

Why make music with your child? Music isn't only a fantastic way for children and parents to experience fun and enjoyable times together, it is also a useful tool for stimulating a child's development. Dancing, singing, playing percussion instruments, and relaxing to music are great for allowing children to practice and master important skills.

Music & Child Development:

Musical songs and activities can help children learn the skills they need as they grow. Music can promote the development of:

- Thinking skills: staying on task, increasing attention span, problem solving, following instructions, understanding and practicing new concepts
- Language, Literacy and Numeracy: learning new words and their meanings, counting, following patterns
- Physical Skills: Gross and fine motor skills, body awareness, coordination (eg: using both hands together)
- Communication skills: verbal and nonverbal self-expression eg: singing, making animal sounds, pointing, looking, waving
- Social Skills: sharing, turn-taking, sitting and waiting – this can help to prepare children for kindy and school

Why do Children Need to Learn These Skills?

- In preparation for school... to increase attention span & stay on task... to strengthen family relationships... to learn counting, words and other academic concepts... to develop body coordination... to develop self-expression.

Tips & Ideas:

- ♪ Face your child and smile when you sing together. Face to face time is important for developing imitation skills
- ♪ Children can learn concepts like counting, colours, go/stop, loud/soft, slow/fast, and up/down within songs and music making
- ♪ Repeat songs over and over to assist your child's learning – repetition helps their brain remember!
- ♪ When singing your child's favourite song, leave the last word off each line for them to sing
- ♪ Change time can be a great opportunity to begin body awareness activities with young infants. Sing about arms/ legs/ fingers and toes etc
- ♪ Grasping instruments (shakers/ beaters) is great for the development of fine motor skills
- ♪ Movement songs in which children do big actions like walking, running and jumping, can help them to develop coordination and balance
- ♪ Dancing is great for developing social skills though group work, turn taking and leading others

Sing&Grow Activities:

What are the child development benefits?

Activity	Child Development Benefits	Song Ideas
1. Greeting Song	A great way to develop appropriate social skills in children by strengthening listening skills and encouraging waving, looking and smiling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let's Sing&Grow
2. Action Songs	Action songs promote the development of fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination. Parent-child interaction is important during these songs, allowing children to either mimic modelled actions or enjoy the sensory experience of their parent's hands over their own.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Busy Body Clap Your Hands Beehive Song Five Little Ducks
3. Hand Percussion Instruments	Again an effective way for developing fine motor skills with children required to grasp objects and coordinate their movements. Activities with small percussion instruments can increase understanding of concepts in children by reinforcing the meaning of fast/slow, up/down, loud/soft.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rock 'n' Roll Band Play Music Together I am a Fine Musician Everybody do this
4. Dancing	Dancing and movement supports the development of gross motor skills including coordination and balance and assists a child's awareness of their body and its ability. Dancing is always a great way to have some fun active time with your children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aussie Animal Groove Bounce Rock and Roll Hokey Pokey Dingle Dangle Scarecrow Ring-a-Ring-a-Rosie
5. Drumming	Motor skills (fine and gross) and social skills may all be encouraged by drumming activities. Children can practice sharing, turn-taking, and appropriate peer interactions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bop and Stop Oh we can play on the big bass drum
6. Movement with Props	A simple way to promote and nurture your child's creativity and self-expression whilst strengthening their gross motor coordination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bounce, Rock and Roll Rainbow Ribbon Dancing Peek-a-Boo
7. Cuddle Time/ Relaxation Time	Allows your child to catch their breath, lower their heart rate and experience calm. A nice time to reassure your child how much they mean to you by providing comfort and safety with a hug, a gentle touch or with words.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twinkle Twinkle My Little Teddy Heart Song Morning Town Ride
8. Goodbye Song	Just like the greeting songs, a goodbye song assists in strengthening your child's social skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little One Good Night Ladies

The Songs listed above can be found on our "Let's Sing&Grow" CD and in these popular children's resources listed below.

The New Useful Book:
Songs and Ideas from ABC Play School
Clark, H. 1995
ABC Books
Available online at <http://shop.abc.net.au>
ABC Shop and Dymocks

Merrily Merrily:
A Book of Songs and Rhymes
Nursing Mothers Association of Australia, 1979.
Available from:
<http://www.mothersdirect.com.au/catalogue>
Ph: 1800 032 926