

# MUSIC MATTERS

*A Newsletter for the Families Enrolled in the Music-in-the-Box Music Masters Program  
Meredith Haynes and Ginger Acopiado, Owners  
FALL SESSION 1, 2005*

“Just as the small child cannot be still because he is in need of coordinating his movements, so the older child, who may seem troublesome in his curiosity...must be given a wide field of culture on which to feed”

Maria Montessori

## **Plan Now for Fall Session 2!**

Don't miss Fall Session 2 – Jamberry . Have you registered yet? Call today to reserve your spot!

Visit [www.musicinthebox.com](http://www.musicinthebox.com) for details

## **IN MY OPINION...**

*By Meredith Haynes*

I wish you could be a mouse in the corner during our every-seventh-week teacher training event. Our teachers, or music motivators as we like to call them, are bubbling with excitement. (Each of us feels we have the best job in the world—bringing music to your family!) They are so eager to learn—not just the new songs but also the why and how of each activity. Every single movement, sound, sight and touch your child experiences is there for a reason.

While you fired up the grill this summer, Ginger and I created classes guaranteed to wow you and your child all year long! We've enhanced our program in several ways. You'll be thrilled with our new stuffed animals (premiering next session)—only the best for our families! We've lengthened the class time for Music Masters 2 and 3 because there is so much to learn! And did you know we're getting your child ready for music lessons? Notice the melodies for our clean-up, reading time, transition, bubbles and goodbye songs. These songs are among the first your child will play in music lessons someday.

We also attended and taught at the Colorado Suzuki Summer Institute. This was a marvelous opportunity to collaborate with fine musicians

from across the country. And their endorsement of our early-childhood music program is significant and appreciated by us!

As Music-in-the-Box enters its 9<sup>th</sup> year, we want to express our heartfelt thanks to everyone who participates in our classes. Your kind words and passion for your children inspires us every day!

## **DEVELOPMENTAL READINESS**

### ***A Summary of What the Experts Are Saying***

*By Ginger Acopiado*

“Why does my 2 year-old jump on her books?” “Why does my child line everything up in a single file line?”

Studies in brain development research have been telling us to “listen to our toddlers and they'll tell you when they're ready” for years now when it comes to potty training, sleep training and eating. But in this ever-increasing competitive environment, parents striving to create the “best” for their child, often create a frustrated, unmotivated or fearful child instead.

There is so much research on child development, yet many parents do not know that there are certain developmental milestones critical for humans to be able to go on to the next level of development. Here's an example: Children must be spoken to by the age of 5 in order for the spoken word to become a normal function of an individual.<sup>1</sup> In a horrible example of child-abuse, a young girl was found locked in a closet at the age of 13. She had never been spoken to or allowed to learn speech. To date, this girl is in her twenties and has very limited speech capabilities. The opportunity for development of speech was missed.

What can we as parent do, especially when we are trying so hard to increase our child's potential? How do you know when to stimulate which developmental

phase? Research shows that the answer is, listen to (or watch) your child. They all go through all phases, but in very different orders. And sometimes stages will overlap and, though rarely, intertwine and they will all be reached to varying degrees.

Toddlers who are physical and aggressive may not be in the development phase for fine motor or organizational learning. Rather, they may be in their gross motor development phase. Requiring long stretches of passive play may not only be frustrating to a child in this stage, but may stilt development as well. Climbing, running and jumping are all key to developing coordination and balance. Have stimulating materials such as blocks or crayons, books, cars and dolls available, but don't get too upset when they throw them around or step and climb on them. Just make sure there are plenty of safe things to experiment with or jump onto when these mobile miniatures erupt.

The same is true of the child who appears "cerebral" or passive. Although they appear "smarter" than their peers of the same age, they are simply in their language development or organizational learning phase first. They may be early talkers or good with small detail manipulation. Requiring ball throwing, climbing and sliding may simply create a fearful child who is afraid the world is unsafe. The reality is they are not developmentally ready to make use of or expand on their physical skills. Instead encourage books, crayons, cars, blocks and other detail oriented items to stimulate this fine motor development, but also make available toys that may appeal to their curiosity for a more interactive and physical play later. Give the passive child a ball, but don't be upset when they carry it around or tell you what color it is instead of throwing it.

All children need stimulation, without expectation, in all areas. The bottom line, take a front seat in parenting by taking a back seat in teaching during the toddler years. You do more to help your child when you let them explore their world in their own time by providing multiple sensory experiences, without creating frustration (yours or theirs). Talk to your active child about colors and shapes while you are jumping onto colored shaped felt mats, it won't speed up the development, but it will ensure it is being stimulated when the phase turns. Roll the orange ball

to your passive child instead of throwing it at them and praise their "catch".

And watch out! Just when you've labeled your child the "quiet one", he'll turn on his gross motor development and climb your furniture and seeming to have "forgotten" those ever impressive ABC's. Research shows that all children go through all stages just in different orders<sup>2</sup> and if you stimulate all phases, and resist "taming" or "coaxing" an unwilling toddler, you will see a glorious well-rounded child who is self-motivated, willing and ready to try just about anything that appears interesting.

<sup>1</sup> The Endangered Child, *Jane Healy*

<sup>2</sup> What to Expect the Toddler Years, *Arlene Eisenberg, Sandee E. Hathaway, Heidi E. Murkoff*

## Multi-Sensory or Multi-System?

*By Meredith Haynes*

We all agree that children learn better through multi-sensory learning. Let's take it a step further and consider the added benefits of *simultaneous* multi-sensory learning.

Multi-sensory is best understood as the function of the body to receive stimuli through the five faculties—sight, touch, taste, smell and hearing. Webster includes emotions in the definition of sense. But I want to include the sensation of movement in our discussion as it is crucial to children's ability to learn. So a better word is multi-system.

Music-in-the-Box is committed to providing your child not only a multi-system experience but a simultaneous multi-system experience.

- Sight
- Touch
- Hearing
- Emotions
- Movement

### Why is Simultaneous Multi-System Learning Best?

We can learn from the experts:

"The point of all this activity is to help your baby engage his senses, motor skills and emotions in a single activity. If he is looking, listening, experiencing touch, and moving his muscles in an emotionally relevant way, he will truly be learning." *Stanley Greenspan, M.D., Building Healthy Minds*, pg. 36.

"Next, try to mobilize all of her senses to work together. Remember that our brains can absorb information from

many sources at the same time and your baby can simultaneously look, listen, move and feel. In fact, it is the ability to exercise all of these systems at the same time that really strengthens and organizes your child's nervous system. If you continue to encourage this ability as your baby develops, you will be helping her improve her capacity for intellectual, social and emotional functioning enormously. *Stanley Greenspan, M.D., Building Healthy Minds*, pg. 64.

"You can try to stimulate your child's learning by using the type of learning that works best for your child [visual or auditory or kinesthetic]. In addition, you can try to strengthen the memory in other parts of your child's brain by reinforcing the lesson using all the learning styles...In this way, the experience and memory will be recorded in the maximum number of ways possible." Winifred Conkling, *Smart-Wiring Your Baby's Brain*, pg. 18.

"When babies are on the brink of talking, this is the time (as well as the period from 4-8 months) to play...repetitive games that babies so enjoy, games like 'peek-a-boos', 'ride-a-cock-horse', while bouncing a baby on your knee...watch for when baby takes the lead...this will be a wonderful moment." *Roberta Micknick Golinkoff & Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, How Babies talk.*

The bottom line is simultaneous multi-system learning benefits your child in the following ways:

- Children will truly be learning
- It organizes your child's nervous system. In other words, It calms children
- Makes her smarter intellectually, socially and emotionally
- Strengthens the memory
- Enhances language development

### Music Masters and Simultaneous Multi-System Learning

Throughout your child's weekly Music Masters class you will observe the carefully-prepared opportunities for simultaneous multi-system learning.

Music Plus:	Sight	Touch	Hearing	Emotions	Movement
Books	X	X	X	X	X
Scarves	X	X	X	X	X
Puppets	X	X	X	X	X
Bubbles	X	X	X	X	X
Instruments	X	X	X	X	X
Marches	X	X	X	X	X
Dances	X	X	X	X	X
Lullabies	X	X	X	X	X

As you interact with your child during the next few weeks, try adding one more "sense" to the activity. I'd love to hear how it went.

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## WHAT'S NEW FOR MUSIC-IN-THE-BOX

- **Register First** The park districts are now requiring that you register fully before attending any classes. This assures the proper waiver and paperwork is on file.
- **Make ups** Many of you appreciate our flexible make-up policy—come when you can to any class. However, due to our popularity, most classes are already very full. An important element of each class is the one-on-one time the teacher spends with each child and the relaxed pace of the activities. When a class is too large, your child's special experience with the teacher is diluted.

We have a new method for make ups. We ask that you sign up for an available make up time! Make ups must be taken care of during the current session. And on the flip side, if you plan to be absent, cross your name out so someone can use your spot.

We understand that you may need to bring siblings to class on school holidays and we welcome them. Please sign a waiver for that child. Also, registered children receive priority on materials in the classroom. Please remind the sibling that there may not be enough materials for each child to have their own. If you wish for the visiting child to be fully involved, please make a name tag and consider paying a \$5 guest fee as a thank you to your music motivator.

- **Items for Sale** We want to offer our unique music materials to you to purchase. Some classrooms are able to carry an inventory of these items. (Please do not ask your teacher to offer IOUs on materials for sale in the classroom. We are happy to save an item for you until the following week.) A fabulous catalog is in the making but in the meantime, your teacher can share a list of items and an order form.
- **Attendance** The park districts are now asking us to document who attends class each week. We will be moving toward this next session.
- We are still growing! We are so excited to be a part of the following communities in Lake County, Illinois - Barrington, Zion and Waukegan, not to mention our growing relationship with Bright Horizons Daycare Centers - now offering classes at Amherst Lakes in Waukegan and soon to be SC Johnson Wax in Racine, Wisconsin.

- And we are going National! Music-in-the-Box would like to announce our 1<sup>st</sup> National Licensed Motivator, Kathryn Shaffer, who facilitates a Music Masters program in Durango, Colorado area. Kathryn is a Suzuki Flute instructor with a degree in Music. We are thrilled to have her join our talented group of motivators and we wish her much success.
- If you know of someone who would enjoy working with young children and their parents in a loving, musically intelligent environment, we want to hear from you. We are now accepting licensing applications for all US locations except Lake County Illinois.  
Email us at: [info@musicinthebox.com](mailto:info@musicinthebox.com) or call us at 847-573-1901 for more information.

- For families with special needs—you are welcome to have your child join Miss Meredith in a newly-formed Sunday School at Hawthorn Hills Community Church. *First Friends* was created to give parents of children with special needs time to go to a church service while their children experience friendship and learning in a safe and loving environment. Call Meredith for details at 847-573-1901.

### ***DINOSAUR ROAR***

We're very excited to offer a themed unit about dinosaurs. Please note the unique features of this program and ways you will want to experience them at home.

- ♪ Our march, *WE ARE THE DINOSAURS* (*Laurie Berkner, "Whaddaya Think of That?"*), is so delightful and good for imagination, impulse control and sequence work. Marching works at home, too. Keep a basket of rhythm instruments handy for everybody!
- ♪ Our dance song is *DINOSAUR ROCK AND ROLL*, (*Joanie Bartel*). We include movements which are challenging and beneficial for child development. Notice the one place to freeze!
- ♪ Our poem book, *DINOSAUR ROAR* by Paul and Henrietta Stickland, is a useful book about opposites and shows vivid pictures of friendly dinosaurs. Help your child notice opposites throughout the day. *Dinosaur Roar* can get you started with opposites like fast and slow, above and below, short and long.
- ♪ Another poem book, *THAT'S NOT MY DINOSAUR*, is unique for its tactile dimension. I especially like coupling it with the song, *Go Tell Aunt Rhody*, which every child needs to know for music lessons!
- ♪ Our felt puppets are just the right size to fit on little hands. Feel the softness! Good for marching and pretending!
- ♪ Our tickle, *Round and Round the Garden*, is the perfect way to introduce rhyming to your child. Try letting your older child fill in the blank and help you find a rhyming word: for example, "round and round the garden like a little [BLANK], one step, two steps tickle you under [RHYMING WORD]. Younger children love to feel the tickles up their arm—try to tickle in rhythm to challenge those brain synapses!
- ♪ *WHEN YOU'RE HAPPY AND YOU KNOW IT* is possibly the most popular book we've ever offered. It is amazing in its ability to capture children's full attention.