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Children . . . Blooming In Their Own time

When my children were younger, we enrolled them in swimming classes with the hope that they would become comfortable in the water. The two older children had no difficulty in transitioning from parent and child classes to going on their own. The youngest one, however, did not adapt so easily. After the first day, I was ready to pull her out of class since she did not even get into the pool. The teachers assured me they would get her into the water if I continued to bring her each week. It continued with me bringing her, getting her into her swimsuit, and then changing her out of her dry swimsuit and going home. The half hour class consisted of a teacher walking her around the pool while watching other children having their lessons. She resisted vocally all the while. This continued for a few classes and then one day I no longer heard her resistance. I looked at the pool and there she was walking down the stairs into the water. She continued over the next couple of years and became quite a confident swimmer. What has this got to do with music classes?

I have shared this story with some of my parents when they have come to the first class and then feel that it is not for their child due to lack of participation. Some continue and some do not. For the ones who do, we enjoy watching their children’s development, creativity, family bonding, self-esteem, confidence, emotional development, and enjoyment of music. We, as teachers, know that other benefits are language development, self-expression, memory skills, concentration, social interaction, fine motor skills, listening, problem solving, teamwork, goal setting, and coordination.

There is one class in particular that comes to mind.

There was a child who had just started and wanted to actively explore the room during the whole class. The child’s mother kept apologizing for her behavior. Little Stephanie was also in that class, singing and participating in all the activities. The active child’s mother was surprised to find out that Stephanie was just as distracted as her child when she started music classes.

I can relate with the parents wanting to withdraw after the first class, but am extremely delighted when the parents continue and they can see the changes in their children just as I saw the changes with my daughter. Now she is all grown up, still loves to swim and is studying to be an early childhood specialist. If you have a child who resists going to class or one who does not seem to participate with the other children during class, hang in there. It is so wonderful to watch children bloom in their own time.

Susan Kirton received her Licentiate for Vocal Performance (L.C.C.M.) through Conservatory Canada, and her Associate of the Royal Conservatory of Music (A.R.C.T.) for Singing Performers and Teachers. She has taught singing, piano and Musikgarten for many years. She has also received her Level I Orff at the University of Manitoba and Level II certification through ECMMA. She is currently the Regional Representative for the Northwest Region of the ECMMA.

Readers are encouraged to reproduce and distribute this “Notable Notes” bulletin for educational purposes. For more information contact: ECMMA Administrative Office, 805 Mill Avenue, Snohomish, WA 98290 ~ (360) 568-5635 email: adminoffice@ecmma.org ~ www.ecmma.org

If you have a child who resists going to class . . . hang in there. It is so wonderful to watch children bloom in their own time.
My first PTA meeting was an interesting experience. I've never taught in a building with a PTA and added my five dollars to the cause this year, although the Fine Arts Boosters take good care of me. I had expected to blend into a crowd of anonymity on chairs with speakers up front, but instead took a corner seat around clustered tables. The discussion centered on ways these women could serve children and teachers. I was amazed at their creativity—and their dedication!

Motivation is an interesting phenomenon. A teacher at this meeting quipped later that she felt she should take a committee job (and did). Guilt works pretty well to get people to make a commitment, but I haven't found it an exceptionally satisfying way to operate over the long haul.

Yesterday a simple-sounding question side-tracked the speaker at our Orff workshop. In the middle of her long answer, she said with a wry grin, “It’s too bad I’m not passionate about my work!” Passion, of course, brings willing follow-through, and a calling to service generally makes happier workers. From the energy she brought to a Saturday with us, she obviously had both.

Right now ECMMA is in the middle of a planning process. We are near the 20-year mark and looking at projects for the next decade. It’s fun to dream about what could be accomplished for music and young children! But all the plans require people—people who can talk to others, give feedback, plan an event, see the big picture, manage the details, keep the records, follow up on conversations, do some legwork, make phone calls, listen to ideas, ask questions . . . well, you get the idea. Good things require the work of many hands for success.

Recently a woman asked about setting a date for a workshop because music teachers in her local schools now have 4-year olds. She wants to spread the word about ECMMA’s wealth of information. I have to admit that’s what led me to leadership. Most of what I learned about making music with young children I gained from reading ECMMA publications and attending ECMMA events. I was ready to share.

When I was approached about the Presidency, my first thought was, “Shouldn’t the president teach at a university? I’m in a public school in rural Iowa.” When I voiced that doubt, here’s the gist of the answer I received: “Where you teach doesn’t matter. We need someone who cares about early

...continued on the next page
child music and movement with organizational skills to get things done.” Still I demurred. Then we started brainstorming. A listener remarked that I spoke like someone who should one day be president. It’s interesting now to look back on the internal dialogue that led me from “that will never happen,” to “perhaps one day,” to “OK, I’ll do it.”

So where do you see yourself in this process? Are you ready to mentor a young teacher? Can you tell a group of eager listeners how or what you teach? Could you help organize a chapter meeting? Would you enjoy connecting with others to make decisions?

Many hands make light work, and the work ECMMA does is vital for growing a healthy, human society in this increasingly technological world. You’re already involved in this wonderful service. How big is the next step on the ladder of leadership?

Judy Panning
ECMMA President

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**ECMMA New Members & Certifications**

*We welcome these new members and certifications from 5/1/11 – 7/31/11*

**New Members**

**North Central:**
- Melissa Aurand – Rockford, IL
- Alison Baker – Springfield, IL
- Joanie Calem – Columbus, OH
- Clara D’Onofrio – Brookfield, IL
- Jessica Garrison – Watertown, WI
- Annelies Harmon – Boone, IA
- Janette Harriott – Kearney, NE
- Lisa Heintz – Lewis Center, OH
- Margaret Matthes – Bloomfield Hills, MI
- Agata Nowak – Harwood Heights, IL
- Rachel Veenker – New Brighton, MN
- Leigh Warnell – Muskego, WI

**Northeast:**
- Kara Burgess – Fair Haven, NY
- Betha Christopher – State College, PA
- Denise Guilbault – Warwick, RI
- Patricia Weitz – Yardville, NJ

**Northwest:**
- Jessica Baudin-Griffin – Edmonton, AB, Canada
- Irene Bowen – Vegreville, AB, Canada
- Renee DeBlock – Edmonton, AB, Canada
- Louise Hansen – Edmonton, AB, Canada
- Holly Hykawy – Calgary, AB, Canada
- Amy James – Bend, OR
- Sarah Lindgren – St Albert, AB, Canada
- Robyn Pfeifer, NCTM – Portland, OR
- Susan Seale – Victoria, BC, Canada

**South Central:**
- Janice Hale – Gladstone, MO
- Marilyn Lowe – Springfield, MO
- Gloria McDaniel – Tomball, TX
- Karen Reed – Austin, TX

**Southeast:**
- Heidi Fields – Atlanta, GA
- Julie Miller – Nashville, TN
- Nikki Ransdell – Wake Forest, NC
- Sarah Ware – Herndon, VA

**Certifications:**

**Level I - New**
- Candia Cormack – Winnipeg, MB, Canada
Welcome to the 2011 fall issue of ECMMA’s Perspectives. We are pleased to feature articles by Julie D. Kastner, a Doctoral candidate at Michigan State University, and Claudia Gluschankof, professor at the Levinsky College of Education, Tel-Aviv, Israel. In her article, “Providing an Inclusive Environment and Appropriate Instruction for Early Childhood Music,” Julie Kastner discusses three specific ways that early childhood music teachers can adapt their instruction to provide positive and successful music experiences for all their young students. In the following article, “Musical Behaviors of Young Children: Perceptions and Constructions of Undergraduate and Graduate Early Childhood Practitioners,” Claudia Gluschankof investigates children’s predominant musical behaviors based on data she collected from observations made by students in her early childhood music education courses. Dr. Gluschankof also offers an insightful analysis regarding the relationship between the early childhood students’ recollected and recorded observations with their own values and beliefs concerning music and the young child.

Also in this issue, Lianne Brewer reviews John Flohr’s book entitled The Musical Lives of Young Children (2004), a worthwhile “read” for early childhood educators and parents. In the Notable Notes column, Susan Kirton shares her experiences and insights concerning the importance of helping young children realize their musical potential in “their own time.” Diana Dansereau reviews an interesting study by Reigado, Rocha, and Rodrigues (2011) that aimed to understand the nature of infants’ vocal responses to musical and spoken stimuli. And, in the section Research Within Reach, be sure to check out the summaries of current research studies relevant to early childhood education.

In summer 2011, five ECMMA Regional Conferences were held around the U.S. and in Canada: South Central Regional Conference (Houston, TX), Southeast Regional Conference (Cookeville, TN), Northwest Regional Conference (Edmonton, AB, Canada), North Central (Dayton, OH), and Northeast Regional Conference (Providence, RI). The presenters and speakers featured at the regional conferences came from varied educational and professional backgrounds and provided conference attendees with a wealth of information relevant to early childhood music and movement education. Summaries of some of the conference sessions are included in this issue.

Angela Barker, Ph.D.
Editor
In an early childhood music class, you may see children engaging in a wide variety of ways, including watching, moving their bodies, playing with props, and musically babbling in response to the songs and chants they hear. However, you may not be able to discern whether any of these children have specific special needs that require sensitivity and modifications in your early childhood music teaching, particularly if a child’s special need is cognitive or behavioral rather than physical. Frequently, young children are not given a specific label for their diagnosis, but are identified as having “developmental delays,” in order to acknowledge the accommodations needed without applying a permanent label (Odom & Diamond, 1998, p. 4). As early childhood music teachers, we should seek to provide an inclusive environment and appropriate instruction for our students with special needs and/or developmental delays.

This article seeks to provide insights from literature in early childhood education and early childhood music education that provide applications for early childhood music teachers to use with their young students with special needs. However, little research exists to describe how young children with special needs learn in the early childhood music classroom. The Division for Early Childhood (DEC) of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) states that young children and their families deserve experiences with “development and learning to reach their full potential” and that early childhood teaching should include appropriate “access, participation, and supports” for all students (DEC/NAEYC, 2009, p. 2). By considering these three features in relation to early childhood music, you can make simple changes to support the teaching you are already doing, while still meeting the needs of all students.

Access

In the early childhood music classroom, access refers to providing opportunities for all students to engage in classes and activities (DEC/NAEYC, 2009). In many cases, the early childhood music classroom can be an even more accessible environment for young children than other settings, because it allows them to engage playfully with music without expectations of correct responses. Related to this idea of access is “least restrictive environment,” which means that children should have access to an environment with the fewest accommodations or restrictions, as is appropriate for each child (Hammel, 2004). For many young
children, the least restrictive environment is in a music class with other typically-developing students, while other children may need a different music class environment with fewer classmates, additional teaching aids, or adaptive musical instruments and props. If you are in a public-school setting, you should work with special education teachers, parents, and administrators to determine the least restrictive environment, particularly if the child has an “individualized education plan” (IEP). If you are in a private studio or community music setting, you should work primarily with parents, but also with administrators to determine the best situation for each child.

**Participation**

In planning and implementing instruction, you can be “intentional” about the choices you make in order to individualize instruction and promote participation for the special needs of some children (DEC/NAEYC, 2009, p. 2). Depending on the types of special needs and/or developmental delays of the students in your music classroom, you may need to develop specific strategies in advance to encourage participation, but you may also need to be flexible in the moment to address situations as they arise. In a study of two public-school elementary general music teachers in their pre-kindergarten music classes, the music teachers exemplified both of these ideas through their modeling, use of language, and inclusion of silent thinking time (Kastner, 2011). Both music teachers promoted a safe, comfortable environment that encouraged the participation of their students with special needs by serving as musical models, social models, and language models.

In being a musical model, rather than verbally explaining an activity or musical goal, you can model how students might sing, chant, move, and perform. You can also utilize songs and chants that do not include words, but are performed on a neutral syllable, like “ba,” “da,” or “ya.” For children who struggle with processing language, this may allow them to participate successfully in music class without having to decode your directions or lyrics first. For example, Taggart, Alvarez, and Schubert (2011), in a study of children with special needs including Down syndrome, hearing impairments, and social and language delays, found that the children’s musical development was similar to that of typically-developing children, but the children with hearing impairments had a delay in their responses and accuracy. By focusing on musical modeling, you can create a seamless flow of musical momentum that further encourages young children’s attention and participation from one activity to the next in a way that is appropriate to their needs.

While promoting musical development may be your primary goal as an early childhood music teacher, serving as a model for children’s social and language development can help children with special needs participate more fully in music class. In the study described earlier of two elementary general music teachers who taught pre-kindergarten music to children with special needs, one of the teachers provided a social model through her promotion of taking turns and taking every opportunity to say “please” and “thank you” with students.
Not only did this model her expectations for appropriate classroom behavior, but through her demeanor, vocal inflection, and simple language, this teacher established a safe place for students’ participation. The other teacher in the study emphasized her role as a language model, and sought opportunities to interact with and encourage language use from her young students. As mentioned above, you may want to limit your use of language and directions in the classroom, but depending upon the specific needs of your students, you may consider the following options in your use of language:

- **Use short, concise statements** (Hammel, 2004). *(For example, say, “Clean up,” rather than, “Okay boys and girls, it’s time for us to pick up all of the scarves.”)*

- **Give options**, rather than asking open-ended questions. *(Instead of asking in a movement activity, “What do you want to do next?” you might ask, “Jumping or rocking?”)*

- **Capitalize on facial expressions, vocal inflections, and gestures to help convey your meaning.** *(Open your eyes wide and exaggerate the pitch of your voice going up when asking a question.)*

- **Sing your directions** on Do or in a simple melody of the key and tonality in which you will perform.

- **Allow an extended amount of silence after asking a question, in order to provide time for children to hear, process, and respond.**

Taggart, Alvarez, and Schubert (2011) found that children with language delays and/or hearing impairments began to vocalize responses, indicating developments in both their language and musicianship. Some of the children with special needs expressed their first words or sounds in music class, even though few songs in the music class were performed with lyrics. Using suggestions, like those listed above, may encourage some of the children with special needs and/or developmental delays to have their own “firsts” in your music classes.

In addition to making intentional changes in the use of musical, social, and language modeling, you can also work on being flexible throughout your music classes as your students demonstrate their needs and desires (Kastner, 2011). This on-going monitoring of children’s participation was found to be an essential quality for working with children with special needs (Hammel, 2001). For example, an early childhood music teacher was documented echoing a child’s response or giving an “answer” in an attempt to enter into musical dialogue with that child (Kastner, 2011). While this may have paused the flow of the activity, it encouraged children to express themselves musically and to hear differences between the teacher’s responses and the children’s responses. In my own teaching, I had a child who exhibited sensitivity to loud noises. When I would make a train whistle noise at the end of one of my songs about trains, he began to cry and cover his ears. I immediately adapted my teaching, making the train whistle sound softer and less intense. Being flexible in your early childhood music teaching could include making adaptations and accommodations like the ones described above, as well as through making changes in the content or length of an activity, the prop or musical instrument that is used or the way in which it is used, and more. In order to be flexible in the moment, you must be well prepared in the activities and music you intend to use, as well as sensitive in “reading” the visual and vocal cues young children give you throughout the class.

**Supports**

Early childhood music teachers need the support from key individuals who are invested in the growth and
well-being of their students; collaboration with others is a characteristic of successful inclusive classrooms (Odom & Diamond, 1998). Collaboration and communication have been documented as aiding early childhood music teachers to provide an inclusive environment and appropriate instruction (Kastner, 2011). Both teachers in this study sought out the knowledge of other trained specialists, like early childhood classroom teachers, special education teachers, physical and occupational therapists, and speech pathologists. Hammel (2004) gave music teachers the suggestion, “Know your special education faculty” (p. 34), and recommended collaboration with them to find out more in-depth information about the details of students’ special needs and the accommodations they require. This may occur casually, through trading anecdotes or ideas in the hallways or in email, or more formally in IEP meetings and scheduled conferences. The special education faculty, as well as the other professionals listed above, have a great deal of knowledge and training, and they may work with your students on a more regular basis, equipping them to provide valuable information that can help you in your teaching.

In addition to these individuals, instructional aides and parents can be useful sources of information and support. Frequently, they are the people who attend music classes with the young children, interacting with them in their music activities, and thus, they are an integral part of your early childhood music classes. Parents and teaching aides, who may be with a student with special needs or developmental delays for an entire school day, often know details not only about children’s special needs, but also about their dispositions, preferences, moods, and attitudes that day. You can seek out their insights, as well as rely on them to provide additional musical, social, and language models for participation and interaction. Because these individuals are coming into your classroom, it is also important to communicate effectively with them about your goals and expectations in music class, which is another essential quality for working with children with special needs (Hammel, 2001). You may consider scheduling a time to explain to parents and/or teaching aides about your classroom structure, organization, routines, and expectations for how they interact with the children during class, and then give them a time to share with you what they know and expect. Together, you can develop an environment in which you can all encourage children’s musical growth, while also working as a support network for each other.

Teaching Music, Teaching Children

Teaching music to young children is exciting, fun, joyful, and sometimes challenging. Providing an inclusive environment and appropriate instruction for all students means that early childhood music teachers may need to make changes to accommodate students with special needs and/or developmental delays particularly in the three areas of access, participation, and support (DEC/NAEYC, 2009). Through providing access in a least restrictive environment, participation through pre-planned and in-the-moment modifications to activities, and support from trained professionals and parents, you can make small, but effective, adaptations in your early childhood music teaching to improve the musical experiences and musical growth for all your students.

References


Instructional aides and parents can be useful sources of information and support.
Introduction

Music and young children have been studied extensively from a variety of research paradigms. Researchers’ use of observation tools in qualitative studies offers us a clear idea of how children behave musically, mainly in Western educational settings. Moorhead and Pond (1942/1978) published the first study of this kind almost 70 years ago. It could be supposed that practice is based on research evidence, and such evidence lies at the core of the early childhood music education courses I teach for both undergraduate and graduate students in early childhood education (ECE), all of whom are early childhood practitioners. Since observation and analysis of video recordings is a central tool in the course, in recent years, in the very first class session I have been asking my students—studying for the B.Ed. and M.Ed. in early childhood education (ECE)—to write a description of a musical behavior demonstrated by a child that they had observed during the preceding month. The aim of these descriptions has been to give me insight on my students’ awareness of young children and music.

As I read the descriptions, all written anonymously, I realized that they were often quite different from those described in the research literature on educational settings. Consequently, I decided to study these descriptions in a systematic way in order to understand my students’ perceptions and constructions of young children’s musical behaviors, prior to their formal encounter with research-based courses.

Literature Review

Researchers have studied young children’s musical behaviors through actual observations, but such behaviors can also be studied as social constructions inferred from adults’ verbal accounts in carefully designed questionnaires.

Musical behavior as an observable complex phenomenon

“Children’s engagement in music frequently is paid minimal attention by teachers and parents, even when it may be the rich repository of children’s intimate thoughts and sentiments” (Campbell, 1998, p.5). However, some researchers have chosen to study the observable music behavior of children within qualitative research paradigms or positivistic studies, using qualitative research...
tools, in four different environments: formal educational (inside the classroom), informal educational (schoolyard and other out-of-classroom spaces), the home, and public places.

Moorhead and Pond (1942/1978) were the first to publish research on children's musical behaviors in formal educational environments (i.e. in the classroom, during free playtime). Their work was not only the first in this type of tradition but seminal in coining new basic concepts, such as chant: a rhythmic, small-range song, repetitive, sung in a group, usually loudly (Moorhead & Pond, 1941/1978). They pioneered research on children's spontaneous music making with instruments (Moorhead, Sandvik, & Wight, 1951/1978) and their studies emphasized that movement is inherent to children's musical expression.

Within this line of research, it is possible to differentiate between studies in which the researcher or teacher has carefully designed the educational environment to encourage musical behaviors (e.g. Cohen, 1980; Delalande, 2009; Gluschankof, 2005a; Mialaret, 1997; Young, 1995), from those in which observations were made in "natural" environments, i.e., environments not purposely designed or provided with the research in mind (e.g. Littleton, 1991). In both cases, researchers found that children explore systematically and exhibit musical play behaviors in a variety of ways. The children's activities may involve not only music instruments but all sorts of artifacts (informal or non-musical instruments), while also engaging most of their senses.

Vocal expressions are present everywhere in preschool. Children not only sing songs learned from their teachers or from the media (i.e., composed songs), but they also create their own. In the USA, Moorhead and Pond (1941/1978) suggested that there were two main types of invented vocal expressions: chant and solo (a free-flowing, introverted type of singing). Fifty years later, Bjørkvold (1989/1992) in Norway and Sundin (1998) in Sweden identified these same types of vocal expressions.

Since the 1990's, research involving exterior spaces in educational settings, or what can be called "informal" spaces, has shown that they provide a rich field in which to study young children's musical behaviors. In such settings, young children's musical expressions are mainly vocalizations (own invented tunes, chants, and rhymes) and "rhythmicking" in their play with artifacts (Campbell, 1998). Older children's musical play takes the form of singing games, characterized by some type of social in-
Children exhibit different types of musical behaviors in the home, depending on their age and their parents’ background and beliefs, among other factors. In studies where parents reported and video-recorded the musical behaviors of babies and toddlers at home (Addessi, 2008; Custodero, Chen, Lin, and Lee (2006) investigated the musical behaviors of young children in public spaces. They gathered their data during nine hours’ observation of spontaneous music making in family-friendly public spaces (malls, parks, museums) in Taipei. According to their findings, the most observed musical behavior was movement, mostly combined with singing and chanting, sometimes in response to external sound sources.

In summary, researchers identify as musical a very wide range of behaviors including the use of voice, tools (musical or others), movement; engaging with others, responding to external sources, self-motivated; already composed music and self-created; happening in almost any place: educational, home, and public.

Musical behavior as a social construction

As a social construction, musical behavior can be inferred in a variety of ways; from studies based on verbal accounts provided by musicians, non-musicians, teachers, and students, or from parents’ responses on especially designed questionnaires. Some musical behaviors can be deducted from written documents such as early childhood education curricula and media.

Following this line of research, Hallam (2010) conducted a study with adults and children, ranging from those actively involved in music to others with no involvement whatsoever. She found that primarily a sense of rhythm—along with expressing and communicating thoughts and feelings through sounds—is considered the basis for musical ability. These results are consistent with the constructions of music among education students: music signifies communication, emotion, and structure (Addessi, Cardoso de Araujo, Valls, & Gluschankof, 2010). In a related study, Addessi and Carugati (2010) hypothesized there are two main prototypes of the musical child implicitly expressed by university students and are based on a correlation between the construction of the musical child and the construction of music. The “able child” possesses greater musical ability (i.e. understands and can produce rhythm, remembers and reproduces a melody) correlates with music as structure, while music as communication correlates with the idea that all children are naturally musical.

In educational settings, singing in a variety of ways (e.g., along with a CD player, adult-directed, with or without movement) was the most reported musical behavior within the USA, followed by moving to the lyrics of songs written especially for children, then playing instruments.
in teacher-directed activities, such as accompanying singing or a recording. Children creating their own music or responding freely to instrumental music were reported least often (Custodero, Nardo, Fox, & Persellin, 2006). In Israel, listening to music in a variety of ways (e.g. adult-designed movement to recorded instrumental music or recorded songs, freely moving to recorded music – instrumental or vocal, joining with singing or small percussion instrument playing) is the most popular musical activity, followed by singing, and rarely the free use of instruments (Gluschankof & Shahar, 2004; Levin, 2009). The implicit views of musical behaviors in both cases are that children are not considered creators and that their own musical expressions are less legitimate than the ones created by adults. Based on these views, educators are introducing children to the adult world of music.

Method

Ninety-seven written descriptions of actual musical behaviors of young children were collected from students enrolled in early childhood music education courses at an Israeli college of education: 19 from ECE M.Ed. students, 31 from third-year undergraduates in an ECE B.Ed. program, and 47 from first-year ECE undergraduates. Fifty-three descriptions including at least three information details (age, setting, behavior) were further analyzed and categorized in an iterative, progressive, recursive and holographic process (Seidel, 1998), looking for emerging and implicit constructions.

Findings

A week ago my five-and-a-half year-old niece and I were riding in the car, and she offered to sing me a song. She sang a song (with which I was not acquainted) that she had learned in kindergarten. From time to time she stopped to remember a specific word. It was clear that she much enjoyed it because, when she finished singing that song, she offered to sing me another one. (M.Ed. student)

Descriptions similar to this one contained a great deal of information such as age, gender, the type of relationship between the student and the child (in this case, a relative), the setting (in this case, a private space within a public space), the situation (in this case, a car ride), the type of musical behavior (singing composed songs), the music repertoire (kindergarten singing repertoire), and the conveyed mood. It is clear from the description who initiated the behavior.

Depending on the specific situation, some descriptions were more general: “in kindergarten, during free-play time, children turn on the CD player by themselves and interact with instruments” (M.Ed. student), while others gave just a vague description of an action: “a five-year-old hums a known song” (M.Ed. student).

The coding and analysis of the descriptions including at least three information details (age, setting, and behavior) yielded two main categories regarding the setting in which the behavior was observed: family or educational. In both settings, behaviors were either initiated by the adults or by the child. Within educational settings, musical behaviors were described in a variety of instances, as shown in Figure 1. However, in family settings, only seldom were specific instances described, those being watching a TV program or a DVD, before sleeping, or during a car ride.

The described musical behaviors included how the
child produced music (with the voice, an object, or both) or what the child’s response was to an external musical source (live or recorded). Some behaviors included producing and responding to music at the same time: “At my place, my nephew dances to the sound of Carmen, sings the aria and moves to the beat, as a result of his exposure to the opera” (B.Ed., 3rd year student).

**Vocal production**

Singing known songs, whether alone, with others, along with a recorded version, self-initiated (S.I.), or adult-initiated (A.I.), was the most popular musical behavior (26 out of 53) in either family or educational settings (see Figure 2).

Some of the students’ descriptions noted the level of proficiency demonstrated by a child: “At preschool, a young boy in the toddlers’ group, sings accurately, sings all the words, the rhythm and the tune are the right ones, he goes up and down in singing, added by the author with the sounds” (B.Ed. 1st year student). One student described the way children improvised on a known song: “Children get songs’ illustrations props (e.g., [drawings] of citrus fruits for a song [on that topic] by D. Ben-Dor), they sing and invent when they do not remember [the words of the song, added by the author]” (M.Ed. student). Other descriptions related to the affective aspect of singing: “I saw a girl who sings in kindergarten. She sang and danced in front of the entire group. She smiled a lot and it was easy to see that she loves it” (B.Ed. 3rd year student). Humming was described also as singing.

Only three instances of improvising or singing invented songs were described, all of them in an educational setting: “During free time a girl sat beading, humming to herself a repetitive rhythm; at the end of each phrase she strung a bead” (B.Ed. 3rd year student).

**Responding to an external music source**

Throughout the first month of their first term, students spent one day per week observing children’s behaviors in a preschool class. The type of musical behavior reported most often by these first-year students involved children responding to music from an external source through movements and gestures, sometimes joining in singing. Third-year undergraduates and M.Ed. students rarely described this type of behavior, other than those who described their own young children’s behavior:

My son is 14 months old, and during the last month each time that he heard the opening theme of the morning TV program for toddlers, even if he is close to the TV set, he crawls quickly because he knows the sounds, he sits down and smiles.

External music sources also included live singing by a relative: “My
nephew is approximately two years old, and my brother sang to him a specific song (very energetic), my nephew swayed his shoulders and danced, and he made the whole family laugh” (B.Ed. 1st year student). Other sources involved live playing by the music teacher during the music lesson; and recorded music emanating from the TV set, CD player, and even the cell phone:

My niece is 3 years and 10 months old. Once I babysat for her in my home, and we played together with dolls and she said to me: ‘Let’s play that the dolls dance.’ I turned on some music from my cell phone; we took the dolls and made them dance. (B.Ed. 1st year student)

Children’s movement responses to music included small gestures, learned actions to specific songs, and freely moving in the room:

It happened while I was observing in preschool. The children were watching a TV program, ‘Yaniv hamagniv’; in that program there are songs and [actors] are dressed in costumes. The children sat, and while watching one of them got up, held out a hand to another child, and they start dancing in a circle; the movements they made amazed me, and we started to pay attention to them, and started clapping to them, which encouraged their dancing. (B.Ed. 1st year student)

**Producing sounds with artifacts**

The students’ observations rendered only five descriptions of children producing their own music with formal or informal music instruments. Interestingly enough, the first-year undergraduates described children playing with “real” instruments in home settings:

I visited my aunt and uncle who live up north, and my cousin, who is six years old, started singing songs from the ‘Festigal’ show¹, while she dances. Afterwards she sat close to me and played ‘Little Jonathan’² for me on her recorder.

From their observations during free play periods in a preschool, the graduate students described musical play with a variety of artifacts. One graduate student report-

1 The annual Chanukah-season musical variety show featuring stars of children’s TV and pop musicians.
2 The Hebrew version of “Hänschen klein”.

**Conclusions**

In this study, ECE students described singing as the most frequently occurring music behavior observed in young children, especially reproducing songs. This finding supports what preschool teachers have reported previously as the most widespread music making in their own classrooms (Custodero, Nardo, Fox, & Persellin, 2006; Gluschankof & Shahar, 2004; Levin, 2009). Although solitary singing was described, only few instances of improvised singing were reported, a type that researchers found as very typical among young children (Bjǿrkvold, 1989/1992; Burton, 2002; Forrester, 2010; Moorhead & Pond, 1941/1978). Israeli classrooms are very noisy, should this be the reason that children’s singing goes unheard? Gluschankof (2005b) recorded numerous instances in which a single child “…sings to herself, her singing is so soft that it is almost inaudible in the video recording; her singing is inferred, if not guessed, from the movements of her lips” (p. 211). Young (2006) suggested that children are seen but not heard in early childhood settings when they are involved in improvised solitary singing because adults are looking for the ‘performance model’ (i.e., composed songs taught by adults to children), consequently diverting their attention from anything that does not sound like that. Following this, it is plausible that not only were the teachers and student-observers who participated in the study so busy at their tasks that they were unlikely or unable to notice this type of singing, but also they may not have been cognizant that this type of behavior is typical of young children; or, because of their own adult-performance-model view of music making, they did not consider children’s improvised singing a worthwhile activity.

Children responding to live and recorded music through movement and gestures was another described behavior, but only by those students who spent time observing children and were not yet required to lead activities or conduct the preschool. All other undergraduate and graduate students seemed to be unaware of such behaviors or found them unremarkable. Researchers have documented that movement is inherent to any musical expression of young children (Moorhead, Sandvik, & Wight, 1951/1978), but it appears that parents (Barrett, 2009; Young, 2005) or freshmen are more likely to identify it. In the present study, it seemed that rela-
tives of young children and freshmen—those attached affectively to young children while not yet in charge of their teaching—considered all children naturally musical and likely of expressing themselves through music. On the other hand, student teachers and graduates, who by their roles were responsible for teaching children, tended to be aware of or interested in behaviors that were easily measured and assessed. These views parallel the prototypes hypothesized by Addessi & Carugati (2010): the “natural musical child” and the “able child.”

Young children’s free use of instruments and other tools as part of their self-initiated play seemed to be seen and heard only by researchers and a few graduate students. Again, this may be related to the performance model and to the view of music held by students and teachers.

While this was a pilot study, the adults’ descriptions of their recollections of young children’s musical behaviors proved to enclose specific sets of values and views of the child and music. This kind of description analysis could be useful not only in studies investigating the influence of music education courses on college students’ social representation of music and the musical child (Addessi, Cardoso de Araujo, Valls, & Gluschankof, 2010), but also in studies of preschool and music teachers, as well as of parents. Finally, it would be interesting to study video-clips featuring what those who were observing and recording—whether students, teachers, or parents—consider as constituting the essence of young children’s musical behaviors.

References


John Flohr wrote the book *The Musical Lives of Young Children* “because of [his] belief that the nurturing of children’s musical interest is of great import to children’s development and their emotional lives” (p. ix). Sounds exactly like the foundation and goals of ECMMA.

This book is an overview and introduction to the field of music for young children and provides direction for teachers and parents. It is not a compilation of research, nor is it a book with a variety of activities for teachers. There are three sections to the text: Foundations, Methods and Organization, and Experiences.

In the “Foundations” section, Flohr gives important information on child development, music for infants, and developmentally appropriate practices. He compares selected instructional approaches for young children (such as High/Scope, Multiple Intelligences, Reggio Emilia, Waldorf Schools) and includes a fascinating but brief overview of prenatal and first year musical development.

The second section on “Methods and Organization” provides an introduction to the many ways to teach young children, and emphasizes that the choices are affected by teaching skills, preferences and individual learning differences in the children.

A simple chart outlines many current methods for teaching young children, the fundamental idea behind each, instructional goals, the primary musical vehicle, and the necessary teacher skills and training required. Each “method” is explained further in the text. Flohr continues to give many helpful suggestions on how to organize the instructional setting, including ideas on class management, the environment, lesson planning and components.

The “Experiences” section is divided into chapters for each of the avenues of music learning: listening, singing, moving, creating, playing, reading, and writing. The author also includes summaries of studies and reviews of literature, developmental milestones, key points, pitfalls to avoid, steps to successful experiences, as well as a chapter on integrating music with other subjects. There was a chart for each of the developmental milestones relating to each aspect of music learning (milestones in listening, milestones in singing, milestones in moving, etc.) which is extremely helpful, especially to a new teacher.

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Vocalizations of Infants (9-11 Months Old) in Response to Musical and Linguistic Stimuli


Reviewed by Diana R. Dansereau, Ph.D.

Through research, we have a growing understanding of the musical capabilities of infants – particularly their musical preferences and perceptive abilities. For example, we have studies which indicate that infants prefer a capella (Ilari & Sundara, 2009) and infant-directed (Longhi, 2009; Trainor, 1996; Trehub, 2003) singing. In terms of perception, we have evidence that children's listening skills are similar to those of adults (Hannon & Trainor, 2007; Trehub & Thorpe, 1989), and that infants can discriminate between tonal patterns, (Schellenberg & Trehub, 1994), rhythms (Trehub & Thorpe, 1989), western vs. nonwestern music (Ilari, 2002), and varying melodic contours (Trehub, Bull, & Thorpe, 1984; Trehub, Thorpe, & Morrongiello, 1985, 1987).

Fewer studies, however, have been aimed at understanding infants’ music production capabilities. The aim of Reigado, Rocha, and Rodrigues’ study was to do just that. Specifically, they sought to study vocal production and the acquisition of singing in infants. Further, they were interested in studying vocalizations in response to stimuli (musical and linguistic), rather than spontaneous vocalizations, which have been the focus of previous studies (see, for example, Tafuri & Villa, 2002). The authors investigated the following two research questions:

- Are vocalizations produced after musical stimuli distinguishable from those produced after linguistic stimuli?
- In the event that specifically musical vocalizations can be distinguished, what features does musical babbling exhibit in comparison with the specific musical stimuli that evoke it? (p. 243)

Method

Twenty-one infants (9-11 months) participated in four weekly sessions wherein the experimenters sang three songs and recited three poems. The songs were untented, differed in meter, tempo and tonality, and were selected from *The Early Childhood Music Curriculum: Experimental Songs and Chants without Words* (Gordon, Bolton, Hicks, & Taggart, 1993). The poems were from Versos de fazer ó-ó by Letria (1999). The experimenters sang a song in its entirety and then waited for a response. During this pause, the experimenters stimulated initial vocalizations by repeating snippets of the song or the entire song. The second song was then sung and this procedure was repeated for the third song and then the three poems. Sessions were recorded and vocalizations were analyzed for their duration and extension (range). In addition, vocal-
izations were categorized as “isolated sounds (a single vocalic sound with noticeable pitch), melodic intervals (two successive pitches in a vocalic motion – ascending or descending), melodic contours (more than two successive pitches or a glissando curve in a vocalic motion – ascending, descending or undulating in a similar tonal context to the stimulus), melodic exploration (vocalization in a tonal context different from the stimulus), and unrelated to the musical stimulus (other sounds such as crying and cooing)” (p. 245).

Results
The researchers reported the following key results:

- The average duration of the infant vocalizations in response to music was 1.60 seconds versus 5.81 in response to the poems.
- The experimenters’ vocal stimuli ranged from 92 – 415 Hz, while infant vocalizations ranged from 283 – 587 Hz. The amplitude of frequency values was greater in relation to the poems than for the songs for both the experimenter and the infants. The amplitude of F0 values for infants’ vocalizations in response to language was 293 Hz; the amplitude for infants’ vocalizations in response to music was 157 Hz.
- When reciting poems, the experimenters’ vocal stimuli represented a range of 0 to 38 semitones (isolated sound to Major 23rd). Ninety-one percent of infant vocalizations in response to these poems represented a range of a minor 3rd, an isolated sound, or a major 2nd. The experimenters’ sung stimuli ranged from isolated sounds to a minor 9th. In response to the songs, the ranges of the infants’ vocalizations were isolated sounds, minor 2nds, major 2nds, minor 3rds, and major 3rds 88% of the time.
- 98% of the infant vocalizations were categorized as related to the musical stimuli.
- Most of the infant vocalizations were categorized as isolated sounds, with the highest percentage of these (64%) representing the tonic of the sung stimulus. The third of the scale was also vocalized frequently (21% of the time).
- When the infants vocalized melodic intervals, 94% of those intervals were descending with 38% descending to the tonic of the stimulus.
- Most of the infant vocalizations occurred at specific points and in response to particular parts of each song.

Conclusions and Discussion
The researchers concluded that vocalizations produced in response to poems were different in terms of duration (longer) and range (wider) than in response to musical stimuli. They speculated that this might be a result of the greater amount of linguistic exposure that infants receive, or perhaps it is a reflection of the infants’ ongoing process of speech acquisition. Additionally, the researchers suggested that the infants may be in a more preliminary stage of singing acquisition than language acquisition or that the novelty of the singing caused the infants to listen rather than vocalize in response.

In terms of the vocalizations occurring at specific moments in the song, the researchers suggested that infants may already have knowledge about the hierarchical organization of music. That is, they seem already to have a perception of the “musical whole” (or at least some notion of “musical segments”), which they punctuate by vocalizing in its boundaries. (p. 249)

This finding may be related to previous research findings which indicate that infants demonstrate preference for appropriate musical phrasing (Krumhansl & Jusczyk, 1990), or may be a response to the experimenters’ model which likely stressed musical hierarchy. The researchers noted that the infants’ tendency to vocalize tonic or the third of the scale indicates a purposeful response to mu-
This finding adds credence to the argument that early musical engagement offers infants another mode of knowing and experiencing their world.

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The general finding of this study – that infants respond differently to a person singing than to a person speaking – is further evidence of infants’ musical perception and discrimination capabilities. Furthermore, this finding elicits a specific vocal response. This finding “corroborates the existence of an early predisposition to act musically, reiterating the importance of an early musical enculturation” (p. 250).

Implications of this study
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References


The authors report on a music intervention program they used with neonates in the NICU at a Middle Eastern hospital. Due to the NICU environment and cultural diversity of the patient population, the researchers developed a music model of live music and wordless singing, incorporating music elements and instruments common to Eastern and Western cultures. The goal of the model was to facilitate “the discovery of music as an intervention that effectively enhanced communication within a culturally divergent population” (Abstract). The researchers found that “drawing on ancient music elements and using instruments common to both Eastern and Western approaches to music allowed for mothers from Eastern and Western cultures to be able to connect with it. Wordless singing allowed for the music to be accessible, as there were no words to provide for nonunderstanding [sic] of the language” (p. 21). Gilad and Arnon concluded that the music model “decreased stress and increased a sense of humanity in the intensive care unit setting” (Abstract).


The researchers based the this study on the underlying principle that “music processing shares mechanisms and brain structures with language processing but not spatial processing, whereas visual-art processing shares mechanisms and brain structures with spatial processing but not language processing” (p. 2). Their goal was to
investigate “the effects of two interactive computerized training programs developed for preschool children: one for music and one for visual art” (Abstract). The primary assumptions for the study were: a) “that music training would improve verbal intelligence independently of spatial intelligence, and that visual-art training would improve spatial intelligence independently of verbal intelligence” (p. 2), b) that music and visual art training would “have a rapid effect on cognition and brain structures” (p. 5), and c) that the training programs would influence executive function…(specifically) that links between [the] training programs and changes in verbal or spatial intelligence might be mediated by changes in executive function” (p. 2).

After only 20 days of training, only children in the music group exhibited enhanced performance on a measure of verbal intelligence, with 90% of the sample showing this improvement. These improvements in verbal intelligence were positively correlated with changes in functional brain plasticity during an executive-function task…[demonstrating] that transfer of a high-level cognitive skill is possible in early childhood. (Abstract)


Development involves progressive changes in knowledge and abilities that occur across the life span. Current research on musical abilities suggests that the development of skills necessary for musicality begins in utero and continues through adulthood. Many of these skills, such as the ability to carry a tune, move in time to music, and respond emotionally to music, progress as part of normal cognitive maturation and development. Others, such as explicit musical knowledge and musical performance, require in-depth learning and practice for future musical development to occur. [The authors provide] a compilation of key musical developmental milestones and learning characteristics from prebirth through adolescence gathered from the research literature. A brief summary of relevant information is provided, as well as charts outlining specific points from the literature. (Abstract)


In this study, Boucher and Ryan investigated the nature (developed or innate) and effects (behavioral, physiological, and psychological) of performance anxiety in 3- and 4-year-olds. The study involved 66 children from two daycares who took group music lessons for 10 weeks and then participated in two culminating concert programs. The researchers used observations of the children’s anxious behaviors, cortisol secretion samples, and children’s self-reports of anticipatory stress as primary measures of performance anxiety. In conclusion, Boucher and Ryan found that the children did experience anxiety with respect to music performances and that responses seemed to have both innate and developed components. Children with prior performing experience reported less anticipatory anxiety, but had higher cortisol levels, than those without prior experience. Additionally, performance location seemed to play a role in children’s anxiety responses. Those who were familiar with their performance environment responded with less anxiety than those who were not. Overall, second performances within a short time frame elicited much lower anxiety responses than initial performances. Findings pertaining to performance location and second performances appear to have direct pedagogical implications, which may help to reduce performance stress in young children. (Abstract)

Using a single-subject alternating treatment design, the researchers investigated the effects of “music and non-music interventions on the social responsive and avoidant behaviors of a preschool child with autism” (Abstract). Finnigan and Starr collected their data during 12 treatment sessions with a 3-year-old child with autism. They found that the use of songs (the music intervention) was more effective than the non-music intervention in increasing the child’s social responsive behaviors. They also reported the lack of avoidant behaviors during the music intervention and suggested “the music condition was more motivating for the participant than the non-music condition, resulting in more social responsive behaviors” (Abstract). While Finnigan and Starr caution against generalizing the results of their study to a larger population of children with autism, they concluded “the fact that music therapy appears to be motivating and effective for a young child with autism suggests the importance of incorporating music therapy interventions into programming for pre-school children with autism” (p. 341).
Submission Guidelines for Perspectives Articles

Perspectives: Journal of the Early Childhood Music & Movement Association offers practical, research-based articles on current topics of interest to anyone who works with or on behalf of young children, pre-birth through age 7. Our readers include music specialists, movement specialists, music therapists, early childhood educators, childcare providers, parents, early intervention specialists, elementary school principals, researchers, teacher educators, students, policy makers, and others.

The mission of Perspectives is: 1) to provide a network of communication, support, and information among the members of ECMMA; 2) to encourage teacher development by fostering a free exchange between professionals in the field of music and other professionals in the field of early childhood development; and 3) to advocate for music in early childhood by supporting education of parents, classroom teachers, and administrators.

Authors are encouraged to submit manuscripts that apply to: 1) all phases of music and movement education for young children, 2) the professional needs and best teaching practices of early childhood music and movement educators, and 3) practice-based research topics that are relevant to early childhood music and movement education.

The ECMMA Editorial Review Board, comprised of practicing professionals in early childhood music and movement, referees all articles submitted for publication in Perspectives.

By submitting a manuscript to Perspectives: Journal of the Early Childhood Music & Movement Association you indicate that your article is not currently published or simultaneously submitted for publication elsewhere in print or online.

General interest articles are evaluated with the following criteria:
- Usefulness and relevance to the field of early childhood music and movement
- Consistency with work/research in the field
- Clarity of ideas

Research articles are evaluated by the following:
- Design of the research
- Presentation of research purpose and problem(s)
- Sound methodology
- Presentation of results/findings
- Interpretation of results/findings
- Conclusions
- Discussion and implications for the profession

The article should be written in a clear and concise conversational style that avoids unnecessary jargon, technical language, and passive voice. The excessive use of long quotations from other sources is strongly discouraged. The article must be consistent with related professional literature. It is understood that authors will avoid personal commentary that is not relevant to the current topic or content that promotes a specific person, performing group, institution, or product.

Submission deadlines are February 1, May 1, August 1, and November 1.

Manuscript Submissions

Manuscripts must be sent via email to the Perspectives Editor, Angela Barker, (editor@ecmma.org) as text in MS Word (.doc) and all images in either .gif or .jpg format. All images and tables must be clearly marked as to their appearance in the manuscript.

The word count for articles is between 800 to 3000 words (excluding references). Each page should be numbered and have 1-inch margins. The text and references must be double-spaced throughout.

Authors should follow recommendations in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.) for research-based manuscripts. Articles of a philosophical or historical nature should follow The Chicago Manual of Style. Please contact the Perspectives Editor for more information.
Editor for any questions relating to publication style.

All manuscripts must include the following:

- A separate page that includes:
  - The author’s name, credentials, and affiliation
  - Complete contact information with mailing address and email address
  - A brief, two-line biographical note (20-25 words)

- Title page
- 150- to 250-word abstract
- A list of keywords: 6 – 10 words
- Body of article
  - 800-3000 words
  - Double-spaced text throughout
  - 10- or 12-point font
  - Numbered pages
- Complete list of references and/or bibliography

Images

Images (figures, graphs, and pictures) should be submitted as separate graphic files (.tif, .gif, .bmp, .jpg). Tables should be prepared as MS Word documents (.doc).

Sound and Video

Perspectives will be able to include sound and video clips with articles that are posted online. Contact the ECMMA Webmaster (www.ecmma.org) for information on recommended file formats.

Obtaining Releases

Authors are responsible for obtaining all necessary releases/permissions required for copyrighted material used in their article. For example, permission must be obtained from parents to use and electronically disseminate a photograph of a child or a child’s drawing. Authors of articles that use tables, figures, and images from other copyrighted sources must provide documentation to the Perspectives Editor verifying that permission has been obtained. Contact the Perspectives Editor, Angela Barker (editor@ecmma.org) with questions about releases and permissions.

Contributors must follow these guidelines when submitting a book review to Perspectives: Journal of the Early Childhood Music & Movement Association:

- Choose a book that is current and research-based.
- Focus of the book should be on topics of interest and value to early childhood music & movement educators, such as:
  - Best practices in learning and teaching of music and/or movement to children, pre-birth through age 7.
  - Music and/or movement and early childhood development.
  - Research-based practice in music and/or movement teaching.
  - Professional development for early childhood music and movement educators.
- Keep the word count between 500-550.
- Provide the complete title, author, date published, and publisher information.
- Include the reviewer’s name, credentials, and school/institution affiliation.
- Send the review as a word document (.doc) to the Perspectives Editor, Angela Barker, at editor@ecmma.org.

All book reviews submitted to Perspectives: Journal of the Early Childhood Music & Movement Association are subject to copy-editing by the Editor or a member of the ECMMA Editorial Review Board. The Editor reserves the right to accept or reject a book review based on its relevance and appropriateness to the needs of Perspectives and to determine which issue a review may be published. For additional information or clarification about the guidelines for book reviews, please contact the Perspectives Editor, Angela Barker, at editor@ecmma.org.
Exploring Sensory Integration Ideas in an Early Childhood Music and Movement Class
Presenter: Janice Vidruk
ECMMA South Central Regional Conference Houston, TX

Music and movement activities help children in ways far beyond the important joy of making music! A wide variety of sensory and perceptual motor activities can help all children achieve success and develop toward their full potential. Dr. Jean Ayres, the founder of Sensory Integration (theory) explained sensory integration as "the organization of all the senses for use...The brain must organize all of the senses if a person is to move, learn, and behave normally" (Ayers & Robbins, 2005, p. 5). She also went on to say that, “A sensory motor program should be offered to all children at the primary level (0 – 6 yrs), when integration is most rapid; so that every child might fully realize his potential and might never know the frustration of a learning problem” (Ayers, 1973).

If integration of the senses is delayed or interrupted for some reason, a child may have difficulty with many aspects of his development. We sometimes refer to this as an “invisible handicap” (Bundy et. al, 2002). What looks like a behavior problem may in fact be a sensory processing dysfunction.

The early childhood classroom or music and movement program is an ideal place for children to experience sensory motor activities. There are many components of sensory integration but a few are significant for our purposes. In this session, we explored the tactile, vestibular, proprioceptive (motor planning), and the auditory systems using appropriate music and movement activities which can play an important role in helping children organize their behavior. We need to give children permission to explore movement and then provide a way to help them understand their world in a playful way.

- Body and Space Awareness
- Start-stop Activities
- Circle Dances and Free Dances
- Rolling/rocking
- Rhythm Sticks and/or Drumming
- Relaxation, Calming Transitions

Every child deserves the opportunity to experience sensory integration activities.

References

When Music and Motion Cause Commotion: The Problem of Sensory Processing Disorder
Presenter: Christine A. Taylor, PT, DPT, PCS
Doctor of Physical Therapy; Pediatric Specialist
ECMMA Southeast Regional Conference Cookeville, TN

The body’s sensory system processes and organizes sensation to provide meaning to our daily experiences. The five senses (sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch) send sensory input from the environment to our brain. The brain processes and filters the sensory input and directs it to the appropriate centers of the brain. Our sensory experiences form contextual memories. These memories help direct our responses to sensory stimula-
tion by integrating three executive systems. The executive systems process clustered sensory input from the five senses. These systems are the vestibular, tactile, and proprioceptive systems.

The vestibular system controls balance. The tactile system processes and discriminates forms of touch. The proprioceptive system helps the body respond to changes in position and movement by coordinating joint and muscle function.

Sensory processing problems arise when an individual has difficulty registering or modulating sensory information sent to the brain. When this occurs, sensory stimulation can become overwhelming and cause an atypical response. There are certain behaviors characteristic of sensory processing problems. Behaviors such as covering the ears with hands, head shaking, and excessive movement may indicate a problem involving the vestibular system. Withdraw from touch, aversion to certain food textures, and a high threshold for pain may indicate a problem with the tactile system. Individuals who exaggerate movement, are excessively clumsy, have trouble coordinating movement, or have difficulty performing fine motor skills may have a problem with the proprioceptive system.

Teachers who understand sensory processing disorders can develop sensory-friendly environments and integrate sensory-friendly teaching strategies using music and motion. Children with sensory problems can benefit from participation in a program that incorporates repetitive, large body movements combined with rhythmic activities such as stomping, jumping, and clapping. Music without extreme pitch changes is best. Always avoid excessive rotation and move in one direction at a time. Use caution when asking children to touch each other or when using props such as scarves or parachutes. Avoid using flashing, changing, or rotating lights. To develop sensory-friendly environments, reduce stimulation by controlling sensory input to the five senses.

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**Make Music: Do Math!**

*Presenter: Christina Foran*

*ECMMA Southeast Regional Conference*

*Cookeville, TN*

**Musical experiences in early childhood pave mental pathways for other kinds of spatial-temporal learning, like numeracy.** As researchers study the correlation between practicing music and improved math abilities, independent math and music programs have also made headlines. Inside classrooms, music activities used regularly during circle times hold great potential for developing young children’s mathematical understanding.

Both the National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Council for Teachers of Mathematics suggest that young children begin learning math naturally through informal, hands-on experiences. From birth, children are exposed to natural, steady beats—patting and rocking—which serve as the foundation for early numeracy skills, such as one-to-one correspondence. Before children begin learning time signatures and measuring beats, they can match claps and movements to words in songs and chants.

“This Old Man” and “Five Green and Speckled Frogs” are familiar songs that incorporate counting. The lyrics and melody both rely on predictable patterns. When children make music, they have the opportunity to explore the measurable quantities of tempo, pitch, and volume. Children can play with opposite pairs like fast and slow, high and low, loud and quiet. Learning rhythm is rich with patterns, fractions, and equality concepts, which are key as children begin using more symbolic notation in both music and mathematics.

Imagine how a simple xylophone could be used to help children transition from informally learning about math concepts to using music as a tool to explicitly learn numeracy skills. By labeling the xylophone’s keys with numbers, teachers can create musical number lines and guide children to connect their familiarity with changes in pitch to comparing greater and lesser numbers. They could teach addition by counting up and subtraction by counting down, letting children hear and play the rising and falling notes. Teachers could lay the foundation for multiplication by showing children how skip counting actually sounds.

While connecting formal and informal learning experiences to developmental standards, teachers can have confidence in the powerful role that making music plays in preparing children for doing math successfully.
Getting “In Tune” with Everyone in the Music Group  
**Presenter: Adrienne Brodeur**  
ECMMA Northwest Regional Conference  
Edmonton, AB, Canada

Regardless of a wide range of skill levels, all children can benefit from the “music group” experience. Music therapy aims to build on each child’s strengths and enhance their overall personal growth in areas such as communication, social skills, and emotional skills. One technique that generalizes to the music class is the VAKT method. This method, developed by educational psychologist Grace Fernald (1879-1950), successfully assisted students in improving their word recognition skills. VAKT is an acronym for the visual, auditory, kinesthetic, and tactile modalities. When applying the VAKT method during instruction for word recognition skills, the student sees the word (visual), says the word (auditory), traces over the word (tactile), and writes the word (kinesthetic).

Music! Therapy, Education, and Performance  
**Presenter: Becky Wellman, PhD, MT-BC, DT**  
ECMMA North Central Regional Conference  
Dayton, OH

Children are naturally drawn to music. Nonetheless, there are things we can do to make these experiences more enjoyable for children of differing needs in our sessions or classes, such as formulating structure, being aware of sensory needs, and adapting instruments, songs, and movement.

Structure and routine provide security and stability for children during music activities by giving them a map of what will be expected of them during a session or class. By incorporating opening and closing songs as well as songs for transition between activities, teachers use music to add to structure throughout a music session. Teachers can enhance structure with picture cards, visual aids, schedule boards, and tools to help children define their personal space and feel more relaxed and open.

Early childhood music professionals must also be aware of the sensory needs of the children with whom they work. Children’s sensory needs include not only the traditional five senses but also the proprioceptive and vestibular systems. While children may present typical, hypersensitive, hyposensitive, and mixed sensory responses during music-based interventions, being aware of possible sensory concerns can allow teachers the ability to temper different interventions or adapt them to meet each child’s individual needs.

Many children are in music groups with the intent of being included in activities with their “typical” peers. In order for children to be fully engaged in the music presented, professionals need to be aware of possible motor planning, language problems, auditory processing delays or disorders, muscle tone issues, and of a variety of communication devices that may be brought to the group. Choosing appropriate instruments, adapting songs, and modifying movement activities as needed to work within these challenges can make music more accessible for all children participating.

Music is a natural process for many children. By utilizing structure, being aware of sensory needs, and adapting the sessions for those who need, we can make it truly enjoyable for everyone.
Australian infant researcher and musicologist Stephen Malloch coined the term “Communicative Musicality” when he observed infants and mothers communicating naturally with playful, wordless vocalizations—ones rich with the characteristics and allure of music. The goal of this session was to illustrate the salient musical features—patterns of timing, contour/melody, pulse, timbre, and gesture—as well as the aspects of earliest human engagement and dialogue that beautifully and effectively interweave in this phenomenon known as communicative musicality. Participants looked at and listened to examples of children’s earliest dialogue; viewed spectrographic representations of early dialogue created by Malloch in his research, and examined universal contour representations of infant-directed speech as analyzed by researcher Anne Fernald, who refers to them as “meaningful melodies.” As a group, we tried our own voices with these messages of praise, attention, soothing, and warning and noted the corresponding musical characteristics.

Another important section of the presentation examined anatomy, development, and characteristics of the young child’s singing voice and how singing evolves into a communicative feature of child’s play. The critical importance of an attuned teacher or therapist’s consideration of the young child’s multi-modal strategies (sensory/motor) was addressed. Participants worked in vocal and movement dyads in order to experience first-hand the power of musical inter-subjectivity. Naturally, we looked at ways that teachers or clinicians could solidify their own singing voices in this context.

Finally, we viewed video examples that illustrated successful and not-so-successful applications of music class and intervention settings involving children with adults. The common thread that connected young children’s joy, enthusiasm, and musicality with the successful attainment of goals was seen when the interactions between children and adults originated and grew from original communicative musicality.

Infants and mothers communicate naturally with playful, wordless vocalizations—ones rich with the characteristics and allure of music.
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Noted Music Education Researcher & Theorist

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L-R: Jill Trinka, Petra Kern, Craig Woodson, Terry Boyarsky, Cynthia Taggart
and other great presenters!