



Musical Mornings to Bedtime Good Nights: Nurturing Infants & Toddlers

Chinese Proverb: I hear & I forget-see & I remember-I do and I understand...Children have to involve their bodies as well as their minds in order to understand the world & experiences. If he may not engage body, as well as mind, he will switch off. Ambron...Childhood Should be a Journey...Not a Race...Childhood is life's 1st gift. Play it for all it's worth. Play it often Play to know: Discovery, wonderment & delight...All children are gifted. Some just open their presents later than others.

(Early on) Hello to everyone. I am truly honored to be with you today. What important work you do. Your home visit bag brings help and hope to so many families. Folks that may be young, isolated, sleep deprived, overwhelmed, new to the community, scared or unprepared for their role as parents. Your presence can offer not only consultation but consolation in an, often, lonely world.

Infants come into the world with an innate receptivity to music and movement. Research suggests that it positively affects all developmental domains. Nourishes the brain by building neural pathways through stimulation from all five senses. Singing with baby stimulates both sides of the brain. Opportunities for social-competence & emotional well-being are created. With hearing being the 2nd sense to develop in utero, the baby dance begins early. Immersed in sounds and rhythms, babies are seemingly pre-wired for music. They are born ready and expecting to move.

Music is a healing force, can help to refuel, express feelings, rejuvenate and be at the core of social connections formed between children and their significant other. We know the importance of the social-emotional piece. Children can know their ABCs backwards and forwards, but if they don't have good social skills and emotional well-being, their ABCs may not serve them well.

There is a strong language-movement connection that will fare better with a strong emotional-social connection. Often parents are not inclined to put baby into the center of their lives or may not have the skills to be confident and effective music makers. Music can be very powerful with a simple song indirectly placing baby at center stage. Simply put, music is the infant-toddler caregiver's best friend and is an indispensable tool that can instantly transform a cranky environment into one of harmony and joy.

Making music is a very easy skill to learn. There just has to be somebody willing to teach it. So when Infant Mental Health folks say, "What! Me teach Music?" I say you can, you must. For some children it may be their only form of self-expression and for some parents it may be the only tool readily available to help them out of a challenging situation. Daily routines offer natural opportunities to include music.

My goal is that you come away with a perspective of bonding as a dialogue, a dance between caregiver and child and perhaps the implication for therapeutic intervention. Music and movement are critical components of an infant's life and can greatly enhance baby's sense of trust. Trust laying the foundation for cognitive development and social-emotional well-being. These early musical experiences will affect the children and their families for years to come and is it a gift that will last a lifetime.

In our hurry up dot com world, we are sitting children as young as 12 months in front of computers. We need to nurture their natural love of music and movement. They desperately need their childhood and often, we are taking it away sooner and sooner. The media is telling us what our children need to make them smarter, faster. But what is important for healthy development has not changed. Love them, hug them-hold them close. Keep them safe, sing and read to them, dance with them, do open-ended art, write down their stories, tape record their songs. Make eye contact with each child everyday. Take time to listen-time to just be. What you do is the most important job I know of. Thank you for what you do.

So when all else fails, try Singing A Song and Dancing Along. It really works. No talent necessary.

MUSICAL EXPERIENCES CAN CONTRIBUTE TO ESTABLISHING FAMILY RITUALS

“Any routine has the potential to become a ritual once it moves from an instrumental to a symbolic act.” Flese et al.

Rituals

Bedtime-mealtime-care giving routines-hello and goodbye-transitions

- Time and place
- Significance
- Identity

I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; & because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do something that I can do. Helen Keller

Importance

Strengthen families and support family health and well-being

- Emotional component- (defining characteristic)
- Availability and togetherness
- Family identity and roles
- Affect on parenting
- Self-regulation
- Active participants
- Coping mechanism

Let us realize that the privilege to work is a gift. The power to work is a blessing, and the love of work is success. David O. McKay

Research

Can have powerful protective factors for all children, especially those at-risk, with long lasting benefits

- Academic achievement
- Optimal psychosocial outcomes among young children
- Prevention of dysfunctional patterns: i.e. alcoholism
- Self-regulation during as toddler
- Learning readiness

Consistent bedtime routine provides greater emotional regulation at 24 months.

Bedtime Rituals

National Head Start Research and Evaluation Study (EHSRE) looked at whether bedtime rituals had any impact on children

- Provide greater emotional regulation at 24 months
- Opportunities for predictable patterns
- Protective factor in development
- Learning readiness skills from preschool to kindergarten

Source: Healing Power of Rituals-Erika London Bocknek and Holly Brophy IMH Bi-Annual Meeting, Spring 2009

MUSIC AS A VALUABLE TOOL

- Supports bonding through touching and rocking...Helps to build trust...
- Nurtures caregiver as well as baby strengthening confidence and self esteem i.e singing vs. reading...
- Affects all developmental domains...
- Provides nourishment for the brain...
- There is a strong language-movement connection...
- Can provide a foundation for learning, listening and literacy...
- Enhances grounding, body awareness, motor skills, problem solving, balance, co-ordination...
- Power to change a mood or frustration in an instant...
- Instills a sense of community...
- Contributes to social competency...Promotes emotional well-being...
- Enriches the quality of life for everyone...
- Feels good and is good for us...

Everybody is a genius, but if you judge a fish, by its ability to climb, it will spend its whole life believing that it is stupid. Albert Einstein

WHAT'S IN IT FOR THE PARENT?

- 1st & most favorite toy, child reaches arms out. If important to parent will share with child...
- A lot of bonding going on. Eye contact, face to face, 1st my turn, then yours, bringing closer together...
- Infants, just few weeks old show clear liking for people who use speech patterns already exposed to. (Spelke)
- Optimum time for language acquisition, foundation cognitive development, between 2-3 yrs. (Hooton)
- If children are not given experiences to engage their bodies, they will switch off.
- Movement frees the mind, instrumental music may affect the subconscious...
- Can be seen as the language of emotions, stirs up inner energies causing sensation in physical body that sets personality in motion. (Kokas)
- Symbol of human feelings. Through joyful musical experiences, becomes a higher form of communication, expressing what is inside.
- Sound exploration is crucial to language development...Caregiver's positive comments reinforce exploration.
- Communicative & expressive, laden with possibilities...
- Stress & cortisol washing over brain like oil. Can't think. With frequent occurrence chemistry of brain will be altered... (Berry)

*Environment plays major role in optimizing brain development. 70 % related to environment. Music offers opportunities for wiring on both sides of the brain.
Pam Schiller*

MUSICALLY SPEAKING

*The brain develops as it wires, only way it can wire is through senses as it experience the world. Novelty makes it up. Repetition is crucial.
Experience wires and repetition strengthens the connections. Pam Schiller*

- Music has more immunity-boosted potential when we actively participate...has the ability to calm and soothe. (Kuhn)
- Children's musical sensitivity is more comprehensive than we think. (Kokas)
- Music therapy has been demonstrated to directly help autistic-war traumatized-sexually abused-special needs-physically disable-low income-homeless children. (Hanna)
- Parent-child interactions possibly enhance attachment and the child's self-esteem having a positive effect on the child's competence (Guilmartin and Levinowitz)

- Combining language with movement increases cognition 90%. (*Wolfe*)
- Swinging, rocking vestibular activity (which children are doing less of) is related to highest level of thinking. (*Firestone*)
- Infants are born with innate ability to process musical sounds and patterns. Abilities must be nurtured through musical experiences or will be diminished, if not lost. (*Healy*)
- Infants and young children have selective windows of opportunity for optimal learning. This is especially true for music, since the ear is so ripe for aural language development from birth-3. (*Begley*)
- Preschool years are a time for socialization and play vs. mastery of abstract pre-academic tasks...caregivers need to make room for emotional lives of children. (*Hanna*)
- Music is best discovered in the body. Spontaneous movement frees the imagination. This freeing is a necessary prerequisite for great scientific discoveries and artistic accomplishment. Music is the language of emotions in the physical body that set the personality in motion. (*Kokas*)
- Music experiences can help children express difficult feelings, may allow them to address important issues that might otherwise arrest their normal development. (*Hanna*)
- Bedtime rituals provide greater emotional regulation at 24 months, opportunities for predictable patterns, protective factor in development, learning readiness skills from preschool to Kndg. (*National Head Start Research & Evaluation Study-EHSRE*)

BENEFITS OF NURSERY RHYMES

- Impact emergent literacy through language development and phonemic awareness.
- Kinesthesia and language play, specifically rhyming are important components in connecting literacy to learning...learn best when movement is involved. *Jensen*
- Fun, engaging oral activities facilitates language acquisition, increases phonological awareness & improves phonemic awareness through rhyme recognition. *Widdowson*
- Rhyme is particularly beneficial for struggling and reluctant readers. *Beers*
- Nurture social skills and emotional well-being.
- Most natural introduction to poetry. *R.Luken*
- When combined with movement give children a multi dimensional sensory experience.
- Provide a link between home and school that fosters a feeling of security. *J. Glazer*
- Perpetuate our literary heritage, linking generations together. *Mary E. Shorey*
- Exposure by age 3 more likely to have higher level of phonemic awareness when enter Kindergarten.
- One indicator of how well children read is their ability to recite nursery rhymes when walk in the kindergarten. *Cunningham et al*
- Encourage children to enjoy participating in music-making through various activities of listening, predicting, singing and moving to music. *Biddiss*
- Singing helps form social bonds...singing together releases oxytocin, known to be involved in establishing bonds of trust between people. *Levitin*
- Pass on common knowledge i.e. counting, alphabet, days of week.
- Rhyming, rhythm and song aid memory, beat attracting attention. Poetic imagery is powerful pathway to storing memory. Melody & harmony attract the brain to listen because they give enjoyment. *Biddiss*
- Possibility that types of song helped to shape us throughout tens of thousands of years. *Levitin*

Tummy Time

- More children skipping crawling stage, considered crucial-strengthen muscles, support handwriting & endurance. Support midline to swing bat & catch ball & have hand-eye coordination. *Amy Vaughan*
- Snowball effect. Cognitive development delayed, visual motor skills delayed. 1 in 5 visual processing disorder.
- Establishes upper body strength that babies will use for rest of their lives, to read & write, hold scissors properly, catch a ball, climb a jungle gym. *Amy Vaughan*
- Supports neck development, which supports jaw, supporting talking and eating.
- Hold a mirror and other interesting objects while singing.
- Lack of can create developmental delays and sensory processing problems.

Fingerplays-Massage

- Help in development of early speech, rhythm and timing, dramatization skills, coordination of hand-foot movement and body awareness.
- Develop hand and finger strength and coordination, necessary for holding and controlling a pencil.
- Encourage communication and touch between adult and child.
- Unclench tight little fists. *Eve Kodiac*
- Tickles to stimulate response and promote separateness.
- Help practice pincher movements.

Rhymes-Peek A Boo

- Provide basis for development of good listening skills. Words supported by the action.
- Encourage mental images-develop vocabulary for creative thinking-make new connections.
- Pleasure from coordination hand-foot or body movements with rhythm of the verse.
- Aware of hands and feet before fingers and toes.
- Peek-a-boo exercise in object permanence. *Eve Kodiac*

Moving

- Bouncing and rocking replicates motion in utero. Helps to get cerebrospinal fluid circulating as well as encouraging growth of new neural pathways, integrating the primitive reflexes. *Eve Kodiac*
- Pony trots-babies learn quickly where WHOOPS comes & show with body anticipate surprise.
- One of 1st things to master control of the body. Sense of balance precedes- facilitates capacity to move.
- 3 planes of movement-rotation around vertical axis-spinning...horizontal...rolling or back and forth...side to side, tilting or up and down
- Children gain control of body in space through planes of movement.
- Ring a Roses-how to fall and get up again and learning how NOT to fall again.
- Classical music, especially Mozart, Vivaldi, Baroque-found to stimulate the brain.

Lullabies

- A form of universal language. The human interaction is the important thing rather than individual lullaby.
- Structure, like a story with a beginning, middle & end, appeals to children.
- Pattern helps learn structure and order, and exercise imagination.
- Slow pace, mimick many of movements experienced before birth.
- Help to strengthen bond formed before birth.

Bedtime Stories

- Create space to spend a few treasured minutes together everyday sharing an activity and language, which goes beyond mundane, daily conversation.
- Regular basis most likely to succeed. Key predictor in terms of educational success. *Pie Corbett*
- Told stories boosts language, by feeding imagination, develops abstract thought. Best writers are avid readers. Establish bedtime routine and wind down at end of the day.

Resource: The Genius of Natural Childhood and The Well Balanced Child-Sally Goddard Blythe, unless otherwise noted.

Infant-Toddler Picture and Story Books

A You're Adorable...M. Alexander
Baby Dance...Ann Taylor
Bumpety Bump...Kathy Henderson
All Fall Down-Clap Hands
Say Goodnight-Tickle...H. Oxenburry
Bedtime...Joan Blos
Big Red Barn...Margaret Wise Brown

Come Along Daisy...Jane Williams
Everywhere Babies...Susan Meyers
Eyes, Nose, Fingers & Toes...Judy Hindley
From Head to Toe...Eric Carle

Home For A Bunny...Margaret Wise Brown
Hush Little Baby...Sylvia Long
I Went Walking...Sue Williams
Jamberry...Bruce Degen

Listen To The Rain-Here Are My Hands...Bill Martin Jr.
Miss Spider's Tea Party...David Kirk
Oh My Baby, Little One...Kathy Appelt
Patrick Paints a Picture...Saviour Pirotta
Peekaboo Morning...Rachel Isadora

Raccoon Tune...Nancy Shaw
Runaway Bunny...Margaret Wise Brown
Row Your Boat (many others) Iza Trapani
Silly Sally...Audrey Wood...So Much...Trish Cooke
Snuggle Wuggle...John London
Snappy Little Farmyard

The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything...Linda Williams
The World of Christopher Robin...A.A. Milne
Ten little fingers and ten little toes...Mem Fox
Time For Bed...Mem Fox
Treasury of Poetry and Rhymes...Selected by Alistair Hedley

Water, Water...Eliose Greenfield
What Makes a Rainbow...Betty Schwartz
Where is My Baby?...H.Ziefert & S. Taback
Where is Baby's Belly Button?...Karen Katz

Down in the Meadow

Down in the meadow in an itty bitty pool. (scissor movement with legs)

Swam 3 little fishies and a mama/daddy fishy too.(bend knees to chest)

Swim said the mama, swim if you can . (legs up & down like swimming)

And they swam and swam all over the dam .(circle legs around, rotating hips)

Boop, boop, Ditta-datta. What-em Shoo! (3)(crossing left over right & right over left) (kiss baby on shoo)

And they swam and they swam all over the dam.....

10 little Fishes

Tune: 10 little Indians 1 little, 2 little, 3 little fishes, 4 little etc. 10 fish in the sea. (walking around w/parachute) (stop)

(stop everytime sing 10 fish in the sea)

(parachute down and up) they swam down low to hide in the seaweed...etc 10 fish in the sea.....

(walking around) they swam n swam n swam all around in a circle etc...

jumped up high to catch some bugs...