

Everybody Started Out Small:
How Music Encourages
Learning, Connection, and Joy
In Young Children
(and in those who sing with them.)

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Presented by
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Everybody Started Out Small: Making Music with Young Children

Purpose

Questions for this session

- How does the brain work?
- What does it need to work well?
- How does what you do already fit with this knowledge?
- How can you build on this knowledge to enhance what you do?
- Why is music so good for the brain?

Goals for the children we work with:

- To learn authentically and deeply.
- To feel safe and connected to those around them.
- To learn in ways that fit their individual learning styles.
- To be ready to read.
- To expand their experiences and knowledge of the world.
- To be creative, imaginative, and flexible in their thinking.
- To be kind, compassionate, and joyful.
- To play and have fun
- To love singing and making music together.

Music can help to reach each of these goals.

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Our brains are incredibly complex. If every neuron in our brain were connected to every other neuron, there would be more connections than there are atoms in the universe. Although we have much in common, each of us is unique in how we learn.

Music works in ways that fit with what research tells us about how the brain works. Young children need relationships, safety, movement, meaning, and repetition to learn well.

Healthy Brains will -

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Relate

Understandings

- The brain is a social organ.
- It works best in connection with other brains.
- When a person doesn't feel safe, energy is diverted from the learning centers of the brain to the affective (emotional) centers. Fear takes over, and learning diminishes.

Activities

Singing Warm-Ups

- Animal Sounds (Snake, Bee, Humming, Puppy Pant)
- Singing Voice, Whisper, Talking, Shouting
- Lion
- Alien
- Nutcracker
- Letters
- Dog and Cat

Songs

1. I Wonder If _____ Is Here.
2. I Know Your Face, but I Don't Know Your Name.
3. How'd You Do?
4. 8 Hugs a Day.
5. Won't You Be My Partner
6. Jambo

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Connect

Understandings

- Our brains want to connect dendrites. That's what makes learning happen.
- The nerves are already there. Learning is the process of connecting them.
- The brain looks for meaning and pattern.
- Meaning relates to what you have experienced. How does this fit with what I already know?
- Children find meaning in relating to their own experience.
- Creative thinking begins with what you know, and then makes a new association.

Activities

- Zipper Songs
- Connection to School Units

Songs

1. I'm So Big
2. Rainbow
3. It's a Very Good Day
4. We All Need More Kindness in this World

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Practice/Repeat

Understandings

- Brains grow by connecting nerve cells. The connection is called a synapse. It's not how big your brain is, it's how many connections there are.
- At its peak, the cerebral cortex creates two million new synapses every second.
- By two years of age, a toddler's cerebral cortex contains well over a hundred trillion synapses.
- Nerves that fire together, wire together. This is called myelination.

Activities

- Same stories explored at length, rather than a new one every day.
- Songs with repetitive parts.

Songs

1. Dog In School
2. Rainbow
3. I'm So Big

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4.

Move

Understandings

- Movement is a great way to embed learning.
- The greatest majority of children are kinesthetic learners.
- We have six senses. The sixth sense is balance or kinesthetic.
- If we are asking kids to sit still, so much energy goes into balance/holding still that listening becomes more difficult.
- Adding movement deepens every learning experience.
- We learn best if we learn in more than one way or modality.
- Often children will come up with movements of their own.

Activities

- Brain Gym
- WOMMP (Water, Oxygen, Marching, Midline, Pretzel)

Songs

1. Zoom Zoom Zoom
2. Mi Cuerpo
3. Know Your Oaks
4. Fire truck

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Feel

Understandings

- Children need to learn self control
- Children need emotional literacy
- Children need to experience empathy.
- Children need confidence
- Mirror neurons help us to connect emotionally.

Activities

- Freeze clap.
- You walk and you Walk...

Songs

1. I can Jump
2. I can Show It On My Face
3. Five Little Monkeys
4. Won't You Be My Partner
5. Love Grows
6. We All Need More Kindness in this World.

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Transition

Understandings

- Music helps with patterns of routine.
- Songs provide safety and familiarity about expectations.

Activities

- Cleaning Up to Music
- Rest Time Music
- Lining up for Activities
- Going Home

Songs

1. Clean Up
2. Greeting Songs
3. Going Home Songs
4. Hand Washing Songs

Songs that can be easily adapted.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Twinkle Twinkle Little Star | • Muffin Man |
| • Are You Sleeping? | • If You're Happy |
| • Row your Boat. | • Bear Went Over the Mountain |
| • Farmer in the Dell | • Eency Weency Spider |
| • Mary had a little lamb | • Ants Go Marching |
| • London Bridge | • Old MacDonald |
| • Mulberry Bush | • Happy Birthday |
| • This Old Man | |
| • Skip to My Lou | |

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Read

Understandings

- Music lays a strong foundation for literacy through rhythm, rhyme, listening, and patterning.
- Exposure to and familiarity with other languages is an important skill for the future.
- Our brains are wired to learn through story.

Activities

- Letter Sounds
- Rhyming

Songs

1. Dog In School
2. How Do I Know? (I Read It In a Book)
3. Favorite Books
4. Gingerbread Man
5. Little Red Hen
6. Down by the Bay
7. Mi Cuerpo

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Play/Create

Understandings

- Play is critical for brain, personality, and social development
- Creativity is a central skill for success in life.
- When children choose, their engagement rises.

Activities

- Nonsense songs
- Silly motions
- Instruments

Songs

1. Willaby Wallaby Woo.
2. Down by the Bay
3. Percussion Round
4. Singing in the Rain
5. Be Bananas
6. Fire Truck

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Resources

BOOKS

Armstrong, Thomas *Multiple Intelligence in the Classroom*
Hamilton, Martha and Mitch Weiss. *Children Tell Stories*.
Katonah, N.Y.: Yellow Moon Press, 1992.
Jensen, Eric *Arts with the Brain in Mind*
Levitin, Daniel. *This is Your Brain on Music*
Page, Nick *Music as a Way of Knowing*
Dee Hansen, Elaine Bernstorff, and Gayle M. Stube *The Music and Literary Connection*
Haven, Kendall *Story Proof* Libraries Unlimited, 2008

WEB SITES

<http://perpetualpreschool.com/>
<http://www.artsedge.org/>
<http://www.preschoollearningonline.com/>
<http://www.everythingpreschool.com/>
www.preschoolrainbow.org
www.songsforteaching.com
www.cmnonline.org
<http://www.mgol.net/public/articles/dendrites.pdf>
<http://www.jackstreet.com/jackstreet/WMUS.Honig.cfm>

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Three Songs

Goals

Relationship Building

Safety

Relevance/Zipper Songs

Repetition: Making Connections and
Reinforcing Them.

Movement

Emotion

Parents Advice

Who You Learned From

Questions??????