



## Music and Learning

There is growing evidence of music's positive effects on children's learning. This includes exposure to, and learning about, music and musical instruments.

*Music is a critical part of every child's social, emotional, physical and behavioural development. It encourages creativity, imagination and self-expression, develops literacy and numeracy, increases confidence and self-esteem and most importantly, brings joy, happiness and pride.*

[The Australian Children's Music Foundation](#)

### Music in the early years

Parents and early learning educators can provide solid grounding in music awareness and appreciation by sharing with children the many musical resources available. A 'starter' list is provided at the end of this resource.

*Music is uniquely an aural art form. The essential nature of music is abstract. Music encompasses existing sounds that are selected and shaped, new sounds created by composers and performers, and the placement of sounds in time and space.*

...

*The initial materials of music are the voice and body, instruments and other sound sources.*

[The Australian Curriculum: Music](#)



Children can:

- make and respond to music, explore the sounds of items in the house and the classroom
- listen to a wide variety of music, instruments, songs and sounds
- compose their own patterns in music
- play instruments, and sing, alone or in a group for an audience
- create notation to communicate their musical ideas.

Skills and strategies such as learning the words and actions to songs, and following patterns in music-making, are strong bases for literacy and numeracy, and have considerable impact on future learning.

## **The research**

Extensive research indicates that *musical activities promote the development of auditory perception, phonological memory, and metacognitive knowledge—three components that are equally involved in the development of linguistic abilities* (Bolduc 2008).

There are links between the development of auditory skills through listening to music and phonological awareness skills.

Some research is exploring the ways music training may contribute to literacy development by way of changes to the brain that contribute to both music and language cognition. This ‘neural overlap’ is receiving increasing attention (Lundetræ & Thomson 2017).

Ongoing research findings indicate that this is an area where schools need to put in considerable effort for all our children.

Meanwhile, we can begin our children’s exploration of the world of music, and of literacy and numeracy, by providing many opportunities to make and enjoy music.



## Other resources

### Songs and dance – early learning

[http://www.aussiebands.com.au/australian\\_kids\\_music.htm](http://www.aussiebands.com.au/australian_kids_music.htm) - an amazing range of websites for music, songs, dance and stories designed for early learners. You can work with your children to choose the sites for the type/s of music you want to listen to, sing with and dance with.

<http://www.abc.net.au/abcforkids/sites/playschool/videos/> ABC TV's Play School has a bright look. Choose your episodes in advance so you can have the materials ready for drawing, painting, experimenting and playing.

<https://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/stayingsafe/children/songsrhymes.html> Bright and engaging road safety songs from the ABC and Transport NSW

Classical gems for small children's dancing, relaxing and listening to. Choose ones that you enjoy too: <http://www.orange freesounds.com/category/music/classical-music/>

Gorgeous violin music here. You will have to search on YouTube for the particular one you want, but it is worth the effort – a marvellous collection.

<https://www.thoughtco.com/best-classical-violin-music-724383>

Music for younger children to hear the tune, text provided, but you and your children provide the voice. A great reminder of the favourites, and you the authority of 'expert' as the singer, so your children can join in. <https://raisingchildren.net.au/guides/baby-karaoke>

### Up to and including school age

<https://www.songlibrary.net/> - an interesting selection of many new songs about stories, environmental issues, music from various countries. Plenty of sample, plus lyrics and scores.

Try 'Feed your imagination' here: <https://www.songlibrary.net/Feed-Your-Imagination.html>

<http://www.songsforteaching.com/australiansongs.htm>

plus the sites listed above.

## References

Aebersold, Caroline (2011) Foreword to *BRIDGING THE GAP IN SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT THROUGH THE ARTS* summary report at:

<https://www.songroom.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Bridging-the-Gap-in-School-Achievement-through-the-Arts.pdf>

Bolduc, J. (2008) The Effects of Music Instruction on Emergent Literacy Capacities among Preschool Children: A Literature Review in *Early Childhood Research & Practice* Volume 10 Number 1 <http://ecrp.uiuc.edu/v10n1/bolduc.html> accessed 5/11/2018

Lundetræ, K, & Thomson, J.M. (2017) Rhythm production at school entry as a predictor of poor reading and spelling at the end of first grade Published online October 23 2017 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5752745/> accessed 6/11/2018

ACARA (2012) The Australian Curriculum: Music <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/the-arts/music/> accessed 6/11/2018