The Importance of Music and Movement for Preschoolers with Special Needs

California AEYC Annual Conference
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10:30 AM–12:00 PM

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Opening Music Experience

*Please remember to participate in the drawing for a free one-day training!*

What We Know

1. Music-learning supports all learning.
   - NAEYC
   - Music Together Curriculum Alignment (*in your folder*)

2. Music lessons early in life lead to greater cognitive benefits later in life.
   - Early childhood music training leads to great cognitive gains (Bilhartz, Bruhn, and Olson, 2000).
   - Music and language perception are related (Tillmann, 2012).

What You Might Not Know

1. Music supports cognitive development.
   - Pattern identification
   - Problem-solving

2. Music supports social/emotional/relational development.
   - Self-regulation
   - Bonding and attachment
3. Music experiences can affect development of sensory systems.
   • Ability to increase body awareness
   • Prime body for learning

*These effects are enhanced when active music making includes movement!*

**Using Your Teacher Eyes (Video Example)**

1. How would you support these children in your classroom?

2. How does the music specialist support these children?
   • Singing to them
   • Looking at them
   • Using their name (singing and signing)
   • Moving to the steady beat
   • Hand over hand

**Learning Domains**

1. Cognitive development
   • Problem-solving
   • Logical thinking
   • Music experience

2. Social/emotional/relational
   • How children relate to others
   • Friendships
   • Sharing
   • Attaching to caregivers and teachers
   • Music experience

**Sensory Systems**

1. The body receives messages and turns them into appropriate motor and behavior responses.

2. Sensory Processing Disorder
   • 1 in 6 children experience disruptions to their sensory processing severe enough to impact their everyday functioning (www.sensoryprocessingfoundation.net).
3. Types of sensory input
   • Vestibular
     — sense of where your body is in space and balance
   • Proprioceptive
     — body awareness, motor planning, how much force to use
   • Auditory/Visual
     — the ability to screen out unimportant things to focus on important things
   • Tactile
   • Olfactory
   • Oral

4. Examples

Ways to Scaffold Movement

1. Static movement (movement that pauses)
   • Before dynamic movement (continuous movement)

2. Movements that have endpoints against the body are easier to perceive.
   • Before movement with endpoints away from the body

3. Movements of the upper body (non-locomotor)
   • Before weight-bearing movements (locomotor)

4. Gross-motor movements
   • Before fine-motor movements

5. Movement without an object
   • Before movement with an object

Music and Movement Guidelines

1. Repetition is good.

2. Alternate side and directions.

3. Three midlines (left side/right side, above the waist/below the waist, front/behind).

4. Include opportunities for singing, instrument playing, and moving throughout the day.
Spiral of Exposure and Experimentation

1. Children learn by observing and practicing many times.

Today's songs are selected from the award-winning Music Together® Family Favorites® CDs, with activities from the Family Favorites Songbook for Teachers.

For more information on Music Together, visit Exhibit Booth #330.
www.musictogether.com

Jessica Lee is a board-certified music therapist and a Certified Music Together teacher and center director. In addition to directing Ensemble Music in Minneapolis, MN, Jessica also works on the child/adolescent inpatient mental unit at the University of Minnesota Fairview Riverside Hospital. She has many years of experience working with diverse populations, ranging from children who are hard-of-hearing to hospice patients, in various settings, including preschools, nursing homes, intergenerational, and hospitals. Jessica also directs an a capella women's group that regularly performs throughout the Twin Cities area.

References