

Young Years Corner

Fall 2007

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Miss Karen's Chatter

It is a typical day in my Young Years music class. Are we developing steady beat? You bet! Are we working on pitch matching? Surely!

But in my daily music classes, I notice other magical things taking place with your children.

Compassion – During “News Sharing Time” at the beginning of class, Sally shares that her pet dog has passed away. Mike shares that his dog passed away last year. Later, while lining up for “Musical Baseball”, Mike gives Sally his place in line.

Trust – Jimmy gives me a scarf while getting one from the basket for himself and his Mom.

Responsibility – Without prompting, Jessica writes an original musical story and plays it on the piano.

Empowerment – Two-year old Billy passes the resonator bars to Kathy without getting upset.

Interdependence – Sarah and Bob suggest ways to help decide who will be the first participant in a game.

Friendship – Emily helps Joel retrieve his pick which has fallen into the body of his dulcimer.

Integrity – Shelly as “Helper of the Day,” makes sure that the class is quiet before walking to the Keyboard Lab.

Creativity – While singing about bridges and boats in class, the students takes me on an impromptu trip meeting sharks, alligators and turtles.

Diversity – Joe and Marla sing “Happy Birthday” to Rebecca in Arabic.

Rejoice in the fact that you have placed your child in an environment that nurtures musical development and celebrates human growth as well.

Miss Karen

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Music with Love (Mrs., that is!)

Musicians in my **Young Child 1** class, upon hearing that Mozart started composing at 6 yrs. old, and after hearing the story and excerpts from *The Magic Flute*, have decided that they should give the story a new spin!



Young Child 3 musicians are composing drumming and rattle compositions to compliment our Native American Music section in four-beat meter. We all agreed that it would be fun to spend the entire class drumming

Imagine That! students had a chance to "try out their wings" in class this week as we became the birds at Grasshopper Park! Singing while we row has become a favorite.

In **Our Time**, we "finally took the horses out of the paddock and struck out to the fields" with the *William Tell Overture*. Quite a tempo work-out for all! We will now move onto experiencing, hearing, singing, and moving to binary (two part) music forms and warming-up our jingle bells for the holidays.

May music bless your family's heart, soul and funny bones this Winter Holiday. Thank you for letting me be a part of it!

Mrs. Love

Family Music Events:

Community Music School Concert Season:

http://webster.edu/shared/shared_cms/documents/0708concertcalendar.pdf

St. Louis Symphony Family Concerts

<http://www.slsso.org/family/index.htm>

Piwacket Theatre Show Dates

<http://www.piwacket.com/calendar.html>

Parenting Groups:

Mamasource

www.mamasource.com

St. Louis Parent Zone

<http://stlouis.parentzone.com>

Articles:

Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

by Michael K. Meyerhoff, Ed.D

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Editor's Note: On rare occasions we print or reprint an article in *Future Reflections* that is not directly related to blindness. This article is one of them. Since Rhett Waldman uses the phrase, "self-fulfilling prophecy," in his article—"The Rebirth of Our Son"—elsewhere in this issue, it seemed appropriate to examine the origins and meaning of this concept. Dr. Michael K. Meyerhoff; Ed.D., is executive director of The Epicenter Inc., "The Education for Parenthood Information Center," a family advisory and advocacy agency located in Lindenhurst, Illinois. His e-mail address is <epicntrnc@aol.com>. Here is what he has to say about "self-fulfilling prophecy:"

One of the more disturbing studies in the field of educational psychology concerns the concept of the self-fulfilling prophecy. As part of a study, prior to the start of a new school year, teachers were given a list of the students who would be entering their classrooms. Next to each student's name was an indication that the student was a "poor," "average," or "excellent" pupil. At the end of the year, the grades the students earned were compared to the ratings their teachers had been given earlier. For the most part, the performance of the students matched the level of academic capability indicated on the list.

The "kicker" in this study was that the "poor," "average," and "excellent" notations were made entirely at random. There was no connection between an individual's rating and his or her past performance, test scores, readiness assessments, or anything else. In other words, it was clear that during the school year, the students lived up to the high or low expectations of the teachers rather than to their actual potential.

The implications of this study are tremendous and tragic. For generations, large groups of children have been doomed to less than stellar scholastic records due to popular prejudices and preconceived notions concerning their race, ethnicity, or gender. And countless individual kids have never been allowed to develop their capacities fully because of conscious or unconscious beliefs and attitudes their teachers acquired as the result of experiences with older siblings, comments written in their official records, or offhand remarks made by colleagues.

Obviously, it is therefore imperative for parents to ensure that their child enters any educational experience with a positive presentation—or at least with a clean slate. They should ask to see any and all files to which their child's teachers will have access and insist that any negative indications be expunged if possible or at least rephrased in a more neutral fashion as appropriate. They also should meet with their child's teachers and strive to clear up any misunderstandings or misconceptions that might jeopardize their child's chances of getting a fair shake.

What is not so obvious is that parents must explore their own susceptibility to this phenomenon and rigorously avoid their own inclinations to unwittingly create problems for their child. Regrettably, human nature leads us to make "personal" comments about our children's "performances." All too often, this results in a temporary problem being transformed into a permanent trait.

For example, a baby starts talking a couple of months before the average age, but still isn't walking when most of her peers are doing so. Consequently, her mother and father remark to friends and relatives that "she is very social, but not particularly physical." The fact of the matter is that the child is exhibiting perfectly normal variations in developmental patterns and there is no reason whatsoever to make this sort of characterization. However, as time goes by, the child gradually understands and then internalizes these comments. Eventually, she becomes the non-athletic chatterbox that everyone always said she was.

A little boy is reluctant to accept the strained beets he is offered for dinner. Instead of simply saying, "He doesn't seem to like this stuff" or "Perhaps we should give his taste buds a little more time to acquire a taste for beets," his parents say, "He's such a picky eater." It is not surprising that mealtimes soon become a major struggle no matter what is on the menu.

A young girl hides behind her mother and refuses to respond when a stranger says hello. Rather than saying, "Give her some time to get used to you" or "She doesn't seem to be in the mood for conversation today," her parents say, "You'll have to excuse her—she's extremely shy." It is not surprising that the child subsequently begins to exhibit reluctance to engage in all social interactions.

A young boy ignores his mother's request to leave a playground. Instead of saying, "You need to work on your listening skills" or "I don't like it when you're disobedient," she says, "You're so stubborn—just like your father." It is not surprising that the boy gradually grows into a real mule.

Of course, it would be impossible—and somewhat unnatural—to refrain from such comments entirely.

Nevertheless, it is imperative that parents make every effort to treat an episode of undesirable behavior as an aberration and to focus their remarks on the behavior itself. To the extent that they repeatedly attribute the behavior to their child's essential nature, they must prepare to deal with a child who will ultimately become precisely what they have predicted.



Music lessons pay off in higher earnings: poll

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Those hours practicing piano scales or singing with a choral group weren't for nothing because people with a background in music tend to have a higher education and earn more, according to a new survey.

The poll by Harris Interactive, an independent research company, showed that 88 percent of people with a post-graduate education were involved in music while in school, and 83 percent of people earning \$150,000 or more had a music education.

"Part of it is the discipline itself in learning music, it's a rigorous discipline, and in an ensemble situation, there's a great deal of working with others. Those types of skills stand you well in careers later in life," said John Mahlmann, of the National Association for Music Education in Reston, Virginia, which assisted in the survey.

In addition to the practical skills gained from studying music, people questioned in the online poll said it also gave them a sense of personal fulfillment.

Students who found music to be extremely or very influential to their fulfillment were those who had vocal lessons and who played in a garage band. Nearly 80 percent of the 2,565 people who took part in the survey last month who were still involved in music felt the same way.

"That's the beauty of music, that they can bring both hard work and enjoyment together, which doesn't always happen elsewhere," Mahlmann added in an interview.

Book Recommendations:

Book for Village –

Tell Me Why the Stars Do Shine. Nashville, TN: Tommy Nelson (Inspirational Baby), 2003.

Books for Our Time –

Carlstrom, Nancy White. Jesse Bear, What Will You Wear? New York: Simon & Schuster, 1986.

Kaye, Buddy, Fred Wise, and Sidney Lippman. A You're Adorable. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 1996.

Metzger, Steve. You Are My Sunshine. New York: Scholastic, 2001.

Charlip, Remy. Sleepytime Rhyme. New York: Scholastic, 1999.

Book for Imagine That! –

D'Antonio, Sandra and Yesh, Jeff. The Ants Go Marching (Traditional Songs). Picture Window Books, 2006.

Books for Young Child Semester 3 –

Langstaff, John. Frog Went A-Courtin'. New York: Scholastic, 1983.

Sweet, Melissa. Fiddle-I-Fee (A Farmyard Song for the Very Young). New York: Scholastic, 1992.

McCaughrean, Geraldine. The Nutcracker. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Book for Music for Little Mozarts 1 –

Williams, Rozanne. Old MacDonald's Funny Farm. Huntington Beach, CA: Creative Teaching Press, 2005.

Books for Grownups –

Habermeyer, Sharlene. Good Music Brighter Children: Simple and Practical Ideas to Help Transform Your Child's Life Through the Power of Music. Roseville, CA: Prima Publishing, 1999.

Shore, Rebecca. Baby Teacher: Nurturing Neural Networks From Birth to Age Five. Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2002.

Hannaford, Carla. Smart Moves: Why Learning Is Not All In Your Head. North Carolina: Great Ocean Publishers, 1995.

Louv, Richard. Last Child In The Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder. New York: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 2006.

Shopping Corner:

West Music: Early Childhood:

<http://www.westmusic.com/category.aspx?catalog=MAIN&id=1000101>

Music is Elementary: Early Childhood:

<https://musiciselementary.com/index.php?cPath=36&osCsid=dc8d0e2a2dca5eb65d0dab0d720d1cf3>

Empire Music

<http://www.empire-music.com/us/english/>

Hearth Song

www.hearthsong.com

E. Beanstalk Toys

www.ebeanstalk.com

Bilibo Toys

www.bilibo.com