

A Letter to Families About Music and Movement

Dear families,

Throughout history and across all cultures, people have used music and movement for expressing thoughts and feelings.

Children seem to be drawn to music from birth. Young infants bounce and giggle when they hear music. They smile and coo when family members sing to them. Toddlers love to bang on pots and pans. As children grow and their large muscles develop, their physical reactions to music become more exaggerated as well as more rhythmic. As language skills develop, they make up their own songs, accompanied by their own dances, and seem to enjoy sharing them with the world.

When you visit our classroom, do not be surprised if you are invited to join us in song and dance. If you have special interests in or cultural ties to music or dance, please let me know. We would love for you to share that expertise with us! Meanwhile, you can build upon the many advantages of a life filled with music and movement, both at home and wherever you go as a family!

What You Can Do at Home

- Children love to sing about what they are doing! Make up songs as you play together, as you ride in the car or walk down the sidewalk, while you wait in line, as your child gets ready for bed or takes a bath, and while he cleans up his toys. Take turns making up verses. Incorporate funny rhymes, alliteration (such as “B-b-b-bubbles, b-b-b-blowing big bubbles”), and other silly word play to support children’s skills in language and literacy.
- Listen to a variety of musical styles and genres. Talk to children about the instruments they hear.
- Help your child make simple musical instruments, such as box “drums,” rubber band “guitars,” or paper towel roll “horns.” Join her in her “band” and perform for the rest of the family!
- Do you personally enjoy singing and dancing? Teach your child your favorite songs and dance steps from your own childhood or those that have been passed down from family members.