

THE IMPORTANCE OF MUSIC EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN

An involvement in a music program helps to educate the whole individual intellectually, physically, socially, emotionally and creatively. A music program can inspire children to sing, move, dance, listen, create, play instruments and love music; and have them jumping for joy with material that makes learning interesting and fun.

The child's early fascination and love for music and movement

can be channeled into a life-long enthusiasm through an involvement in an enjoyable and active music program!

Music can be fun, easy and accessible for all. Music is unique and can enable children to feel and understand the music cognitively through rhythmic work on body and instruments, physically and kinesthetically through the use of movement, emotionally

through self-expression, and through one's sensibilities - that of the aural, visual and tactile. This holistic style of teaching allows children to experience the music through their body, mind and spirit. A simple movement, vocal or rhythmic trigger can recall the material years later.

Music education aims for all children include:

- Enjoyment and fun with and through music.
- Acquiring a repertoire of rhymes, songs, musical games and dances.
- Making instruments and playing instruments.
- Improvisation - using creative imagination and free expression.
- Developing a sense of beat (the steady pulse in music shown physically by tapping feet, etc).
- Development of rhythm - (the duration of sounds; a specific rhythm is a pattern, eg, a series of words).

- Discriminating between loud and soft (dynamics).
- Discriminating between fast and slow (tempo).

WHEN CAN MUSIC BE INTRODUCED?

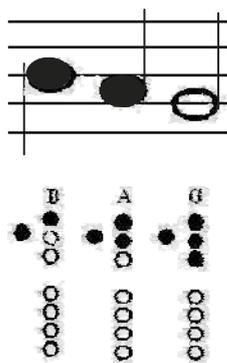
Children begin to learn at a very young age. The foundations for a successful lifetime are built during these young formative years (between birth and 8 years) and therefore the earlier children can be involved in music activities, the better. During this time, the brain grows at its fastest rate. By beginning music education at a young age, the child has more chance of being meaningfully involved with music in later life as a listener, performer and a creator.

This article was provided by Susie Davies-Splitter from Welcome to Music. For further information on Susie or Welcome to Music please visit their website which is located at www.welcometomusic.net

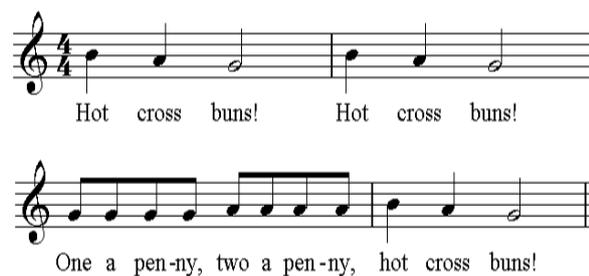


LEARN TO PLAY THE RECORDER

Welcome to your very own beginners guide to the recorder! When holding your recorder your left hand should be on top, with your thumb covering the hole on the back and your index, middle and ring finger covering the top three holes on the front of your instrument. Your right hand should be on the bottom and covers the bottom four holes. Remember to cover the holes completely with the flat part of your fingers - do not use your fingertips. Fingers that are not covering holes should be hovering over their assigned holes. Hold your instrument in a triangle shape in alignment with your body. To play a note put a small part of the mouthpiece in your mouth resting between your bottom and top lips and close your lips around the mouthpiece. Blow soft, warm air into the instrument whispering the word "do" to start and stop the sound. Blowing air too hard will cause your instrument to squeak.



Hot Cross Buns



GAMES TO PLAY WITH YOUR CHILDREN

ANIMAL RUN

No equipment is needed.

HOW TO PLAY:

Children form a big circle in a cleared space. Ask the children to run around the circle acting and sounding like an elephant (big steps, big movements). Then ask the children to run around acting and sounding like a cat (smaller steps, fast movements). Move on to running like a duck (waddling with 'wings' by side) and then flying like a bird (with arms out to the side in 'flapping' movements). Continue this activity by asking children to come up with animals and matching movements of their own.

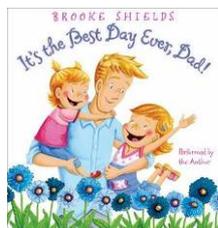
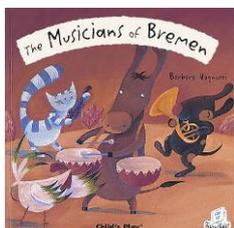
POISON BALL

- Soft medium-sized ball
- Markers to set out at both ends of an open space

HOW TO PLAY:

All children line up at one end of the space behind the line. On 'go', all the children must run to the opposite marker while the leader rolls the ball across the space, trying to hit children on the legs with the 'poison ball'. If a child is hit below the hip, then they should move to the side to help roll the ball across. Continue with rolling the ball across the space until all children have been hit or the time for the activity is up.

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MAKE READING AN EXPERIENCE TO REMEMBER WITH GLADSTONE REGIONAL LIBRARIES

Surprisingly, or for some not so surprisingly, music and nursery rhymes have a huge positive effect on a child's learning of language. Singing songs and saying nursery rhymes with little children teaches them about the rhythm and pace of our language in a fun way. It helps children with their memory and vocabulary development. Many rhymes or songs include counting, body parts and animal sounds for extra learning fun.

Repetition is a key element of learning, and songs and rhymes enable children to repeat words and phrases in a far more enjoyable way than just speech alone can provide. Indeed, singing can be so much fun that they are probably unaware that they are repeating (and thus learning) the same words over and over again!

Singing is a time to be close between parent and child. Music truly does "soothe the savage beast". There are not too many kids out there who don't respond to a soothing, finger-waving rendition of "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" when the tears start to flow.

There are plenty of nursery rhyme books at the Gladstone Regional Libraries to help parents remember all of the words that they once knew so that they can pass them on to their own children. Books, like "Incy Wincy Spider" by Kate Toms have bright colourful illustrations to enhance them.

Some more amazing titles that are available from Gladstone Regional Libraries include:

- You Can't Play Here by Angus Corby
- The Musicians of Bremen by Barbara Vagnozzi
- It's the Best Day Ever, Dad! by Brooke Shields
- Ruby Sings the Blues by Niki Daly
- Animal Band by Christopher Jennings

You can also find plenty of CDs and DVDs with songs and nursery rhymes that you can borrow from your nearest public library to accompany you and entertain your child at home as well as in the car.

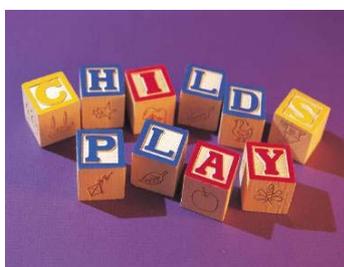
Of course, you can't go past groups like The Wiggles for bright, energetic, action-packed

songs either. They have recently released a DVD and CD "Nursery Rhymes Collection" which has all the classics, reproduced in their special Wiggly way.

All of the Gladstone Regional Libraries offer Storytime and Craft for Under 5's, in which children and parents or carers participate. No bookings are needed. Venues and times are:

- Gladstone City Library
Wednesdays 11.00 – 11.30am
- Agnes Water Library
Wednesdays 10.00 – 10.30am
- Boyne Island Library
Fridays 10.30 – 11.00am
- Calliope Library
Fridays 10.30 – 11.00am
- Miriam Vale Library 1st and 3rd
Tuesdays 9.30 – 10.00am
- Mt Larcom Library
Thursdays 10.30 am

Gladstone City Library also has Baby Bounce (singing, nursery rhymes and finger plays) for babies aged between 4 months and 24 months, and their carers. Baby Bounce is held in the Meeting Room on the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month from 11.00 to 11.30 am. For more information please contact Gladstone Regional Libraries on 4976 6400.



Play brings you closer to your children and it helps them to become more independent. They are more able to work out problems and to develop their own concentration and imagination. These are key skills needed for life and learning at school

and beyond. The following five skills are the key to supporting your children in their play.

CREATING TIME

Try to plan ahead. Identify time during the day when you can play with the least interruptions. Turn the television off and involve brothers and sisters.

INVOLVING YOUR CHILD

Ask your child what they enjoy playing. Let them choose what they want to play. Children learn best and enjoy play more when they decide how they want to play. Importantly their concentration, enjoyment levels and good behaviour increases as a consequence!

BE ON THEIR LEVEL

Preparing for play with your child is important. Make sure you are close to your child, have eye contact and show that you are interested.

DESCRIBE WHAT YOU SEE

As your child is playing, just concentrate on describing what you see. Use it as a tool for observation, avoid asking questions and just copy your child's play.

USE PRAISE

Use descriptive praise. Be close when you praise, smile, get eye contact and use hugs. Be sincere and genuine and praise as soon as possible after good behaviour