

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

Music, music everywhere

Children are tuned in to music while still in the womb, so how and when you use music can affect their mood, memory, emotions and learning. Here are some ideas for making music work for you and your children in the setting.



1. Because music is linked to our emotions, use music to reflect the atmosphere you want: loud, fast music will create excitement while quiet, slow music will calm the children. Be purposeful about what music you play, and when, to support children to recognise how it makes them feel. For example, you can use it to signify transitions through the day
2. Create plenty of opportunities for children to hear and join in songs, such as nursery rhymes, as they support children's learning and are culturally significant, linking the past and present. Use action songs to teach rhythm and develop early musical understanding and use props to help children remember and repeat songs independently
3. Encourage a habit of adults and children making up songs to well-known tunes for everyday activities, such as tidying up, walking along corridors, transitioning from outdoors to indoors, and so on
4. To develop pitch and the mouth, tongue and lip movements for speech, offer opportunities for children to use their voices by singing high and low, whistling, chanting and humming. Try singing outside where children can be louder and more active with their voices
5. Consider your music resources – what is available for children to access independently, what is used as an adult-led activity and how children are taught to use them. Basic percussion instruments, such as maracas, are the easiest for children to have access to and are valuable to play along to rhythms and songs. Don't forget to include home-made instruments (bottle shakers, tin drums, tissue box and rubber band guitars, crisp tube rain sticks) alongside purchased resources. Remember to include music opportunities in the babies' treasure baskets, e.g. Indian bells, wind chimes, rattles etc.
6. Access to tuned instruments provides a different experience for the children, with chime bars, bells, keyboards, etc. allowing them to express mood and experiment with ideas. Try asking parents if they could demonstrate playing instruments for the children or watch videos of different types of music.

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Think carefully about the cultures reflected in your instrument choices and use the internet to share typical music from different countries, asking advice from parents to avoid stereotyping

7. Wherever your instruments are accessible, provide props for the children to express themselves further e.g. ribbons, scarves and accessories such as hats, shoes, jewellery, feather boas, etc., to develop imagination and express feelings
8. Provide a variety of musical styles to develop listening skills as they distinguish between tones, styles, speeds and instruments. Use IT resources such as the internet, Spotify and YouTube to support you.

Find more resources at www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna