

Rock-A-Bye Babies: Music & Movement for Infants & Toddlers

The essence of this presentation is to not only provide ways to use music & movement throughout your day, but to acknowledge the magnitude of your profession. What you do is the most important work I know of. Many children in your care get their first view of the world from you. They learn about love and trust from you. Thank you for what you do.

Infants are born, seemingly, pre-wired for music and movement and that is how they learn. With hearing being the 2nd sense to develop in utero, babies are born ready and expecting to move. Everything about appropriate musical experiences is positive. Year after year, the research builds in support of the importance of music in a young child's life.

Movement is now 'moving' into the spotlight with an emphasis on increasing learning. We know that music and movement affect all areas of development, nourish the brain, can help to strengthen learning, listening, literacy, body and spatial awareness, co-ordination, language, problem solving, motor skills, and perhaps, most important create opportunities for social success and emotional well-being.

Music will enrich children's lives and tap into their creative energy. It has the power to slow things down, instantly transforming a cranky environment into one of harmony and joy. With infants often coming to programs as young as six weeks, a simple song can calm the uncertainty of the transition for baby, mom and dad. As an infant-toddler care provider, music can be your best friend.

The current focus on academics may leave the crucial role of social-emotional development behind. It is difficult for children to develop cognitively if the emotional component is not stable. Trust lays the foundation for that social-emotional piece and music can greatly enhance that sense of trust. Musical experiences can be at the core of the social connections formed between children and their significant others. Music can be a dialogue for bonding, a dance between baby and caregiver. These early musical experiences will affect the children and their families for years to come and it is a gift that will last a lifetime.

Making music is a very easy skill to learn. There just has to be somebody willing to teach it. So if you think, "What, Me Teach Music?". You can and you must. For some toddlers it may be their only form of self-expression and for some parents it may be the only tool readily available to help them out of a frustrating situation.

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

But it's not just for the children. It's for everyone. Musical experiences can positively affect staff efficiency, productivity and stress levels. Invite your families for a potluck, an evening program to celebrate the seasons and to join together in Music, Movement and More.

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

Infant-Toddler Picture and Story Books

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

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

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

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

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

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

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