

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 2, 2005*

"I hope you will look at and appreciate music in many different ways—a biological human need, an astounding art form that allows us to feel and experience a multitude of sensations, an extraordinary vehicle for enhancing intelligence, and a way to connect and unite people all over the world."

Sharlene Habermeyer, Good Music Brighter Children

Plan Now for Winter Session 1!

You won't want to miss our next session—Brown Bear. Registration is available now!

IN MY OPINION...

By Ginger Acopiado

Creating the "Ah Ha!" moment in the classroom can be one of the best learning experiences we as parents can give our children. Experts in child development have been saying for years that to force a child to do things before they are developmentally ready is tantamount to creating a child who is not motivated internally to learn.

An "Ah Ha!" moment occurs when the child, through no help or instruction from anyone else, discovers that their body (or mind, thought, senses) can reproduce something they observe (hear, feel). A perfect example of this is the Peek-a-boo. Place a scarf on baby's head and pull it off saying "Peek-a-boo" - a centuries-old game, but the perfect first example of an "Ah Ha!" moment. You can't make a newborn baby pull down a scarf before they can use their grip with meaning any more than you can make a dog hold a pencil with his paw. But when that first "Ah Ha!" moment occurs, baby will pull the scarf off of your head. A developmental milestone has been reached.

The same holds true in music class. You may notice how our teachers encourage gently, but rarely instruct. They say encouraging words like "you did it!" and "thank you!" rather than over-used and demotivating "Good job!" (Yes, it is true, "good job" in the absence of a true accomplishment actually de-motivates a child, it is much better if it is replaced with a positive affirmation, like "Good try" and "I like how hard you worked on that" or "You did it!")

You may have noticed how we gently encourage our moms *not* to "help" their budding Beethovens in the classroom. Or that we rarely make eye contact with mom and dad. At first glance it may appear that we dislike grown-ups, especially if you were to pop in on our teacher trainings and saw us teach our teachers to ignore you. Yes, really, we teach our teachers to ignore you. Pragmatically it's a sticky situation, after all, children do not enroll themselves, and insulting seems a sure way to an empty classroom. But we have a feeling you understand.

Let's examine what would happen if we handled class in a different way; if we made eye contact with grown-ups, laughing adoringly at every precious comment or coo made by one child. Or even if we commented on a child's ability or skill level during class, saying "good job" no matter what skill mastery was being pursued.

We encourage individual mastery because:

"Joey's" attempt at mastering finger cymbals by feeling the cool metal to his cheek and turning them over and over in his hand becomes impossible when Grandma wants to show him the "right" way. He may decide he can't do it, that he doesn't like to be wrong, so why do it at all, it's more fun to run around the room!

We encourage eye contact only with students because:

Pretty soon, "Johnny" who was so interested in shaking his egg shaker and how he could imitate "Miss Suzie", would tire of "Miss Suzie's" conversation with Mommy and seek out other ways to gain attention. Mommy would become upset with "Johnny" for

interrupting or bad behavior, but “Johnny” would simply be communicating in the only way he could that he was not interested in grown-up conversation.

We encourage positive affirmation (pa) and real praise (rp) rather than general “good job” because:

(PA) Inquisitive “Ali” who would otherwise be an active learner, would begin to doubt if she were able to do things right, after hearing “Miss Suzie” say to her mommy “Don’t worry, Ali will figure out how to rub her sandpaper blocks like everyone soon.”

(RP) And “Taylor” would lose joy in mastering new skills because each skill was being met with the same “Good Job”, whether or not she was able to master it. And later in life Taylor, when she found she wasn’t exactly proficient at one of these skills, would feel undermined and lied to - even demotivated to try new things.

And as for ignoring you, the parents, we truly do love and appreciate our parents, grandparents and care-givers, and our budding Bach’s need you too. Especially when it comes to encouragement, genuine praise and gentle redirection. Our teachers will help you, and we promise to make eye contact so that you can ask us anything you want to know - after class! And when you make a new friend feel free to chat and get to know them better, in the classroom, after class. Your child needs your full participation, after all, you are their best teacher.

THE METHOD BEHIND THE MUSIC

By Meredith Haynes

Long ago, Plato said, “Music is a more potent instrument than any other for education.” Current research continues to prove the wisdom of these words.

In the book, *Good Music Brighter Children*, the author discusses neuromusicology, the study of how music affects the brain. She states, “scientists have found that music has the ability to train the brain for higher levels of thinking—the kind of thinking involving problem solving, inference, arriving at conclusions, comparing and contrasting the similarities and differences between two or more objects, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating

information.” Just think, bringing your child to music class every week is making him smarter and getting him ready for learning!

What do children need for learning? “image, emotion, and spontaneous movement” according to Dr. Hannaford in the book, *Smart Moves*.

How does Music-in-the-Box help? We offer you a simple and delightful way for your child to experience imagination, emotion and spontaneous movement. Notice how our Jamberry theme includes these elements—the children *imagine* they are “cookie bakers of the night” or eating “goober peas.” The children are invited to feel the *emotions* of surprise [Who Took the Cookie from the Cookie Jar?] and concern as the boat falls over the dam [Jamberry]. And we offer many moments for *spontaneous movement* when we play our rhythm instruments, march, dance and play with bubbles.

Don’t let music end with the start of kindergarten. Learning a musical instrument provides further opportunity for developing the imagination, creative thinking, communication, and teamwork skills. Perhaps my favorite reason for private music lessons is to demonstrate the power of learning to work toward a long-range goal. We live in an environment of instant gratification. When things don’t come easily or immediately, we give up. Music lessons offer children as young as three-years-old the chance to learn patience and perseverance.

This is my challenge for you. The new year is upon us—time for contemplation and resolutions. Resolve to make learning music a priority for your child. Come to music class. Enroll your three-year-old (or older!) in music lessons. And have a happy new year!

WHAT’S NEW FOR MUSIC-IN-THE-BOX

- WATCH US GROW! We’d like to welcome our newest Music Motivator, Donna Weinstock. Both Donna’s experience teaching pre-school and her degree in music make her a welcome addition to our team. She will teach for us in the Bright Horizons Amhurst facility and at the Waukegan Park District come January.
- 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 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 in Libertyville. *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.
- We have a number of new moms in our classes interested in joining a playgroup or a mom's group. If you share this interest, or belong to a group in the Libertyville area, please let us know so we can include this information in our upcoming newsletters!

♪ A FINAL NOTE...

We always want to make our classroom resources available to you. If you've enjoyed the elements of our Jamberry theme, you may want to consider continuing the learning at home!

- ♪ The classic book and tape *JAMBERRY* by Bruce Degan should be on your shelf right next to Goodbye Moon. It is an essential childhood experience! Jamberry has a train element which appeals to so many. There is a lesson to be learned about what to do when something bad happens—the boat tips over; the elephant falls while skating. And if you study the pages carefully you'll discover lots of "I Spy" fun—I spy marshmallows on trees!
- ♪ Our march, *GOOBER PEAS (Songs from America CD /Music for Little People)*, is a civil war piece. Watch the children discover new vocabulary while they march and stop to eat some goober peas! Great playdate fun! Pull out your rhythm instruments, hats and stuffed animals, turn the music up and march around the house!
- ♪ We chose *YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE* for our special lullaby. This song may already be part of your bedtime repertoire. Notice the beautiful harmony of Sarah Hickman (*Newborn CD*). We hope you are enjoying the sneak peak at our latest picture book created by our very own Miss Ginger.

- ♪ You will want to purchase your own copy of Laurie Berkner's *Under A Shady Tree CD* so you can own *SHORTIN' BREAD* and *SONG IN MY TUMMY*.
- ♪ *WHO TOOK THE COOKIE FROM THE COOKIE JAR* is another fabulous David Carter pop-up book. The rhyme and emphasis on pronouns makes this a worthwhile purchase.
- ♪ *Make sure to get to your local library and check out a Mary Poppins Soundtrack CD, A SPOONFUL OF SUGAR* is a timeless favorite you will want to sing with your children. Don't forget to dig the wooden spoons out of your kitchen drawer!
- ♪ *I KNOW A CHICKEN* from Laurie Berkner's *Whaddy Think of That CD* is such fabulous fun. The echo pattern gives your child an optimal moment for hearing himself sing—a necessity to establish the brain connections for singing on pitch. The gross motor directions are excellent for young children—shake in a circle, up and down, fast and slow, etc.

DON'T MISS A WEEK OF MUSIC!

Tuesday, December 20
Holiday Sing in Gurnee
with Miss Evette

10:15 – 11:00

Gurnee Park District

Dance Hall in Viking Park

4374 Old Grand Road in Gurnee

A \$2 donation at the door is suggested. Proceeds will go to provide books and music to a local charity.

Wednesday, December 21
Holiday Sing in Libertyville
with Miss Ginger and Miss Meredith

10:00 – 10:45

Libertyville Sports Complex

1950 N. Hwy. 45 in Libertyville

A \$2 donation at the door is suggested. Proceeds will go to provide books and music to a local charity.

Thursday, December 22
BOX OF FLUFFY DUCKS
350 MILWAUKEE AVE (DOWNTOWN LIBERTYVILLE)

December 22 * 9:30 – 10:00*

Pre-register and receive a free egg-shaker

847-362-1198

**No registration fee, all ages welcome.*

BUY IT FROM A MOM

A way to encourage entrepreneurial moms who attend our classes!

<p style="text-align: center;">Music-in-the-Box Presents <i>Music Masters For Birthdays & Music & Memories For Birthdays!</i> <i>At the Libertyville Sports And Rec Center</i> <i>Or your home!</i> Saturday and Sunday afternoons.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Call to reserve your time! 847-362-5865</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">DONNA WEINSTOCK Representative for PETLANE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Home parties for all your pet supplies And gifts for pet lovers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">847-223-6156</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Alison Koehler, M.Ed., LCPC Licensed Psychotherapist Specializing in Child, Adolescent and Family Therapy 847-216-0011 akoehler3@yahoo.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Jeanne Engelkemeir Kelly's Kids <i>The largest at-home kids clothing company specializing in coordinated clothing for the entire family.</i> 847-367-4012 www.kellyskids.com</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;">Debbie Schroeder Usborne Books www.UBAH.COM/Y1632 847-362-1139</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Beth Schrag Photography 847-549-8702 bethschrag@hotmail.com Capturing life in motion</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Call Beth to your child photographed in your own home or other casual setting!</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Erin Mayes TICKLE BUG</p> <p style="text-align: center;">847-362-3456 <i>Beautiful Hand-knit Ponchos For Women & Children</i> <i>Call today to have a Ticklebug showing in your home.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Kristie Stovall DANCE, THEATRE & ACTIVITIES Specializing In Children's Theme Parties</p> <p style="text-align: center;">847-573-0372</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Triona Guidry 847-540-5938 Guidry Consulting, Inc.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Providing quality computer services Homes and small businesses our specialty</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">YOUR BUSINESS HERE!</p>

Do you have a small business? We'd like to include your product or service in my newsletter. There is no fee. Let us know what you do so we can "BUY IT FROM A MOM"! (Call Meredith at 847-573-1901 to include your business or send us an email at info@musicinthebox.com)