



The Benefits of Music on Child Development

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Article Information	Abstract
<p>Article history: <i>Received: 17.08.2012</i> <i>Revised: 20.09.2012</i> <i>Accepted: 11.10.2012</i></p>	<p>Childhood is an exciting, fun and challenging period of life. Every new experience is an opportunity to learn and grow. It is the most critical time for building the physical, mental and emotional foundations that will support us for the rest of our lives. Maturation and learning are the two main factors that define the overall personality of a child. Maturation an autonomous process of somatic, psychological and mental differentiation and integration spread over developmental stages and phases. Whereas learning being an external process is deeply affected by environment and practice Environment being one of the major factor has a deep impact on child's learning and hence on development . As parents and loved ones, we should strive to give our children the tools to build a successful life, and one of the best choices we can make for our children is giving them the gift of music. In addition to improving creativity, learning music cultivates many skills that will continue to be useful to our children throughout their lives. Some of the skills that music help develop in children are :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concentration• Coordination• Relaxation• Patience• Self Confidence• Other intellectual and emotional skills <p>Music has proven to provide many more benefits to children and adults than simple entertainment. Much research currently is being undertaken to learn the effects of music on lithe mind and body, yet we now know from findings of several of the most prestigious researchers in the field that it can have very positive effects on child development.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">© 2012 IAMT. All rights reserved.</p>
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1. INTRODUCTION:

"Our Children are the pillars of the nation and they must be cared for and protected, at all costs, under suitable environment."

--Jawaharlal Nehru

The role of parents in their child's life cannot be under emphasized. The parents should consider themselves as true partners in their child's education. Every child's growing intellect needs nurturance. Hence it becomes important for us to provide our children with those experiences that are rich & productive.

Children is and exciting, fun and challenging period of life. Every new experience is an opportunity to learn and grow. It is the most critical time for building the physical, mental and emotional foundations that will support us for the rest of our lives. Maturation and learning are the two main factors that define the overall personality of a child. Maturation an autonomous process of somatic, psychological and mental differentiation and integration spread over developmental stages and phases. Whereas learning being an external process is deeply affected by environment and practice Jensen(1973) has put forward what is considered as a novel conception that environment affects development mainly as a “ threshold variable.” He argues that environment operates like diet in relation to physical growth. As parents and loved ones, we should strive to give our children the tools to build a successful life, and one of the best choices we can make for our children is giving them the gift of music.

Home environment is a measure of the quality and quantity of social, emotional and cognitive supports that has been available to the child within the home [5] . The most important part of the Child’s life environment is the home. Family is the society in miniature when the child is in the home and the home alone for the first vital years of his life. Home is the most important in child’s because it is the home that meets the child’s basic needs whether they are physical psychological, social and emotional.

Every child can learn. We as a parent are responsible for helping our children develop his /her talents. In doing this, we should not only awaken our child’s joy in learning but also fuel the persistence and effort necessary for mastering these skills.

As parents we can make learning the most fascination and liberating experience for our child. Integrating different activities can also help a child learn fast.

Psychologists talk about eight kinds of abilities or intelligence. They feel that every child has different proportions of these abilities, these are

- Linguistic: The capacity to use language.
- Logical-Mathematical: Logical thinking and ability to manipulate numbers of quantities.
- Spatial Intelligence: The way a child perceives his visual or spatial world.
- Bodily kinesthetic: Ability to use the whole body or parts to solve a problem.
- Musical: Capacity to appreciate music, to be able to hear patterns, to recognize to remember them.
- Interpersonal: An understanding of other people.
- Intrapersonal: An understanding of one self, one’s perceptions, reactions and expectation
- Naturalistic: Ability to discriminate among living things.

Music with its integrating and organizing power affects the child’s total personality and as a therapy can provide the oneness all children need. Shakespeare once wrote:

“If music be the food of love, play on--”

Profound words true, but he failed to mention that music is not just nourishment for the heart, but also for the soul.

Music is the universal language. It influences all level of human existence, It promotes all round development of children. From time immemorial music has been a part of Indian culture, Music at its most basic level is just sound, Sound produced by vibration. These vibrations can be caused by musical instruments and voices sound reached to ear by changes in air pressure. It is believed that music stimulates the pituitary gland, whose secretions affect the nervous system and the flow of blood. The right kind of music helps one relax and refresh. Preschool age (3 to 6 years) is a very delicate age when

children are totally dependent on their mood. Formal teaching at this age is not possible for pre scholars. Music therapy plays an important role to make the children socialize learning rhymes while playing and singing is a good way of social development and when they play with each other at that time emotional development, physical development and cognitive development take place. Music therapy plays an important role in cognitive development of children. A study is conducted to see the effect of music therapy on preschool children. It was observed that if a rhyme is taught directly to the children their grasping capacity was slow and if it is taught based with the music then their grasping capacity was double. If preschool lesson and teaching are based on music then the teacher child relationship becomes free, while singing children feel free with their teacher while doing action and singing which results learning faster.

We should encourage our children as early as possible to listen to and make music. Children can start by listening to their favourite's songs and accompanying the music with simple instruments made from household products.

Music has soothed the souls of human beings for ages. It helps to recover from ailments since ancient times. Today, there is a widespread interest in the use of music therapy in treating behavioural problems. Among the psychological effects of music the pronounced ones are on the behaviour and temperament of the individual. Emotions feeling and thoughts have been reported to be greatly influenced by music listening or participation. The idea of music as a healing influence which could help health and behaviour is as old as the writings of Aristotle and Plato. Music being a vital force in developing, understanding and enhancing the aesthetic, emotional and spiritual values, aims at all round development of the individual. Schopenhauer (1983) observed that the

effect of music is strong, quick, necessary and infallible on the emotions of human beings. Studies conducted on the effect of music on young and grown up students have revealed that they show less emotional conflict and appear to be more comfortable in their relation with parents, Thus it can be concluded that there is possibility of improvement in the behaviour and adjustment of children with the help of music education.

Music and Skill Development-In addition to improving creativity, learning music cultivates many skills that will continue to be useful to your children throughout their lives. The following are some of the skills that listening to music and taking music lessons help develop in children:

Concentration-Learning a musical instrument will help your child develop concentration, as they must focus on a particular activity over extended periods of time. Developing concentration in this way also will help them when they must focus their attention on other subjects at school.

Coordination-Practicing musical instruments improves hand-eye coordination. Children develop important motor skills when playing music just as they do when playing different sports.

Relaxation and stress reduction-More and more, music therapy is being used to complement more traditional forms of medicine. Researchers acknowledge that certain types of music can aid relaxation by lowering heart rates and blood pressure.

Patience-In order to learn a musical instrument, children must develop patience and perseverance, which will help them later in life when they must tackle other more difficult challenges.

Self-Confidence-The act of learning and playing an instrument, the encouragement of a teacher and the enthusiasm of a proud parent, will build in a child a sense of pride and confidence. Moreover, children who practice self-expression and creativity often become better communicators later in life.

Researchers also have found a significant relationship between music instruction and positive performances in such areas as: reading comprehension, spelling, mathematics, listening skills, primary mental abilities (verbal, perceptual, numeric, spatial) and motor skills.

Research on Music, Computer Training and Child Development

With the rise of the Internet and the proliferation of high-tech jobs that require computer skills, there seems to be less interest in music and arts education. Fortunately, while all this is happening, several studies by experts in the field are demonstrating that studying the arts — particularly music — can actually help develop skills necessary when learning about computers. In an interview, one of the researchers from the University of California said: "Music training jump starts certain inherent patterns in parts of the brain responsible for spatial-temporal reasoning." Computer lessons, on the other hand, do not force children to think ahead or visualize, as they must when playing a piece of music.

Several studies indicate that the reading level of students with one year of music was nearly one grade higher than their peers without such music training. Children with two years of music experience had scores equivalent to two years ahead of their reading age, and these statistics improved with music experience.

Research has shown that music touches at-risk children in special ways as well. Music introduced into their environment seems to make them more relaxed and receptive to learning.

Other research findings show the following:

- 1996 — Children in Rhode Island elementary schools who were given enriched, skill-building music classes showed marked improvement in reading and math skills. Students in the program who had started out at lower reading and math skill levels than those of

children in the control group caught up to statistical equality in reading and pulled ahead in math.

- 1997 — Researchers found that children given piano lessons improved much more dramatically in their spatial-temporal IQ scores (important for some types of mathematical reasoning) than children who received computer lessons or no lessons.
- 1997 — A research team exploring the link between music and intelligence reported that music training is far superior to computer instruction in dramatically enhancing children's abstract reasoning skills, the skills necessary for learning math and science.

2. CONCLUSION

Music has proven to provide many more benefits to children and adults than simple entertainment. It has even proven to help patients recover from diseases or surgery more quickly and with less pain. Much research currently is being undertaken to learn the effects of music on the mind and body, yet we now know from findings of several of the most prestigious researchers in the field that it can have very positive effects on child development.

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