

Music

Everyday there are sounds of excitement in the air; especially during the holiday season. Music is an engaging and effective way of grasping children's attention and fostering their learning (Building Literacy with Love, 2005.) Musical experiences have been described as another language through which young children learn about themselves, their world and others (Educating Young Children, High/Scope Research Foundation, 1995.)

Maybe it is a choir singing or the ringing sound of the bell outside the store. Maybe it is the fun in singing holiday songs or listening to the roar of shoppers shopping. All of these sounds are natural opportunities for learning. As a parent, you need only to increase your awareness of musical opportunities and understanding of how they benefit your child. Music fosters language and literacy development in many ways. Music can be an engaging way of:

- teaching recognition of patterns that help in anticipating what is to come
- encouraging children to follow directions
- helping children to recognize volume and tone
- teaching that movements communicate messages
- allowing children to explore cause and effect
- building vocabulary through stories and rhymes
- encouraging children to express themselves
- building listening skills

From listening to sounds and playing with volume, to feeling vibrations and actively receiving assistance with dancing, manipulating instruments and props, all children can benefit from exposure to music! And most importantly, musical experiences are all around us. Use this holiday season to sing songs throughout your day and provide opportunities for new experiences. There is no right or wrong way to be musical. There are only the opportunities for wonderful engaging learning experiences with your child. Enjoy your daily experiences with your child! If you have any questions or want to learn more about early childhood literacy and school readiness, please contact Project S.E.E.D at 601-266-5163. Project SEED is a collaborative initiative between the Hattiesburg Mayor's Council for Early Learning Opportunities and The University of Southern Mississippi Institute for Disability Studies. Project SEED is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Children and Families (Grant # 90L00134/01).

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