



SANTA ROSA AREA MUSIC TOGETHER NEWS

A newsletter for Music Together families in Santa Rosa, Windsor, and Healdsburg.

Volume III, Issue III ♦ Fall 2007



Sing it, Don't Say it!

We all know that Music Together is a music education program, but you may not have realized that it's a language immersion program, too! Yes, music is really a language - a critical form of human communication deeply rooted in all of us. In his theory of multiple intelligences, Dr. Howard Gardener cites "musical intelligence" as one of the eight intelligences by which we know the world around us. According to him, musical intelligence runs in an almost structural parallel to linguistic intelligence.

Our goal in class is to help our little ones begin the development of their musical intelligence in a meaningful way. Since little children learn from watching and imitating their important grown-ups, while you are in class, it is the most profound kind of music learning for your child if *you* stay musical for the whole 45 minutes! We ask you to put your talking voices on hold and use your singing voices, so that the children can have an "immersion" experience. Speaking directly to children during the types of activities we do can interrupt important musical processing in their brains. Between songs, please don't talk to your child or another adult. Instead, use non-verbal communication - smiles, gestures, etc. The quiet spaces are very important, and singing the 5-I (bum! bum!) when we put instruments away is the whole group's job - not just the teacher's! In classes where the adults really practice these important parts of our program, the musical progress made by children is stunning! Remember we are modeling - the children really are paying attention to what we do. When we model focus, we teach our children focus. During these quiet moments we often hear the children humming or singing softly - we can miss that chance if we're not listening for it.

If you must say something to your child in class -try singing it - it's fun- your child will like it, too!

The Tiny Ones...

Congratulations to all families who have had a new baby recently! I love seeing the newborns in class, as they grow (fast!) and respond so stunningly to our music activities. With a very young baby in class, please remember to give yourself permission to adjust what the class is doing to fit the needs of your baby. If you never got the "infant suggestions" handout, ask your teacher for one.

...And don't forget -sing to your baby daily!



Dust off that old...

Flute? Or was it a clarinet? Cello? Guitar? Flugelhorn? Over the years, many parents have told me that Music Together prompted them to get out an instrument they once played or took lessons on, and begin to try and play it again! It's so wonderful to show your child what it's like for you to try and play something! If you're one of those parents who plays an instrument, at least well enough to get it to make a sound, why not bring it in to class sometime? We're always delighted to have adults do little "show-and-plays" to help expose the children to a variety of instruments. Let your teacher know if you'd like to bring something in!

Administrative Help Needed

As our center grows, more and more responsibility is being taken on by my wonderful administrative assistant, Andrea McFadin. This fall, Andrea will take over the lion's share of registration for Winter session, in fact. Andrea is also expecting a baby in March! We are looking for another administrative assistant who can work with Andrea on this winter's registration, then take over much of the process for spring. This could work into a permanent shared position. If you know someone with strong communication and administrative skills, computer knowledge, and business experience, I'd love to hear from her/him. This will be a part-time position, and the exact amount of time each week will vary. Any interested person please contact: Ginger Parish, 544-5747, or

gingerparish@netzero.net for more details.

In This Issue:

- Registration News
- Teacher News
- End of the session calendar
- 'Homeplay' ideas
- Big Kids' News
- ...and more!

Keep the Music Alive! As you finish this session, please remember to **keep** doing music with your child every day! It's really YOUR model of music-making that means the most to your child educationally. You're taking your child on a wonderful journey toward music competence; don't stop when class ends! Keep up the good work!





Registration News

• **Priority registration** for WINTER session begins **Monday, October 29 until Friday, November 16**. If you register in this 3-week period, you will be guaranteed your spot for winter session. You'll be given registration materials in class the week of October 29; ***read your materials carefully, there are changes in the way we'll do some things!*** I'll also send an email reminder out. You must **include your payment** with your registration, whether you register in class, by mail or online.

If you wish to change your class day or time, registering early in the priority period will put you in the best position to get your first choice to switch. Winter session begins January 7 (10 consecutive weeks).

• **Winter Session:** Look at the schedule you'll be given in class for the details, but basically the class offerings for winter will be the same as they are now, *except* for a NEW Windsor class at 3:30 PM on Wednesday(!) - there will be some changes in teachers, too (see 'Teacher News' below).

• **Why continue in music classes anyway?** Most families choose to keep their children in classes for several sessions, because the development of music skills, like language development, is ongoing, continuing to build in a deep way with focused experiences. Brain research shows us that music aptitude can actually increase or decrease depending on environment. In other words "use it or lose it"! The brain is making important neural connections in early childhood that must continue to be exercised so they're not "pruned". In classes, you can be sure your child will have exposure to a meaningful and powerful group music-making experience each week!

If you have any questions regarding your child's musical progress please ask your teacher about it, or call me (Ginger). I love to help parents interpret what's happening for their children from a developmental standpoint - it's such an amazing journey to watch your child grow through!

Teacher News

Some teacher changes coming up this winter. . .

Our dear Pam Koppel, who has been singing and wiggling in the Windsor Wed. evening classes for 1½ years, will sadly be leaving us this winter. She will continue teaching in Sebastopol and Petaluma with West County MT. Windsor families have enjoyed her sweet style and gentle warmth. We'll all miss you, Pam, thanks for all you've done!

You may have heard that Laura Hays only joined us very briefly, before moving back to Boston. A wonderful teacher, Anna Jennings, stepped up to help us, though! Anna, originally from MT of San Francisco, joined us this fall. Anna tells me she loves her Sonoma County families! She currently teaches in Santa Rosa on Thursdays, and in Healdsburg on Mondays. This Winter, she will continue teaching only her Santa Rosa Thursdays. Welcome to Anna!!

We are welcoming a new teacher this winter, too - although he's not at all new to music with children! Some of you may know Tom "Star Tom" McCurry from his work as a preschool music specialist. Star Tom has been working with me this fall to get ready to take on the Wednesday evening Windsor classes, and the Monday morning Healdsburg classes. We're happy to have him join us!

Helen and Ginger will stick with the same schedules we have this fall!

You can take a look at our "bios" on the website or on the schedule you'll be getting in class, to read more about all of us teachers. We are all delighted to be able to bring this wonderful curriculum to so many families!! Thanks for singing with us!



Scheduling Make-Ups Go to: <http://makeups.musictogether.com> , access key is **wiggle** (Also, www.santarosamusictogether.com has a link on the home page.) ***Don't wait!!*** They get filled at the end of the session!! ***The scheduler is best, but if you can't do it online, you can call me (Ginger) at 544-5747 to set one up by phone (don't email me for a make-up please!!) Thanks!***



OCTOBER / NOVEMBER

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
21 OCT.	22 Week 7 Regular classes	23 Regular classes	24 Regular classes	25 Regular classes	26 Regular classes	27
28 Winter 08 Pre-Registration:	29 Week 8 Regular classes *Priority begins →	30 Regular classes	31 Regular morning classes - NO EVENING classes in Windsor	1 NOV. Regular classes	2 Regular classes	3
4	5 Week 9 Regular classes	6 Regular classes	7 Regular classes	8 Regular classes	9 Regular classes	10
11	12 LAST DAY Regular classes	13 LAST DAY Regular classes	14 Regular classes LAST DAY (except Wed. eve.)	15 Regular classes LAST DAY (except Big Kids)	16 LAST DAY Regular classes	17
18	19 Open Registration begins for Winter 08!!	20	21	22	23	24
<i>Happy Thanksgiving!</i>						
25	26	27	28 LAST DAY for Wednesday Windsor evening classes	'Big Kids Family Music' Families: Your last day is December 6!! 😊		

Winter Session Classes will begin on Monday, January 7!

Big Kids' News!!

"BKFM" The new Music Together curriculum, called Big Kids Family Music™, is underway! BKFM is a new 60-minute class geared for children ages 5 and 6. (To attend, your child must be 5 yrs. by the start of the semester.) Adults still play an important role in this class, although the adults and children may have different musical roles. We are having SO much fun in there! I'm planning to offer it again this winter! We meet Thursdays at 3:30 PM. This class includes game songs, folk dances, jam sessions, and more structured work in rhythm and tonality. Check it out for your 5 or 6 year-old! No prior Music Together experience is necessary.

4 and 5 Year-Olds' Class: We are discontinuing the class for 4-5 year-olds that has been offered in the past. Really, mixed-age classes are a better fit educationally for 4 year-olds, and now we have the BKFM class (above) for 5 yr.-olds. The 4-5 class typically had low enrollment, while many 4-year-olds continued to be in mixed age classes. It really seems to me that this is the best way to go. Please ask me if you have questions about the best music education for, or how to engage musically with, your 3 to 5 year-old child.

Children's Ensemble: Well, I (Ginger) did it! Last spring I wrote that I had an idea for a children's ensemble, and now it has come to pass! The **One World Children's Ensemble** began in mid-September with 14 boys and girls between the ages of 7 and 11. It's going really well!! The children sing like angels, and we are learning recorder, xylophone, and drumming. It's not Music Together, but rather a course of my own creation, born of my work with elementary age children, and my training in the Orff approach to music teaching. Children are developing skills working musically in a group while honing their rhythm and tonal work as individuals. We meet on Mondays from 4:00 - 5:30 at the Glaser Center on Mendocino Ave. If you know a child you think might like to join us, please contact me!

Gift Idea?

When your parents and in-laws wonder what they can get for the grandchildren for the holidays, remember a Music Together class makes a great gift to your little one!!



Babies Class

We're offering the Babies Only class again this winter for newborns to 8 months. If you know anyone with a new baby, let them know! These classes are so sweet and fun; fabulous for bonding with a new infant, while learning important developmental information. Meets Wednesdays at 11:30 in Santa Rosa.



“Homeplay” suggestions ...

of like homework, except without the work! They weren't utilized by enough people to justify my continuing them weekly, but so many did say they enjoyed them, that I thought I'd use part of the newsletter three times a year to give a few suggestions. Here are some ideas just for fun:



In the past, “Homeplay” sheets were available after each class. They were kind

I.) Time out for play:

- This week, do “Shake Those Simmons Down” at home at least once without the CD. Make up some new verses for it, using things you do in your lives around home or funny movements. Remember to just do it yourself, even if your child isn't participating with you. It helps your child just to see your example of spontaneous music making!
- Play “Simple Gifts” (the play-along piece) with instruments (if you don't have many, use some “kitchen” ones), and watch your child's reaction. Let yourself really listen to it and get into it, regardless of what your child is doing.
- Have a parade! Sing something with a marching beat (“Ran Tin Tinnah”, “When the Saints Go Marching In”, and “The Ants Go Marching One by One” come to mind...), and play instruments and march around. It's fun to do with more people, so see what family members you can get to do it with you! Set up a row of stuffed animals on the couch to watch the parade go by!

Important: When you do a musical activity at home, whether scarf-dancing, playing instruments, whatever, **see the song through to the end even if your child is not participating with you!!** If you stop, perhaps feeling frustrated that your child isn't engaging in that moment, your child will notice!! This will teach two things: 1) making music isn't something worth sticking with for your own enjoyment, and 2) your child will think his/her participation is the only reason you make music (it may actually be, but it's better to send the message that it's something **you** do for fun!!). You're the role model!

II.) Fun with daily routines:

- As you're coming in the house from a car ride, sing “Hello Everybody” to things in your house. Another time, play “peek-a-boo” with a scarf or your songbook while singing the Hello song to your child.
- At bath time, Chant “Saying and Doing”, changing the words to reflect body parts you're washing or other things you're doing (‘filling the tub, filling the tub, filling and filling and filling the tub’). You can even ‘wash’ tub toys! You can use silly voices - high or low - Silly parents delight their children!
- The next time you are picking up toys or doing some other repetitive motion, sing a rhythmic song such as “Crow Song” or “The Earth Is Our Mother” and turn the job into a music time, popping toys away on the beat! Maybe your child will even join in with you...
- The rhyme “I Had a Little Frog” can be very engaging for little ones. Try using it this week while you're doing a diaper change-it may stop a wiggly baby or toddler long enough to do the job quickly! If your child is no longer in diapers, use this chant while dressing or putting on shoes.

III.) Songbook Activity:

- Read the parent introduction pages (particularly pgs. 5-8) in your songbook (especially if you haven't already!) - see if you can relate any of it to what you did in class this week.
- Point out pictures in the book that relate to this week's class (instruments, animals, etc.) Talk about seeing/doing those things in class as you look in the songbook. Sing or chant a song or two while you're at it!
- Sit with your child and your songbook, and find “Saying and Doing” (pg. 22). Point out the different parts of the picture. Make up words to this chant from the picture. It's fun to tap the beat onto the picture while you say it. Or, find any one of your favorite songs or rhymes in the book and sing it to your child while tapping the rhythm of the song or rhyme on the page. Point out the pictures that go with it too. The “Three Ravens” picture (pg. 16) works well for this! You can do this while the song is playing on the stereo or not.

Winter Song Collection

Coming up in Winter, we'll be using the STICKS song collection. This is a really fun one, with songs like “Follow Me Down to Carlow”, “Ridin' in the Car”, and even “Pop! Goes the Weasel”. This one has always been a favorite!

