

# Including Music in an Infant/Toddler Classroom

Music encourages children's language, social-emotional and motor development. When infants listen to singing, they are learning about rhythms and vocal sounds needed for language development. When toddlers experience music, they are building vocabulary, enhancing motor skills and playing with the sounds that are used in reading.

## Why is music important?

- ✓ Teaches social interaction skills
- ✓ Builds self confidence and self awareness
- ✓ Increases vocabulary
- ✓ Improves gross and fine motor skills
- ✓ Promotes creativity
- ✓ Creates motivation for learning
- ✓ Supports pre-language skills
- ✓ Trains the ear for speech sounds
- ✓ Encourages listening skills
- ✓ Adds a multisensory component to improve memory and motivation

## Guidelines for using music:

Keeping your music areas safe, interesting, motivating and non-distracting

- ✓ Use music as a free choice activity and a group activity every day!
- ✓ Put recorded music on only for a specific purpose, then turn it off when the activity is done
- ✓ Have at least one instrument available per child in the classroom. Also, make sure that you have multiples of favorite instruments so that children can express freely with the instrument that they prefer.
- ✓ Rotate some of the instruments that are available to kids at least monthly
- ✓ Sing informally throughout the day

Examples:

Sing songs during routines:

clean-up

Good morning

Good- bye

lining up for outside

come to circle

wash hands

sing to the baby that you are rocking, while you are playing with children, etc.

- ✓ Music should be fun for children
- ✓ All items should be safe for children- no sharp edges or small, removable parts
- ✓ Minimize toys, instruments and music that have startling sounds

## Individual Expression:

Helps develop creativity, self awareness, curiosity and self-confidence

- ✓ Free dancing- have props available (scarves, flowing skirts, ribbons)
- ✓ Free use of instruments- have them easily accessible (e.g., centers) & include instruments from different cultures
- ✓ Provide free access to a tape player and microphone
- ✓ Make up new words to familiar tunes
- ✓ Freeze dancing
- ✓ Dance to show how a song makes you feel
- ✓ Encourage children to react in some way to music (baby coo, toddler dance, ask: "remember this song?")

## Exposure to Different Types of Music:

- ✓ Songs of different styles (country, rap, folk, classical, cultural, popular, different languages, children's music, jazz, reggae, blues, lullabies, gospel, techno...)
- ✓ Play quiet music for a few minutes in the background when transitioning to nap, work time, or other quiet times. Once the children are settled, turn off the music.
- ✓ Expose children to songs in different languages
- ✓ Guests come in to play an instrument

## Vocabulary/ Pre-literacy:

Specific enrichment using music to improve beginning literacy and vocabulary skills

- ✓ Provide verbal labels for the movements that children make with their instruments
- ✓ Give names to what the children are doing
- ✓ Instruments help teach cause and effect
- ✓ More verbal play!
- ✓ Kids make instruments
- ✓ Anticipation
- ✓ Scaffolding

Presentation by All About Learning

Sarah Merchant

Amy Antinoro

303-512-0075

303-663-6656