

INTRODUCING MUSIC TOGETHER®

Music Together is an engaging program of weekly music and movement classes for children from birth to kindergarten and the grownups who love them. Our purpose is to nurture each child's natural enthusiasm for music and movement. In class, we sing, dance, laugh and play rhythm instruments in a relaxed setting that enriches children's experience of music and guides them toward a lifetime of musical enjoyment.

Music Together was created in 1987 by the Center for Music and Young Children whose purpose is to do original research on early childhood music development and to draw together the best existing research. Out of this effort have come the four principles on which Music Together is based:

1. All children are musical.
2. All children can achieve basic music competence: the ability to sing in tune and to move and sing with rhythmic accuracy.
3. The participation and modeling of parents or caregivers, regardless of their musical ability or experience, is essential to a child's musical growth. You are the best model for your child. We can teach your child how to sing in tune, but only you can teach him or her to have the disposition to love making music. So, adult participation is essential to the success of our program.
4. A child's musical growth is best achieved in a learning environment that is playful, that is developmentally appropriate, and that is oriented toward participation and not toward performance. This needs to be an environment that is musically rich and diverse, yet immediately accessible to the child's—and the adult's—participation.

Putting these principles into action in Music Together classes, we focus on the actual experience of music. Rather than teaching concepts or information about music, we offer an experience in music immersion.

Research shows that children need to reach basic music competency, before stepping into learning about music in a more formal learning environment. Children need to first unlock the code for the music of their culture and they do this themselves by listening to and experimenting with music much as they learn how to talk by listening to and experimenting with language.

Children who have participated in Music Together, when compared to those in comparable settings who have not, have shown significantly greater progress in cognitive development, particularly in problem solving, in language acquisition and verbal fluency, in physical development, particularly in coordination, and in socio-emotional development, as well. We teach music but because of the way that we do it, the children learn so much more. Music Together supports all learning.

In Music Together classes, children are free to engage in their own learning styles and at their own developmental levels as they experiment with music through play. Some little ones may quietly and wisely observe, absorbing the experience from the comfort of their parent or caregiver's lap. Kinesthetic learners who need to move for optimal learning may explore the room (often while the rest of us are sitting down and that's just fine). Others may experiment freely with singing and imitating the teacher's movements.

Each response is completely appropriate and whatever the children are doing, they are soaking in the music. With the variety of responses from the children, the class stays focused because the adults participate fully in the music, modeling the singing, movement and instrument play for their children.

Why We Do What We Do in a Music Together Class

Because children learn through play, the most important thing that happens in class is that we have fun. At the same time, we encourage music development in many ways. For example, we sing songs in both major and minor keys. Most children's songs are in major keys. But, if children only sing in major keys, their tonal experience will be limited. By featuring a wide variety of tonalities in each Music Together song collection, we give children the opportunity to compare and contrast which helps them solidify their understanding of tonality.

In class, we sing and move to songs that are counted in two, which is common in children's songs, and also sing and move to those counted in three, which is much less common. We also experience songs that have unusual meters. We echo rhythm patterns to give children a more purely rhythmic experience. We echo tonal patterns, singing intervals from the scale used in the song we've just sung. The tonal and rhythm patterns give children the basic building blocks of music and are often among the children's favorite class activities because they are so accessible.

We sing many songs each session using 'vocables' which are syllables that have no meaning. Vocables play an important part in the Music Together curriculum because they allow children to have a purely musical experience without being distracted by attempts to process language. This gives the tonal part of children's music development a chance to catch up with their language development which is given so much more emphasis in our culture.

We sing or play along with music from many cultures and in languages other than English. Music Together song collections feature selections from a wide variety of cultural traditions because doing so makes our music experience so much richer.

We offer children a sumptuous buffet of songs from which to pick and choose and with which they can experiment and we help them build a strong movement vocabulary. In the process, we plant many seeds of learning AND we have loads of fun. In fact, we describe our classes as "45 minutes of PURE FUN". Music Together songs and activities are designed to incorporate play so that learning happens easily and naturally.

Nut and Bolts

We offer three ten-week sessions during the school year, starting in September, January and March, and an eight-week summer session starting in June. Classes are forty-five minutes long and meet once a week. All classes are mixed-age, birth to kindergarten, so siblings can be together. Tuition for a ten-week session is \$166 for the first registered child and \$94 for each additional siblings. Tuition for the eight-week summer session is \$140 for the first registered child and \$74 each for additional siblings. Infant siblings (younger than eight months on the opening day of the session) of a registered child attend at no cost. Each participating family receives: two matching CDs and a corresponding songbook so the fun and learning continues at home; *Music Together at Home: Helping Your Child Grow Musically*, an introductory DVD for parents and caregivers; and a music development growth chart to help you understand and support your child's music development.

We offer a series of free demonstration classes preceding each session or you can visit one of our ongoing classes as a free demonstration class, provided there is space available. Reservations are required. We would be happy to arrange a special free demonstration class for your play group, faith group, MOMS Club or preschool group—for any group of parents and children who love music and love to have fun. To arrange a free demonstration class, contact Clarice at 651-439-4219 or at Clarice@MusicTogetherClasses.com.

We offer classes in Apple Valley, Arden Hills, Blaine, Circle Pines, Coon Rapids, Forest Lake, Hugo, St. Paul, Shoreview, Stillwater, White Bear Lake and Woodbury in Minnesota and Hudson in Wisconsin. Details of our locations and our schedule, as well as more information about our program, are available on our web site at:

www.MusicTogetherClasses.com