



Musical Resource Pack (Early Years)





Why music?

Music is fun! Most children love music, and respond with great enthusiasm to music. Therefore music is a good medium to use to engage your child, sustain his/her attention, and strengthen the attachment between him/her and you. Musical awareness is innate and begins at a very early age.

Music can also be used to enhance many areas of your child's development. Through shared music making the following aspects of your child's development can be developed:

- Gross and fine motor skills
- Communication skills (verbal and non-verbal)
- Learning through play
- Concept comprehension
- Developing confidence and self-esteem leading to a healthy sense of self
- Social skills
- Language skills
- Learning through repetition



Through participation in music time, you and your child may access new play opportunities, share new experiences, and discover new ways of interacting with each other that are positive and fun. You may learn new tools for parenting, and gain confidence as you interact with your child. Through musical interaction, you may gain new insight into your child's strengths, personality and development.

It would be great if you could aim to spend some time every day interacting musically with your child. This need not be a large amount of each day. You could build in a routine of using instruments in your child's playtime or bath time, and singing some gentle lullabies at bedtime.





Activities that require you, your child and household objects





Action songs

- Resources:** None
- Aims:**
To have fun together
To promote language development
To develop gross and fine motor skills
- Steps:**
Sing familiar action songs with your child
Repeat the actions with consistency and enthusiasm
Encourage your child to join in with the actions and the words of the song
- Remember:**
Allow time and space for your child to respond and join in
You can modify the known actions/words to follow what your child is doing
- Possible songs:**
If you're happy and you know it clap your hands
Oh we can play on the big bass drum
Head, shoulders, knees and toes
The Grand Old Duke of York
Five little monkeys

These are only some suggestions. Any familiar action song can be used.





Moving to music

Resources: Access to various different kinds of music and a way of playing your music aloud (phone, tablet, smart speaker)

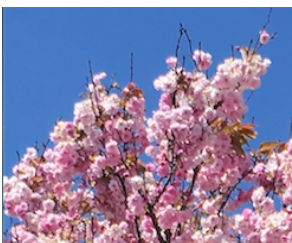
Aims: To have fun together
To develop gross and fine motor skills
To promote choice-making and independence

Steps: Choose a piece of music and play it aloud
As the music sounds, move to the music in whatever way feels most appropriate
Encourage your child to move as she wishes
Change the style of music and repeat the activity
Encourage your child to choose the music



Remember: Allow time and space for your child to begin to move
There is no right or wrong way to move
If necessary, hold your child in your arms and move with her

It may take some time for you and/or your child to become confident enough to move freely to the music. This is normal. Keep trying and soon you will relax and enjoy the activity.





Tickle games

Resources: none

Aims: To have fun with your child
To promote interaction

Steps: Sit facing your child or with your child sitting on your knee
Begin a tickle game such as "Round and round the Garden" or "Bananas in pyjamas", ending with the anticipated gesture of tickling
Repeat this process
As the game becomes familiar, extend the waiting time before the final action



Remember: Repetition is important for your child. It allows him time to understand the activity and recognise and enjoy the anticipation created

Your child may want to repeat this activity over and over again. Follow his lead and remember: adults get bored much quicker than children do.

As he gets older your child may want to reverse the role and lead this activity. Encourage him to do this.





Vocal conversations

Resources: None

Aims: To have fun together
To promote communication and interaction skills
To encourage confidence and self-esteem

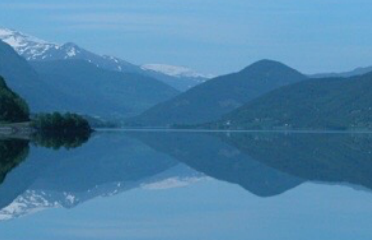
Steps: Sit facing your child
Encourage your child to vocalise or sing
Listen to your child's singing/vocalising and repeat his musical phrase (copy elements such as sound/volume/length/feeling/etc as much as possible)
As this activity become familiar, move around the room and focus on listening to each other
As this activity becomes familiar, encourage your child to repeat your musical phrase
Develop this activity into a vocal conversation (i.e. where the answers need not repeat exactly the initial musical phrase)



Remember: Allow time and space for your child to understand that you are repeating his phrase
Praise your child's every effort to communicate with you

Is it important at first to listen carefully to and repeat your child's singing. This allows him to feel that his contributions and efforts are meaningful and valuable.





Exploring sounds

Resources: A selection of household

objects Aims: To explore new sounds

together

To promote confidence and self-esteem
To develop gross and fine motor skills

Steps: Arrange various household objects on the floor around your child

Encourage your child to explore freely the different objects

Respond musically to your child's discovery by exploring the objects with him

Respond verbally to your child's exploration with praise

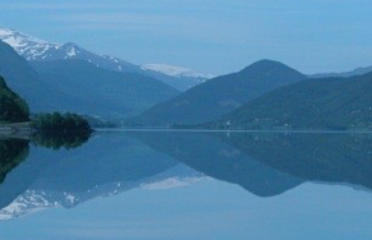
Remember: Allow time and space for your child to explore the space and the objects

Allow your child to lead you in this exploration.

Respond musically to all of your child's attempts to communicate with you

This activity can be adapted for many different situations, e.g. in the forest, in the garden, using pots and pans, etc. The main focus is to allow your child to lead you in the discovery of new sounds.





Rhythm conversations

Resources: None or
One large pan, or two pans (different sizes if possible)
Two wooden spoons or other kitchen utensils

Aims: To have fun together
To promote communication and listening skills
To develop gross motor skills

Steps: Sit facing your child (with a large pan between you, or each with a pan)
Encourage your child to play or clap a short rhythm
Listen to your child's playing and copy her rhythm exactly
As this activity become familiar, move around the room and focus on listening to each other
As this activity becomes familiar, encourage your child to copy your rhythm



Remember: Allow time and space for your child to clap or play
Allow time and space for your child to respond to your rhythm
Praise you child's every effort to communicate with you

This activity may also be done using different household object that make interesting sounds.





Play and stop game

Resources: A variety of household object which make interesting and varied sounds

Aims: To have fun with your child
To promote interaction and communication

Steps: Sit facing you child with the household objects in between you
As your child begins to plays various objects, copy her movements exactly, playing when she does and stopping as soon as she does.

Repeat this process

If appropriate encourage your child to give verbal cues as well by saying "play" and "stop".



Remember: Repetition is important for you child. It allows her time to realise that she is leading you and the music

Your child may want to repeat this activity over and over again. Follow her lead and remember: adults get bored much quicker than children do.

This activity can also be done with a group of children. Always be clear who the leader is and ensure every child has a turn to be the leader.





Developing expression

Resources: None

Aims: To have fun with your child
To develop gross and fine motor skills
To develop listening, interaction and confidence

Steps: Choose a familiar song such as "Oh we can play on the big bass drum" or "Frere Jacques"
Introduce different ways of moving and making sounds (clapping, stamping, dancing) and different ways of playing (loudly, fast, slowly, quietly)
Encourage your child to choose a way of playing then sing a verse of your song, changing the words to match how you are playing



Example 1: Sing: "We can dance slowly round the room today and this is how we do it; we can dance slowly round the room today and this is how we do it" to the tune of "oh we can play on the big bass drum"

Example 2: Sing "We can clap our hands today; quietly; quietly; we can clap our hands today; we can clap our hands today; quietly; quietly" to the tune of "Frere Jacques"

Remember: There are no right or wrong words to sing.
Simply make them up as you go along.

You can match the speed and expression of your singing to your style of playing. For example, if you are marching very fast, try singing the verse as fast as you can.





Taking turns

Resources: A selection of household objects

Aims: To promote interaction and communication
To develop social skills
To develop motor skills

Steps: Encourage your child to choose an object
Listen to your child plays on this object
Take this object and play it yourself
Give the object back to your child
Repeat this process
You can emphasise each turn by saying or singing "My turn"; "Your turn", or create a song about sharing and taking turns



Example: Sing: "We can share together today; you can play; I can play; we can share together, we can share together; you can play; I can play" to the tune of "Frere Jacques"

Remember: There are no right or wrong words to say or sing.
Simply make it up as you go along.
This activity may be hard for your child so encourage and support her to take, wait for and anticipate her turn
Encourage and praise your child in this activity

Try this activity with a ball: simply roll a ball backwards and forwards between you and your child as you sing.





Quiet time

Resources: Access to gentle music (slow and quiet music/songs, lullabies) and a way of playing your music aloud (phone, tablet, smart speaker)

Aims: To spend time enjoying each other's company
To develop intimacy
To relax together

Steps: Choose a piece of music and play it aloud
Sit with your child on your knee; give him a cuddle or rock him gently; encourage your child to make and hold eye contact with you
Spend a few minutes doing this activity to finish your music time together



Remember: Allow time and space for you and your child to become confident and relaxed
This activity may feel uncomfortable to begin with. Keep trying and soon you will relax and enjoy each other's company.

You could also sing along to recorded songs, or sing familiar songs such as "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star" or "You are my sunshine".

You could also use props instead of or as well as instruments. Try using scarves, bubbles or coloured lighting to create a relaxed atmosphere.





Activities that require you, your child and musical instruments





Instrument list

Some of you may want to use **musical instruments** and have questions about which instruments to get. For this, my advice would be to choose quality over quantity. It is better to have a few instruments with good quality sounds than many instruments with low quality sound. Also aim for instruments that your child likes and that he or she can play independently. Some suggestions would be:

Medium/Large drum

Ocean drum

Tambourine

Tuned percussion (chime bars, small xylophone, combibells)

Useful webistes:

<http://www.lmsmusicsupplies.co.uk>

<http://www.amazon.co.uk>



Some of you may want to use **Music-making apps**. Please supervise your child or young person accessing these apps if necessary, as many apps that are free have pop-up adverts that can be quick to incur costs.

Apple (no cost)

- **GarageBand**
- **Soundprism**
- **iKaossilator**
- **SoundForest**
- **Sansula**
- **Bongos!**
- **Conga drums**
- **FingertipMaestro**
- **Cove**





Apple (cost)

- Singing Fingers (cost)
- Bloom (cost)
- Thumbjam (cost)

Android

- WalkBand
- iKaossilator

Remember: you do not need musical instruments to be able to do musical activities with your child. 'You' and 'your voice' are the biggest assets you can bring to making and enjoying music with your child. You can also use household objects and make instruments together using household objects.





Instrument time

- Resources:** A selection of musical instruments
Prior knowledge of instrument songs such as "I am the fine music man" and "We can play on the big bass drum" or recordings of these songs
- Aims:**
To have fun with your child
To develop gross and fine motor skills
To promote interaction and communication
- Steps:**
Encourage your child to choose an instrument for himself and for you
Choose a song to sing or listen to
Encourage your child to play along and praise him when he does so
- Remember:** There is no right or wrong way to play an instrument.
Taking part yourself will encourage your child and enable you to enjoy playing instruments together



You can change the words of well-known tunes to match what you and your child are doing. For example sing the words "This is the way we play the bells, play the bells, play the bells; this is the way we play the bells, in our music time" to the tune of "Here we go round the mulberry bush".





Exploring sounds

Resources: A selection of musical instruments
Aims: To explore new sounds together

To promote confidence and self-esteem
To develop gross and fine motor skills

Steps: Arrange various musical instruments on the floor around your child

Encourage your child to explore freely the different instruments

Respond musically to your child's discovery by exploring the instruments with him

Respond verbally to your child's exploration with praise



Remember: Allow time and space for your child to explore the space and the instruments
Allow your child to lead you in this exploration.
Respond musically to all of your child's attempts to communicate with you

This activity can be adapted for situations where musical instruments are not available, e.g. in the forest, in the garden, using pots and pans, etc. The main focus is to allow your child to lead you in the discovery of new sounds.





Play and stop game

Resources: One large drum, or two small drums, or two instruments with different sounds

Aims: To have fun with your child
To promote interaction and communication

Steps: Sit facing you child with the drum in between you As your child plays the drum, copy her movements
exactly, playing when she does and stopping as soon as she does.
Repeat this process
If appropriate encourage your child to give verbal cues as well by saying "play" and "stop".



Remember: Repetition is important for you child. It allows her time to realise that she is leading you and the music

Your child may want to repeat this activity over and over again. Follow her lead and remember: adults get bored much quicker than children do.

This activity can be done with different instruments and with a group of children. Always be clear who the leader is and ensure every child has a turn to be the leader.





Rhythm conversations

Resources: One large drum, or two drums (with different sounds if possible)

Aims: To have fun together
To promote communication and listening skills
To develop gross motor skills

Steps: Sit facing your child either with a large drum between you, or each with a drum
Encourage your child to play a short rhythm
Listen to your child's playing and copy her rhythm exactly
As this activity become familiar, move around the room and focus on listening to each other
As this activity becomes familiar, encourage your child to copy your rhythm



Remember: Allow time and space for your child to play the drum
Allow time and space for your child to respond to your rhythm
Praise you child's every effort to communicate with you

This activity may also be done using clapping rather than playing a drum, or with different instruments if available.





Conducting

Resources: A selection of different instruments

Aims: To have fun creating music together
To develop listening and interaction skills
To promote confidence and communication

Steps: Teach or discuss with your child two different hand signals: one meaning "play" the other meaning "stop" (for example, pointing with one finger could indicate "play" and holding up the palm of the hand could indicate "stop").

Choose a leader

The leader uses hand signals to direct the other person to play and stop playing.

When the game becomes familiar, swap leaders.



Remember: Watch carefully and follow the leader's hand signals as quickly as possible
Choose hand signals that are easy to achieve and memorable
When your child is leading, respond to every gesture he makes, even very small gestures

This activity can also be done with a group of children and with many combinations of instruments and other household items.





Developing expression

Resources: A selection of musical

instruments Aims: To have fun with your

child

To develop gross and fine motor skills

To develop listening, interaction and confidence

Steps:

Choose a familiar song such as "Oh we can play on the big bass drum" or "Frere Jacques"

Introduce different ways of playing, e.g.

loudly, fast, slowly, quietly, angrily,

tenderly Encourage your child to choose a way of playing

then sing a verse of your song, changing the words to match how you are playing



Example 1: Sing: "Oh we can play loudly on the drum today and this is how we do it; we can play loudly on the drum today and this is how we do it" to the tune of "Oh we can play on the big bass drum"

Example 2: Sing "We can play the bell today; quietly; quietly; we can play the bell today; we can play the bell today; quietly; quietly" to the tune of "Frere Jacques"

Remember: There are no right or wrong words to sing. Simply make them up as you go along.

You can match the speed and expression of your singing to your style of playing. For example, if you are playing the drum very fast, try singing the verse as fast as you can.





Taking turns

Resources: A selection of musical instruments

Aims: To promote interaction and communication
To develop social skills
To develop motor skills

Steps: Encourage your child to choose an instrument
Listen to your child play this instrument
Take this instrument and play it yourself
Give the instrument back to your child
Repeat this process
You can emphasise each turn by saying or singing "My turn"; "Your turn", or create a song about sharing an instrument and taking turns on an instrument



Example: Sing: "We can share the drum today; you can play; I can play; we can share the drum, share the drum today; you can play; I can play" to the tune of "Frere Jacques"

Remember: There are no right or wrong words to say or sing.
Simply make it up as you go along.
This activity may be hard for your child so encourage and support her to take, wait for and anticipate her turn
Encourage and praise you child in this activity

You can also do this activity with a prop instead of an instrument. Try rolling a ball backwards and forwards between you and your child.

