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## Announcements

- Session 2 ends the week of March 22nd. Check with your teachers if there are makeup classes that extend past this date.
- Session 3 is open for enrollment right now! See below for more information.

We hope you are enjoying your music class! As always, if you have any questions about anything, please feel free to contact us at the below phone number or email.

Questions or comments? Please feel free to contact us.

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## Session 3

We are very excited to return to a majority of in-person options in our schedule!

- We will have offerings at NWDC, Falls Church, Strathmore, and SEDC for all ages.
- Classes with ages under 5 will be outdoors, masked, and socially-distanced.
- Classes with ages over 5 will be indoors, masked, socially-distanced and require proof of vaccination to attend.
- Please visit our website for detailed schedule and enrollment information.
- <https://www.levinemusic.org/lessons-and-classes/areas-of-study/first-music/schedule/>



## Creating Family Dynamics: Music as Family Bonding

One of my favorite reminders to parents is “the sound of your voice is your child’s favorite sound.” Many parents and caregivers who are new to my class look at me in shock, insisting that they are not musicians. However, because we know that babies absorb much of the sounds they hear from within the womb, it’s no surprise that they recognize, take comfort in, and feel safe when they hear the voice of their parents. This is just the very beginning of the advantages of using musical experiences to create a sense of family bonding.

Children who participate in music, whether passively listening or participating in musical activities, are subject to the endless cognitive, physical, social, and emotional developmental benefits. Research has shown that music ignites pathways within the brain associated with empathy, trust, and cooperation. We also know that music helps to develop a child’s confidence and sense of self-worth. So, it’s not surprising that the act of making music with others makes us feel closer to them. There are literally positive endorphins that are released when our brains recognize unison singing or harmony within music. When a choir sings or a band plays together, there is an unwritten agreement between all participants and the entire ensemble must work together. With this in mind, music is one of the best activities for growing closer as a family.

When I think back on my childhood, music is a prominent element in my memories of spending time with family. Many of these do not involve overly complex musical study. The sound of my dad playing The Eagles while working on a project in the garage; my mother singing lullabies; my grandmother humming a song while making me an after-school snack; my family watching me sing in my local children’s choir; my little sister and I giving an exclusive living room concert; and of course, attending endless music exposure experiences at school, church, sport games, concerts, and community gatherings. Music is all around us, and even though no one in my family is a trained musician, we embraced it as part of the fabric of our family. The positive experiences and memories I associate with music are the reasons I feel so strongly about introducing music to children and families as early as possible.

How can you add more music to your home? Some very simple ideas:

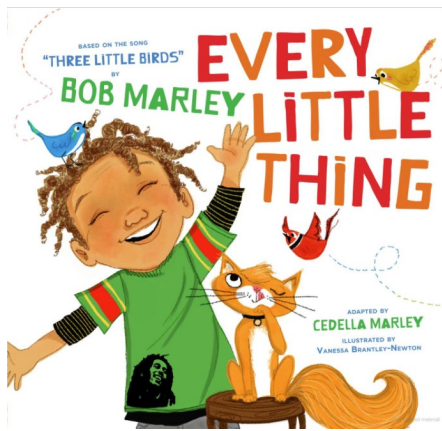
- **Create family traditions that revolve around music.** A great example is using a cumulative song like “The 12 Days of Christmas” and giving each person in your family a part that is always theirs. Sing the song each time you get together (for Christmas, in this case), no matter how old children are.
- **Sports Fans?** If you attend local high school or college sporting events, teach your children the school song so they can sing along. Bonus points for teaching them to clap on beat to chants and cheers!
- **Use music to motivate tasks.** Create a playlist of songs that your kids love and put it on while doing chores or tasks around the house. Adding this spark of joy and fun can help relieve stress and lift moods for clean up time.
- **Incorporate Family Jam Sessions.** When you listen to or watch music being performed at home, grab an instrument, and encourage steady beat keeping with young children, or play with rhythmic patterns in the music with older children.
- **Ask Grandparents to share their favorite rhymes and songs from childhood.** This is not only a great way to pass down aural tradition and heritage, but it also presents an opportunity for grandparents to cherish and share their own childhood memories.
- **My personal favorite: Regularly scheduled Dance Parties.** No further explanation needed. Having a tough day? Dance party. Celebrating a great day at school? Dance Party. It’s Tuesday and we’re making dinner? Dance Party.

Whatever way you choose to incorporate music into your family’s life, do so with confidence knowing that you are creating lasting memories that are deeply positive and multi-sensory.

- Abby Schoenborn Cohen



## Musical Book



Bob Marley's songs are known the world over for their powerful message of love, peace, and harmony. Now a whole new generation can discover one of his most joyous songs in this reassuring picture book adaptation written by his daughter Cedella and exuberantly illustrated by Vanessa Brantley-Newton. This upbeat story reminds children that the sun will always come out after the rain and mistakes are easily forgiven with a hug. Every family will relate to this universal story of one boy who won't let anything get him down, as long as he has the help of three very special little birds. Including all the lyrics of the original song plus new verses, this cheerful book will bring a smile to faces of all ages—because every little thing's gonna be all right!



## Digital Source



Inside the Orchestra brings music to children, cultivating music appreciation and enhancing their education through engaging, interactive experiences with orchestral music.

<https://insidetheorchestra.org/>