cinema screening formats.



# THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD AND THE CINEMA

Being exposed to film gives perspective. It can provide comfort, arouse curiosity and empathy, promote development, provide a new language or a tool.

How does the Convention on the Rights of the Child relate to our work with Kids Kino and how can cinemas work with children's rights? Here you will find important information that can support your applications when applying for funding for different types of children's cinema initiatives.

## The Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Convention on the Rights of the Child became Swedish law on 1 January 2020 and has existed since 1989. A person is considered a child up to the age of 18.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child contains 54 articles and should be seen as a package where all the articles interact.

We have selected a few articles that we consider important for those who want to work with the Convention in everyday life. These can be linked to everything from pricing to the treatment of our youngest audiences.

**Four basic principles permeate the entire Convention:**

**Article 2** All children are of equal worth and have equal rights. No child should be discriminated against. The Convention on the Rights of the Child applies to all children who are in a country that has ratified it.

**Article 3** In all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration. The concept of 'the best interests of the child' is the cornerstone of the Convention. What is in the best interests of the child must be determined on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the child's own views and experience.

**Article 6** Every child's right to life, survival and development. To consider is not only the child's physical health, but also their spiritual, moral, mental and social development.

**Article 12** The right of the child to form and express his or her views and have them taken into account in all matters affecting him or her. When taking views into account, the age and maturity of the child shall be taken into account.

**There are other articles that can be used for further work:**

**Article 13** Children have the right to freedom of expression and information; to think, feel and express their opinions, while respecting the rights of others (e.g. to be heard on film).

**Article 15** Children have the right to participate in associations and peaceful assemblies.

**Article 17** Children have the right to access information through, for example, the internet, radio and television. The State shall encourage the creation of material that is of value to children and does not harm the child.

**Article 23** Children with disabilities have the right to a full and decent life and to be helped to participate actively in society.

**Article 28** Right to education

**Article 29** The school shall help the child to develop and teach the child about human rights. (School cinema for example)

**Article 30** Children belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities, or to an indigenous people, have the right to their language, culture and religion (e.g. a wider range of films can play a role here)

**Article 31** Right to play, rest and leisure as well as cultural and artistic life. The right of the child to participate fully in, and have access to, cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activities.



## What is a Child Rights Perspective?

To understand what a Child Rights Perspective is, we also need to understand the difference between the child perspective and the child's own perspective - together, these are weighted into the Child Rights Perspective.

### The child perspective

Adults' views on children

What you, as an adult, know about children, your own experience of being a child possibly your own children

### The child's own perspective

When the child is given a voice

the child's views, wishes and opinions expressed in his or her own way

### The child rights perspective

The other two perspectives are weighed in together

In any decision or action affecting children - the rights of the child and the Convention on the Rights of the Child must be taken into account

## Working with the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Below you will find some simple examples of how to work with the Convention in everyday life. Think about which articles are appropriate for your organization. Maybe you already use some of the Convention's articles? If so, is there anything that could develop your work?

For example, does your organization have a film club for young people? Do all children have access to your organization? How many children are in your catchment area and what can be done to make them more likely to become tomorrow's cinema audience?

Certain socio-economic factors and therefore pricing can be crucial when it comes to widening participation. Are there specific municipal initiatives to attract new audiences that do not usually make up the regular cinema audience?

## ABOUT US

### Do children have the opportunity to be involved (Article 12) in your organization?

Children can be involved in different ways. The room can be made accessible by simple means, for example a step at the counter can make it easier for children to pay for their tickets themselves.

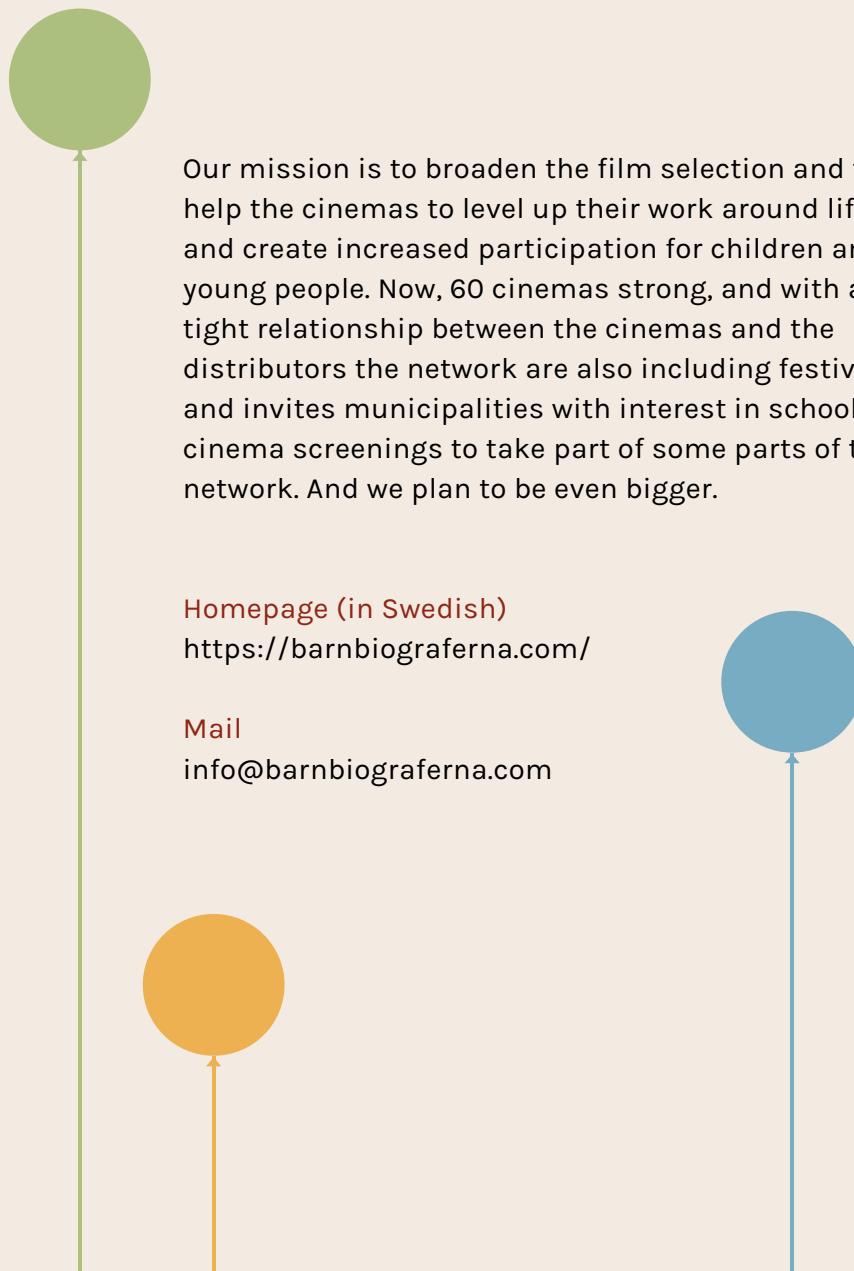
Participation can also be a strategic issue. Working with young organizers can improve development. Let the children/young people take over the cinema for a day or a weekend. Train the new generation of organizers and programmers and pass on your knowledge so that young people understand that the cinema is a workplace and an important community space.

Perhaps you can work with children/youth reference groups? They could be involved in decisions about film choice, or how the cinema as a space should be designed? Young people could also assess and evaluate the cinema experience, the kiosk range, venue design, etc.

**If children and young people are involved and helping you, give feedback!**  
**Often we forget to let them know what difference their input has made!**



During the pandemic a small group of commissioners in the Swedish Film Regions (Sweden have 19 regions) started to form a network for cinemas after been commissioned to develop Biografcentralens Childrens Cinema of the Year concept. And together with Riksföreningen Biograferna (The Swedish Association of Cinemas) Kids Kino Sweden was born. We share the work responsibilities as well as the finances. We have a small budget to be able to carry out one meeting per year, one digital meet-up and ensure that all new members receive a starter pack with our lovely sign and lots of balloons to their cinema. We also have a reference group who helps us with content to the meetups, inform us about good examples and are all active in the industry themselves in different ways. And we have a Facebook group for members to stay in touch, ask for advice and help each other out.



Our mission is to broaden the film selection and to help the cinemas to level up their work around lifting and create increased participation for children and young people. Now, 60 cinemas strong, and with a tight relationship between the cinemas and the distributors the network are also including festivals and invites municipalities with interest in school cinema screenings to take part of some parts of the network. And we plan to be even bigger.

**Homepage (in Swedish)**  
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