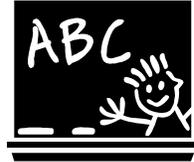


Music & More

What are early childhood music classes?



Group music classes that provide an enriching musical environment for young children and their caregivers.

Children birth to age five experience music through listening, moving, singing, and creating music with the help of their caregiver. Music & More Early Childhood Music Classes are based on the *First Steps in Music* curriculum by John M. Feierabend. Classes also include activities based on the theories and methods of Edwin Gordon, Zoltan Kodaly, and Carl Orff. Why not just use one method exclusively? Although it would be easier for the teacher, the additional methods make the class more enriching and beneficial to the children. Each of the theorists mentioned above are considered experts in music education. Using the best ideas from each of them results in a truly top notch curriculum. This integrative approach also allows the teacher to choose from a larger variety of activities to best meet the needs and interests of the individual children in the class.

The *First Steps in Music* series is an attempt to preserve the rich repertoire of traditional and folk literature; to enable today's families to recall and learn songs and rhymes that have nurtured wonder and joy in young people for generations.

John M. Feierabend



When does music development begin?

At birth or before. Babies are born with a given amount of music potential; however, they will only reach their potential if they receive an enriching music environment. The best time to influence music potential is before age nine; at nine, potential stabilizes. "What does that mean for parents of very young children? It means that the first few months and years of a child's life are the most important for creating a music environment that best assists a child in maximizing her potential" (Reynolds, Valerio, Bolton, Taggart, and Edwin Gordon, *Music Play: The Early Childhood Music Curriculum Guide for Parents, Teachers, and Caregivers*, 1998.)

Can a baby really participate in a music class?

Yes! Music development is very similar to language development. Before children learn to speak, they have to hear the sounds of language over and over again. Children must hear a variety of musical sounds before they can begin making music (Reynolds et al., 1998). Listening is not a passive activity in early childhood music classes. Caregivers bounce Baby on the knee, wiggle Baby's fingers or toes, sway with Baby, or dance with Baby. These activities are done as Baby listens to the rhythm and beat of chants, songs, or musical examples. As babies becomes toddlers, they begin to make musical babble. They bounce, wiggle, or dance with a doll or toy just as the caregivers did with them.

True musical literacy—the ability to read, write, and think music—is the right of every human being. Musical learning must begin with the child's own natural instrument—the voice. The education of the musical ear can be completely successful only if it is begun early.

Zoltan Kodaly

What activities do older children do?

Similar activities as described for babies, but as active participants. Children this age may join in singing and can do movements and actions by themselves. Classes for older children include **finger plays, action songs, and circle games.** Children have opportunities to be creative as they **play instruments, wave streamers, and make up their own phrases to songs.** When stories include songs or cue words for instrumental parts, **story time** is twice as fun! Listening to instrumental music is a time for children to **march, dance, or move like a favorite animal.** During each of these activities, older children continue to develop through the support, guidance, and encouragement of their caregivers.



The *First Steps in Music* series is based on an extensive survey of research related to the development of singing and movement skills in young children, as well as many years of practical experience sharing musical activities with this young age. It is this combination of a research based curriculum, quality literature, and practical experience that makes the *First Steps in Music* curriculum unique.

John M. Feierabend

What are the benefits of participating in early childhood music classes?

Early music experiences aid brain development. Brain cells must practice making connections at appropriate times or the brain will redirect the cells for another use. The brain must practice hearing and interpreting music or “the cells that would have been used to establish that hearing sense will at best be directed to another sense...No amount of compensatory education at a later time will be able to completely offset the handicap” (Reynolds et al., 1998). **Foster speech and language development.** Singing sounds may be easier than saying sounds, especially in children with delayed language acquisition. Children who are apprehensive to speak may be willing to sing. **Time for close interaction between caregiver and child.** The early months and years are a crucial time for developing bonds (Bee, *The Developing Child*, 2000), yet it can be difficult to think of ways to interact with children when they have

limited capabilities. Early childhood music classes provide caregivers ideas for interaction that they can continue outside of class. **Materials for home use.**

Caregivers receive handouts on music and child development, word sheets for the songs, and music and instruments to use at home. **Opportunities for social interaction with other children and adults.** Children learn to share as they take turns with instruments. **Fun!** Children enjoy playing, singing, and listening to music. **Priceless memories.** Caregivers have a front row seat watching their child develop new skills and make exciting music discoveries.



Elemental music is never only music but an integration of movement, dance and language. It is music one creates oneself in which one is involved not as a listener, but as a participant.

Carl Orff

Discover the benefits and fun for yourself! Register your child in a Music & More Early Childhood Music Class.



**CALL MIRIAM LAMB AT 979-846-8070
FOR DETAILS AND TO REGISTER!**

