

Music Together.®

Supporting Early Learning
Curricula, Philosophies, and
Standards

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High-quality early care and education programs require and seek alignment among principal educational ideas, standards, philosophies, and curricula. Offered in a variety of early learning settings, including preschool and kindergarten classrooms, Music Together® is an adaptable music and movement curriculum which incorporates and supports various prominent approaches within the early childhood education arena.

Music Together is a music and movement curriculum dedicated to nurturing every child's innate musicality. While making music is a joyful activity valuable for its own sake, it also offers benefits that can be especially welcome in an early learning setting. Children in Music Together have shown gains in cognitive, physical, language, social, and emotional development, reinforcing that Music Learning Supports All Learning.® Music Together also supports family engagement and classroom teacher professional development. Versatile and rooted in developmentally appropriate practice, the Music Together curriculum is particularly well suited to a variety of early childhood programs and curricula.

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Music Together Supports NAEYC Early Childhood Program Standards

Standard 1: Relationships

Program Standard: The program promotes positive relationships among all children and adults. It encourages each child's sense of individual worth and belonging as part of a community and fosters each child's ability to contribute as a responsible community member.

- Music Together creates group music experiences that solidify bonds among children, and between children and teachers, promoting a sense of community in the classroom.
- With a comprehensive home component, Music Together can also promote positive relationships between children and their parents or other family members.
- School-wide Music Together music-making events unite the entire school community, including family members, through a shared activity and a shared repertoire of songs.
- Music Together's supportive classroom and take-home materials (CDs and songbooks) give classroom teachers and family members musical tools, knowledge, and a platform through which to interact with children in sensitive and responsive ways.
- The group music-making experience in Music Together class supports children's leadership and turn-taking skills, their ability to follow and respect peer leaders, and their capacity to work with others as an ensemble, all in a playful environment.

Standard 2: Curriculum

Program Standard: The program implements a curriculum that is consistent with its goals for children and promotes learning and development in each of the following areas: social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive.

- Music Together is a comprehensive, research-based, developmentally appropriate music curriculum. In addition to detailed guidance for both the music specialist and classroom teachers, the curriculum includes materials that encourage music participation and experimentation among young children of all ages, as well as ongoing mentoring, support, and professional development opportunities. At the heart of the Music Together curriculum is the goal of consistently providing children with a rich environment of music learning and developmentally appropriate experiences.
- With the belief that Music Learning Supports All Learning[®], the Music Together curriculum supports the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development of each child, all while having fun with engaging and playful music activities that foster creative expression. For more information on how the Music Together curriculum and program model supports Standard 2, see "Music Learning Supports All Learning," available by contacting in-school@musictogether.com.

Standard 3: Teaching

Program Standard: The program uses developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate and effective teaching approaches that enhance each child's learning and development in the context of the curriculum goals.

- Understanding that young children learn best in a playful yet responsive learning environment, Music Together class experiences are grounded in a developmental and participatory approach to music education rather than a performance-oriented approach.

- Given that children have various learning styles, developmental needs, and interests and therefore respond to different instructional approaches, Music Together activities reflect and activate the variety of learning modalities (e.g., visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile).
- Music Together specialists work with classroom teachers to incorporate music education into the daily classroom routine. Classroom teachers are also guided on how music can inform and enhance learning in other disciplines.
- The Music Together curriculum is accessible to all children, regardless of background and experiences, and includes songs from many cultures as well as original compositions that reflect a multicultural world.

Standard 4: Assessment of Child Progress

Program Standard: The program is informed by ongoing systematic, formal, and informal assessment approaches to provide information on children’s learning and development. These assessments occur within the context of reciprocal communications with families and with sensitivity to the cultural contexts in which children develop.

- Music Together specialists are trained to understand and regularly observe children’s tonal and rhythm development. Assessment with developmentally appropriate music measures is available as an additional service through Music Together LLC.
- Music Together LLC’s professional development workshops and materials deepen specialists’ and classroom teachers’ understanding of children’s music development, how to best support this development, and how to tailor music and movement activities to respond to children’s diverse learning styles and developmental needs.
- Regular communications with families is an integral part of the program, providing parents with guidance on how to recognize their child’s musical growth and how to use music in the home to support this growth.
- The curriculum itself is consistently assessed and informed by ongoing review of new knowledge in the field of child development and education, as well as feedback from practitioners and families.

Standard 5: Health

Program Standard: The program promotes the nutrition and health of children and protects children and staff from illness and injury.

- All movement activities are designed to be safe and developmentally appropriate for the growing bodies of young children, even infants.
- Ensuring there is enough space for children to move freely and safely is an integral part of Music Together program standards.
- Music Together classes regularly expose children to enjoyable movement activities and stress the importance of the modeling of this activity by adults, promoting children’s disposition to become life-long movers.

Standard 6: Teachers

Program Standard: The program employs and supports a teaching staff that has the educational qualifications, knowledge, and professional commitment necessary to promote children’s learning and development and to support families’ diverse needs and interests.

- All registered Music Together teachers must pass an intensive 25-hour training course which includes instruction in early childhood music and movement development, teaching strategies, and classroom management.

- Music Together LLC offers a variety of on-going educational and professional development opportunities for both Music Together specialists and classroom teachers.

Standard 7: Families

Program Standard: The program establishes and maintains collaborative relationships with each child's family to foster children's development in all settings. These relationships are sensitive to family composition, language, and culture. To support children's optimal learning and development, programs need to establish relationships with families based on mutual trust and respect, involve families in their children's educational growth, and encourage families to fully participate in the program.

- Music Together's supportive home materials allow families to participate at home in the same activities children share with their teachers in school, strengthening the home-school connection and helping families to feel involved in their child's learning.
- With the belief that music is an international language, the Music Together curriculum has served families with diverse backgrounds and needs. The rich repertoire of songs in every collection represents the diversity in music and culture that exists across the globe. Translations of supportive materials can be found in multiple languages.

Standard 8: Community Relationships

Program Standard: The program establishes relationships with and uses the resources of the children's communities to support the achievement of program goals.

- The Music Together program model has had success in a variety of settings (e.g. school, day care, community center) and with a range of organizations and support services that work with children and families facing a wide array of obstacles and in need of various types of support.
- The Music Together program builds "musical communities" by creating a link between the home, school, and surrounding community through participatory music classes that actively involve children, parents, teachers, caregivers and extended family members. Engaging in musical activities with other parents and children can help to build positive relationships within the family and surrounding community.

*Note: Standards 9 and 10 relate to areas not directly relevant to Music Together in school and childcare settings.

Music Together Aligns with Head Start Program Performance Standards

1304.21 Education and Early Childhood Development

The Music Together curriculum and program model:

- Is based in and strongly committed to developmentally appropriate practice. [1304.21(a)(1)(i)]
- Is inclusive of all children, both typically-abled and those with special needs. [1304.21(a)(1)(ii)] *
- Respects and celebrates all cultures and all families through its diverse, inclusive curriculum. [1304.21(a)(1)(iii); see also 1304.40(a)(5)]
- Encourages child-directed learning by inviting, accepting, and including children's suggestions into music and movement class activities. [1304.21(a)(1)(iv)]
- Includes parents as an integral part of the program, providing them with the knowledge, tools and opportunities to interact musically with their children in school and at home. Regular communications with families is an integral part of the program, providing parents with guidance on how to observe, recognize and encourage their child's musical growth and development. [1304.21(a) (2) (ii)]
- Supports social and emotional development through group activities that: build trust and respect among children and between teachers and children; foster children's independence as well as their social competence; support children's development of self-control. With a rich array of songs that represent the diversity in language, culture, and family life, all children, regardless of background and experiences, feel included and respected. [1304.21 (a) (3) (i)]
- Builds routines and smooth transitions into each class lesson plan, and provides classroom teachers with music-based strategies that enhance daily class routines and transitions. [1304.21(a) (3)(ii)]
- Supports all learning styles with a variety of strategies, including experimentation, observation, exploration, and free play with instruments and movement. [1304.21(a)(4)(i)]
- Ensures opportunities for self-expression. [1304.21(a)(4)(ii)]
- Promotes interaction and language use among children and between children and adults, at school and at home. [1304.21(a)(4)(iii)]
- Supports emerging literacy and numeracy development. [1304.21(a)(4)(iv)]**
- Develops gross motor skills through full-body movement, locomotion (movement through space), and informal dancing. [1304.21(a)(5)(i)]**
- Develops fine motor skills through fingerplays, other small movement activities, and instrument play. [1304.21(a)(5)(ii)]**

1304.40 Family Partnerships

The CDs and songbooks sent home with every child create an excellent opportunity for fostering family partnerships and increasing parent involvement. The Music Together program can also support the goals and strategies of your program's Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework.

- Family music events are fun, accessible avenues for interaction with parents. [1304.40 (a) (4)]
- Home use materials provide parents with opportunities for adult education, including literacy and language learning. [1304.40 (d) (1)]

- Parents are encouraged to participate in Music Together class times at school whenever possible. [1304.40 (d) (2)]
- As parents create strong, positive bonds with their children through music-making, they also increase their parenting skills and knowledge of their children’s developmental needs. [1304.40 (e) (3)]
- Songbooks are sent home with every child, providing parents with a fun literacy-building activity to do with their children. For those songs that are particularly beneficial for language and literacy growth, parents are given song variation ideas that promote their child’s language and literacy skill development. [1304.40 (e) (4) (i)]

1304.24 Child Mental Health

Research has shown that regular music-making can decrease depression, and that singing can reduce anxiety in children and adults. The mitigating effects of music-making on these major mental health problems make participation in music an excellent supplement to appropriate mental health intervention.

Consistent use of the Music Together curriculum in school and at home can:

- Provide parents with information and tools to respond appropriately to their children at home. [1304.24 (a) (1) (iv)]
- Aid the work of music therapists, occupational therapists, and speech and language pathologists who can adapt the curriculum to their interventions with children and families. [1304.24 (a) (3) (i) (ii) (iii)]***
- Support the work of mental health professionals by collaborating with them to further treatment goals during Music Together class times.
- Create a joyful, light-hearted atmosphere conducive to positive mental health.

1304.41 Community Partnerships

The mission of Music Together is to provide the highest quality music and movement experiences to as many young children as possible and to involve their parents and other adult caregivers, including early childhood professionals. Music Together is an ideal partner to fulfill Head Start’s mandate to connect with organizations or businesses that provide support and resources to families. [1304.41 (a) (2) (ix)]

* Music Together LLC has on staff a board-certified music therapist, available to consult with music specialists and classroom teachers on practical learning strategies and to collaborate with other professionals involved in the education of children with disabilities.

** For more information, refer to the document “Music Learning Supports All Learning”, available by contacting in-school@musictogether.com.”

*** For more information on our Music Together Within Therapy™ program for credentialed allied health professionals, contact therapy@musictogether.com.

Music Together Supports the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework

The Music Together curriculum supports the following domains and domain elements in Head Start's Approach to School Readiness:

Domain 1: Physical Development and Health

- Physical Health Status: Music Together's engaging movement activities provide exercise opportunities.
- Gross Motor Skills: The Music Together curriculum incorporates large movement activities that support motor coordination, body awareness, body control, and balance.
- Fine Motor Skills: Music Together's fingerplays and instrument play-alongs foster hand-eye coordination and hand and finger dexterity.

Domain 2: Social and Emotional Development

- Social Relationships: The group music-making at the core of the Music Together program builds children's cooperation and turn-taking skills, promotes a sense of empathy and respect for others, and enhances healthy adult-child relationships.
- Self-Concept and Self-Efficacy: Music Together activities encourage self-expression, self-confidence, and creative independence.
- Self-Regulation: Various songs and song variations found in the Music Together curriculum support children's development of impulse and inhibitory control, emotion knowledge, attention-shifting skills, and the ability to follow simple directions.
- Emotional and Behavioral Health: Music Together classes naturally support healthy emotion expression by giving children an alternative avenue through which to express themselves.

Domain 3: Approaches to Learning

- Initiative and Curiosity: Music Together activities foster imagination, creativity, and a disposition to explore and experiment through opportunities to try new things in a supportive environment.
- Persistence and Attentiveness: Various Music Together song activities provide children with the opportunity to make a plan of action and to follow through until it is complete. Music Together class time is also a fun way to help children exercise their attention skills.
- Cooperation: Music Together's group music-making and movement experience provides children with opportunities to work together in an ensemble and engage in cooperative music play.

Domain 4: Logic and Reasoning

- Reasoning and Problem Solving: Instrument play is a part of every Music Together class and exposes children to cause and effect relationships.
- Symbolic Representation: Symbolic representation in the Music Together songbooks and "SongCards" allow children to form correlations between the written word, images, musical notation, and the songs they are singing.

Domain 5: Language Development

- English Language Development: Dual language learners can benefit from the English language experiences provided through music, since elements of words may be more available to a child when sung than when spoken. This is due to both the repetition and the slightly slower overall tempo of singing compared to speech.
- Receptive Language: Music Together song activities support children’s listening skills, vocabulary development, and ability to recognize and discriminate sounds.
- Expressive Language: Various songs in every Music Together collection allow children to practice the manipulation of sounds in language and expose them to alliteration and variation in syllable stress. Songbooks provide opportunities for musical storytelling.

Domain 6: Literacy Knowledge and Skills

- Book Appreciation and Knowledge: Music Together songbooks and Singalong Storybooks help to familiarize children with print materials and provide opportunities for creative storytelling through music. The songbooks can be used independently or for shared literacy activities with other children and with adults.
- Phonological Awareness: Music Together songs without words (sung on specific vocables or phonemes), songs with rhymes, and repetition of these songs support children’s phonological development.
- Alphabet Knowledge: Through use of the songbook and song cards, children are exposed to the distinct sounds associated with specific letters.
- Print Concepts and Conventions: Music Together songbooks help children to recognize that the musical note represents sung language and that notes grouped together form musical phrasing, or a tune. The songbooks also support children’s understanding that print conveys meaning, that letters are grouped to form words, and that written words represent spoken language.

Domain 7: Mathematics Knowledge and Skills

- Number Concepts and Quantities: Some Music Together songs can incorporate numbers, counting, and quantity, giving children a fun and different way to explore math concepts.
- Patterns: Music Together’s songs and rhythmic chants in varied meters familiarize children with concepts of patterns, sequencing, and proportion, all reinforced through repetition.

Domain 8: Science Knowledge and Skills

- Conceptual Knowledge of the Natural and Physical World: Many Music Together songs introduce children to characteristics and properties of various things around them, such as animals, vehicles, or seasons. Opportunities for song substitutions and variations also allow children to give their own descriptions of things in the world around them.

Domain 9: Creative Arts Expression

- Music: Understanding that children’s music growth is best achieved in a participatory rather than performance-oriented environment, Music Together activities are playful, musically rich, and developmentally appropriate. In this learning environment, children’s basic music competence—the ability to sing in tune and move with accurate rhythm—is developed.
- Creative Movement and Dance: Music Together links songs with movement so that children experience the feeling of rhythm and beat, and the use of creative movement as a form of expression.

Domain 10: Social Studies Knowledge and Skills

- Self, Family and Community: Music Together songs are inclusive of the variety of cultures, communities, and families that exist in the world.
- People and the Environment: Many Music Together songs explore common elements of children's surroundings, providing a fun way for children to learn about the environment and people in their lives.

Music Together Aligns with Early Head Start

The Music Together program uniquely and comprehensively aligns with Early Head Start and can serve as an integral part of the program by supporting its goals while providing families and service providers with engaging and enjoyable activities.

A Multigenerational Approach

Music Together understands the importance of promoting the parent-child relationship and believes that fostering this relationship by working with children and adults together is the best way to ensure children have the positive and nurturing relationships that best support healthy development. Both the in-class experience and the supportive take-home materials (CD and songbook) provide caregivers, classroom teachers, parents, and other family members with the tools and knowledge necessary to foster children's growth in multiple domains while also having fun through music play.

Flexibility in Program Delivery Model

The Music Together program has had success in a variety of settings and, depending on a community's needs, can be used in the home, center/school, or a combination of the two.

Serving the Needs of the Community

Music Together can respond to the diverse needs of a variety of communities and populations. With the belief that music is an international language, the Music Together program has served families from many countries and cultures and incorporates a rich array of songs in each collection to represent the diversity in music and culture that exists across the globe. Translations of parent education materials are available in several languages.

Full Alignment with the *Four Cornerstones of Early Head Start*

1. Child Development

With the belief that music learning supports all learning, Music Together supports the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development of each child, all while having fun with engaging music and movement activities.

- **Physical:** Guided and child-initiated music, movement, and instrument activities provide opportunities for children to use their bodies in various ways, supporting the development of body awareness, coordination, and fine, gross, sensory, and oral motor skills.
- **Emotional:** Children's development of emotion-regulation abilities occurs through activities that foster the adult-child attachment relationship and help preverbal children learn to use the facial, vocal, and emotional responses from an adult to interpret the surrounding world. Through the activities, children and adults engage in reciprocal affective attunement, which promotes intersubjectivity (shared attention and experience between an adult and child) and secure adult-child attachment relationships. Lullabies also provide an opportunity for infants and toddlers to practice self-soothing.
- **Social:** Children's self-regulation capacities and emerging executive function skills of inhibitory control, attention, and working memory are developed through songs, rhythm and movement activities that involve children's own initiation and ceasing of behaviors. Solo, dyad, and group activities also support children's turn-taking skills and growing self-concept.
- **Cognitive:** Songs and rhythmic chants in varied meters familiarize young children with concepts of proportions, patterning, and simple counting, supporting their emerging math skills. Through instrument play and movement with props, children have the opportunity to explore cause-and-effect.

- **Language:** Music supports emergent language and literacy development through songs with rhymes and songs without words (sung on specific vocables or phonemes) that expose children to the basic structure and sequence of sounds involved in language, including phonological awareness and alliteration. The adult-child dyad element also supports joint attention (shared attention between an adult and child), which fosters language development through the benefits of a parent's verbal response to a child's focus of attention.

Children with Disabilities. The Music Together community is firmly committed to its mission to serve all children, including children with special needs. Music Together's International Headquarters supports its licensees with on-staff assistance in the form of a board-certified music therapist and the Special Needs Program Development Workgroup.

The Power of Music. Active engagement with music can have powerful positive effects on children's personal and social development that go beyond what can be measured. All children are musical, and being given the opportunity to participate in music at an early age and develop basic music competence allows children to experience the rewards of exceling in something early in life, nurturing their self-esteem and motivation to learn. Particularly for children with special needs or at-risk academically, this experience can foster in them a more positive outlook on their future.

Supporting Transitions. As Music Together has program models that serve children birth to 8, it can also support the EHS goal of helping young children transition between early care and education programs by being a constant in children's lives in school and at home.

2. Family Development and Engagement

Music Together views parents, family members, and extended family members as a child's first, and strongest, educational influence, and supporters of ongoing learning and development. Therefore, parents are essential partners in a comprehensive collaboration to build and sustain a dynamic and rich learning and development environment for their own children. The Music Together program can also support the goals and strategies of your program's Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) framework.

3. Community Building

The Music Together program is a service that supports families with young children yet also builds community by providing a platform for mutual and equitable support among all participants – children, teachers, parents, caregivers, and family members. Occasional large family and community events are encouraged as a natural extension of the music experience.

4. Staff Development

As a developmentally appropriate and research-based early childhood program, Music Together is grounded in established "best practices" in the areas of child development and early education and can therefore be an integral element of professional development efforts and an enjoyable tool for educators and service providers to use to create and enhance quality relationships with children and their families. Music Together Specialists may hold in-service trainings for all interested staff, or individuals can take part in partial or full program trainings.

Music Together Supports The Creative Curriculum for Preschool

As a non-performance oriented, playful approach to early childhood music education, the Music Together curriculum aligns with key components of The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool, including the belief that discovery and exploration are integral to learning. Accessible to all learning styles and abilities, the Music Together curriculum also naturally fosters children's critical thinking skills, creativity, and confidence.

Teaching Strategies GOLD™ Objectives for Development and Learning

The Music Together curriculum supports the Teaching Strategies GOLD™ Objectives for Development and Learning. In addition to Objectives 34 (music concepts) and 35 (movement concepts), Music Together can support these other objectives:

Social-Emotional: Objectives 1–3. Regulates own emotions and behavior; Establishes and sustains positive relationships; Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations

- Music Together activities provide children with opportunities to explore how to manage and express their feelings through music and movement.
- As the participation of adults, regardless of music ability, is an integral component of the Music Together program model, classes and activities naturally foster positive relationships between children and adults.
- The group music-making experience solidifies bonds between children and supports children's prosocial and turn-taking skills.

Physical: Objectives 4–7. Demonstrates traveling skills, balancing skills, gross-motor manipulative skills, fine-motor strength, and coordination

- Music Together's large movement activities support body awareness, coordination, and balance.
- Instrument play and fingerplays help children to develop fine-motor skills and hand and finger strength.

Language: Objectives 8–10. Listens to and understands increasingly complex language; Uses language to express thoughts and needs; Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills

- Music Together song activities support children's active listening skills, vocabulary development, and ability to recognize and discriminate sounds.
- Songbooks provide opportunities for musical storytelling.

Cognitive: Objectives 11–12, 14. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning; Remembers and connects experiences; Uses symbols and images to represent something not present

- Music Together naturally supports children's approaches to learning through activities that foster curiosity, inventiveness, and a disposition to explore and experiment. Activities also exercise children's attention skills, cognitive flexibility and persistence.
- Since music-making is so much fun, Music Together classes can help children become more engaged in the classroom, and more motivated to learn.

- Suggestions on how to incorporate music-making into daily classroom activities outside of music class and at home are an integral part of the Music Together program model such that music-making in different settings can help children to connect different experiences.
- Symbolic representation in the Music Together songbooks and “SongCards” allow children to form correlations between the written word, images, musical notation, and the songs they are singing.

Literacy: Objectives 15–17. Demonstrates phonological awareness, knowledge of the alphabet, knowledge of print and its uses

- Music Together songs without words (sung on specific vocables or phonemes), songs with rhymes, and repetition of these songs support children’s phonological development.
- Various Music Together songs and rhymes help children practice the manipulation of sounds in language and expose them to alliteration and variation in syllable stress.
- Children’s alphabet knowledge is developed through Music Together songs, rhymes, chants, and SongCard materials that expose children to distinct sounds associated with specific letters.
- Music Together songbooks and song cards help familiarize children with print materials, and activities that specifically support pre-literacy skills are highlighted in the teacher materials.

Mathematics: Objectives 20 and 23. Uses number concepts and operations; Demonstrates knowledge of patterns

- Some Music Together songs can incorporate numbers, counting, and quantity, giving children a fun and different way to explore math concepts. The SongCard Guide includes activity suggestions for teachers that addresses numerical awareness.
- Music Together’s rhythmic chants in varied meters familiarize children with concepts of patterning and proportion.

Science and Technology: Objectives 25 and 27. Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things; Demonstrates knowledge of Earth’s environment

- Learning about living things and the environment happens in the subject matter of many Music Together songs.

Social Studies: Objectives 29–31. Demonstrates knowledge about self; Shows basic understanding of people and how they live; Explores change related to familiar people or places

- Music Together songs are inclusive of the variety of cultures, communities, and families that exist in the world, and provide children with a fun way to learn to identify, appreciate, and respect differences among people.
- Many Music Together songs explore common elements of children’s surroundings, providing a fun way for children to learn about the environment and people in their lives.
- The family songbook includes “Musical Memories” pages that can assist teachers and caregivers in helping children to connect music to themselves, people in their lives, and to their experiences.

English Language Acquisition: Objectives 37 and 38. Demonstrates progress in listening to and understanding English; Demonstrates progress in speaking English

- Music Together’s supportive materials for teachers provide suggestions on how to use song activities to support learning for the English Language Learner.

Music Together Supports the Montessori Philosophy

A young child absorbs his environment effortlessly and without fatigue and becomes one with the environment in which he finds himself.

- Music Together understands that the most important time for music learning is between the ages of birth and six. This is the period of primary music development, a time when children's growing brains are most open to musical influence and growth. Exposure to a variety of music and movement experiences is crucial during this period, when the child learns so fast and so well.
- All children can achieve basic music competence—that is, learn to sing in tune and move with accurate rhythm—provided they have a sufficiently rich musical environment to stimulate music learning. With exposure and experimentation, the child's natural music aptitude can blossom and flourish.
- In cultures where group singing and dancing is still part of daily life, children typically achieve basic music competence around the same time they become competent in language—by age three or four. In our culture, however, because so many children lack the kind of active family music-making experiences that stimulate music learning, they often don't sing in tune or move with accurate rhythm until age five or six. Many never learn at all.

The power of the adult role model

- Music Together realizes that the participation and modeling of teachers, parents, and caregivers is essential to a child's musical growth. Participating adults are able to present the music and movements with enthusiasm because it is so much fun for them, too. The children absorb the adults' passion and joy.
- The music specialist comes to the classroom once a week to lead music, movement, and instrument activities. The guide and assistant participate fully, becoming musical models for the children during class and throughout the week, as they use Music Together activities in their daily classroom lives.
- Children "bring the music home" to their families with the Music Together CD, songbook, and Parent Guide DVD and booklet. Parents, too, become music-making role models—and knowing the same songs creates a profound sense of community among the children, their families, and their school.
- The Music Together program recommends having two all-school family events each semester. By participating and experiencing the joy of singing, moving, dancing, and playing instruments with their children, parents can be inspired to make music at home, too.

Belief in the child's inner guide

- The Music Together approach is non-performance-oriented, with each child participating at his or her own developmental level. With a sufficiently rich music environment, all children can learn to sing in tune and move with accurate rhythm as naturally and joyfully as they learn to talk and to walk.
- In the Music Together class, children experience an assortment of musical activities designed to stimulate exploration and discovery. Children's natural learning cycle of play, discovery, repetition and mastery is engaged.

Children's sensitive period for movement

- Because movement is an essential developmental tool for children, all levels of movement are found in the Music Together experience. Fingerplays, small movement, large movement, movement in place and through space (locomotor), group dances, movement that crosses the midline of the body, and movement involved in using rhythm instruments such as egg shakers and rhythm sticks are all utilized.
- Maria Montessori realized movement needs purpose. Moving to songs and chants both stimulates physical development and feeds the sensitive period for socialization. Movement enables children to communicate with others through song, have a sense of belonging in the culture, and explore and master physical expression at their own level of interest and ability.

The child's universal desire to belong

- Music Together activities are designed to be accessible and interesting for all styles of learning. The visual learner, the auditory learner, and the kinesthetic learner are all appreciated, respected, and supported, allowing each to feel a sense of belonging.
- Children's ideas and movements are "accepted and included" by the specialist. When a three-year-old sees his movement incorporated into a song activity—or leads the next movement for the whole class!—the feeling that "I belong" is affirmed.

Actions, not instructions

The children learn music through watching, listening, absorbing, and—when they are ready—participating. The Music Together specialist therefore introduces song activities simply by moving and singing, with no spoken instruction or directives.

Experiencing the whole first

A song is introduced by being sung in its entirety, with children free to join in at any time and in any way they wish. This allows children to respond according to their own developmental level. Music Together does not break songs into pieces and teach them a piece at a time.

Children's need for repetition

The music specialist recognizes children's need for repetition, yet will also introduce incremental variation—differences in tempo and dynamics, as well as simple substitutions—to provide experience over time with musical principles and improvisation.

Children's sensitive period for order

The music class provides certain ritual moments: the opening "Hello Song," the lullaby, and the closing song, "Goodbye, So Long, Farewell." These ritual activities provide a comforting predictability within the changing components of the week-to-week lesson plan.

What the young child experiences and takes in remains a part of the child, within his unconscious and conscious mind and memory for life!

- Music Together provides a rich musical experience, with twenty-five songs offered in each song collection. Children gain a repertoire of fifty to seventy-five songs a year—what a wonderful foundation for a life-long love of music and music-making!
- The Music Together curriculum builds a foundation for future music learning.

Musical comparing and contrasting

- Each Music Together collection includes a mix of original songs and traditional tunes from the folk, jazz, and world music traditions. This range of musical styles provides children with a rich music experience that stimulates and supports their growing music skills and understanding.

Music Together Preschool Aligns with Reggio Emilia Principles

The Image of the Child

Music Together views children as highly competent learners, co-creators of their own learning, innovators of new possibilities, naturally joyful and expressive, open to suggestions, emulators of all that surrounds them, and significant influencers of each other and of adults in their lives. Music Together's image of the child forms a basis for all planning; problem-solving; work with children, teachers, and parents; assessment of progress; and continuous improvements.

Partnership with Children

- Music Together gently works with children as caring and skillful partners in musical samplings, explorations, and expressions and allows for and accommodates differences in learning styles, personalities, and individual readiness.
- Music Together includes children's interests, ideas, cultures, and contributions and helps to build self-confidence, self-sufficiency, and high self-esteem.

Joy in Everything

- Music Together offers joyful experiences in music and movement throughout the program. The guidelines, encouragements, and modeling are all designed to be positive in every aspect of the sessions.
- Music Together provides guidance for extending the Music Together elements into the flow of the school day and using them in a variety of ways. Some are for musical transitions between activities and for arriving in class and going home; augmenting dramatic play, group and individual explorations, and projects; and for revisiting the experiences that the children had during the Music Together sessions.

The Image of the Teacher

- Music Together views the music teachers and the classroom teachers as competent and caring professionals who are supportive and significant contributors to children's musical growth when given adequate information and opportunities. They also serve as powerful role models when participating with children in musical learning activities.

The Processes of Exploring and Expressing

- Music Together assists adults and children in collaborating to explore new areas of learning, revisit known areas for reinforcement and new discoveries, and to find new ways for expressing ideas, feelings, and possibilities for enhanced relationships.
- Music Together provides songbooks, song cards, and music CDs for each collection for use in the classroom to support explorations and extending the learning outside of the Music Together sessions.

The Role of Time

Music Together provides music and movement experiences that are compatible with the rhythms of children at different ages and guides teachers in adapting to the receptivity of each learning group and the sustainability of each musical activity.

A Community of Learners

- Music Together builds a compelling learning environment of music, movement, and thematic treatments that are engaging for children.
- Music Together supports each individual child's needs for being accepted, understood, and appreciated; having influence with their peers and adults; and accomplishing wonderful things with their learning group through music and movement.
- Music Together guides and supports productive group processes and assists children in taking leadership and in learning how to become effective group members.

The Role of the Environment

Music Together structures a learning environment that is compelling and reinforces an energetic, joyful, and productive experience for children and adults. It includes musical instruments and, on occasion, supportive materials, such as scarves, kitchen utensils, teddy bears, dramatic play items, and toys of various kinds. It also provides for equitable participation by all children, a communal experience while making music and moving with the songs, and opportunities to play along with instruments.

An Emergent Curriculum

- Music Together incorporates children's interests and fascinations into the Music Together sessions as a primary vehicle for immediate, complex, comprehensive, and sustained learning.
- Music Together invites children to contribute ideas, lyrics, gestures, large movement ideas, and musical instrument play as valued influences for the group.

A Project Approach

Music Together supports a project approach through its structure of musical activities that engage children and their classroom teachers in revisiting songs each session, stimulating further interest and research into elements that relate to the Music Together experiences, inspiring children to add on to the musical experiences during Music Together sessions, encouraging children to expand on their interests and incorporate the Music Together music into their classroom activities, and stimulating children to continue with various in-depth explorations and expressions.

The 100 Languages of Children

- Music Together provides immersion in several of the over 100 languages that children experience and can develop as part of their multiple intelligences. A few that Music Together provides that support holistic and comprehensive learning and development are singing; rhyming; chanting; tones, pitches, and scales; storytelling; various musical instruments; dancing; gestures; facial expressions; emotions; graphic illustration; musical notation; math; speaking; and reading.
- Music Together employs many materials and processes to encourage and support learning, such as CDs with songs, chants, instrumentals, tonal patterns, and poems; songbooks with songs, illustrations, and guidelines for teachers and family members; a wide array of musical instruments; supporting items, such as scarves, toys, and things from home; small, medium, and large gestures; facial expressions; large body movements; moving around and dancing; dramatic play; counting; reading; introduction of new words, animals, and diverse characters; song cards to reinforce and extend the musical experience and bridge to other learning domains; and treatment of diverse cultural elements.

The Image of the Parent and Family

- Music Together views parents, family members, and extended family members as essential partners in comprehensive collaboration to build and sustain a dynamic and rich musical learning and development environment for their children.
- Music Together believes that parents and family members are often a child's first and strongest educational influences and supporters of ongoing learning and development.
- Music Together provides songbooks; music CDs for home and travel; DVDs for orientation on how children develop musical appreciation and competence; newsletters; an online musical instrument store; and opportunities to participate in their child's weekly Music Together sessions and periodic sing-alongs at school.

The Importance of Relationships

- Music Together believes in and establishes relationships with children, staff members, parents, and family members that are friendly, safe, and supportive and are the basis for effective learning and development.
- Music Together develops and nourishes relationships that are respectful, gentle, caring, collaborative, invigorating, diverse, imaginative, and adventurous.
- Music Together conducts its sessions so that there is mutual and equitable support among all participants, and mutual influence is invited and encouraged to flow in all directions, including among children, teachers, parents, and family members.

The Image of the School

- Music Together views the school as an essential community institution where diverse influences can support optimal learning and development for children, their families, and the community.
- Music Together augments and supports the curriculum with unique music and movement experiences that contribute to enhancing all learning throughout the school program.

The Image of the Community

- Music Together views the community and context in which the school is situated as an important influence and potential contributor to learning and development in school and in the Music Together sessions and related activities.
- Music Together incorporates community and cultural influences in its lesson plans and in its activities with children and teachers.

Music Together Supports HighScope Preschool Curriculum

Research-based, Developmental Approach

The Music Together curriculum and HighScope derive from the same principles—namely a developmental rather than instructional approach to early education based on active, participatory learning.

The following principles are integral to both program models:

- The modeling of parents, caregivers, and teachers to support children’s active learning experiences.
- Developmentally appropriate content that is presented through engaging materials and activities.
- Children’s participation in shaping the flow of activity that is facilitated by teachers and parents.
- A research-based approach to learning and education that is continually developed and validated.

The harmony of HighScope and Music Together also lies in the people behind the program development. Dr. Lyn Ransom, coauthor of Music Together Preschool with Kenneth K. Guilmartin and Dr. Lili Levinowitz, also created the original music program for David Weikhart and HighScope. She served as a HighScope author and teacher trainer before joining the Music Together staff.

Partners in Learning

Music Together clarifies teachers’ roles as music catalysts (as opposed to music instructors) through the articulation of teaching principles that align with, and support, HighScope’s adult-child interaction approach to education and development. These teaching principles help to guide classroom staff in leading music experiences that engage and delight children, offer ample opportunity for active learning, and help teachers to find a sense of playfulness while they teach. For example:

- “Accept and include,” which refers to incorporating a child’s movement or music suggestion into a song or movement activity. This teaching principle helps all children learn that they have valid music and movement ideas, and encourages children—and teachers—to experiment and play freely with music without concerns about making a “mistake.”
- “Build relationships through music and movement,” which refers to interacting through the arts rather than just learning about them. This teaching principle enhances the relationship between teachers and children by giving the teacher ways to use music and movement as a means of communication that is nonverbal and direct, yet playful.

Curriculum Content Areas

The Music Together curriculum can support many of the Key Developmental Indicators (KDI’s) in HighScope’s curriculum content areas, such as: engagement in learning, problem-solving, social and emotional development, physical development, and language and literacy. Music Together also directly supports the Creative Arts curriculum content area for HighScope’s Movement and Music curriculum, which can be enhanced by Music Together activities and materials.

HighScope Classroom and Daily Routine

The HighScope Classroom and Daily Routine can be enriched through the Music Together curriculum, which includes the following key program model components:

- Each semester, children, teachers, primary caregivers, and parents are exposed to a song collection that is research-based and artistically conceived and produced. Supplemental

materials (classroom teacher guide, family songbook, SongCards) enhance and extend the learning experience for the children by providing teachers and parents with a variety of music and movement activities designed to stimulate and support music learning.

- Led by a trained music specialist and based on an activity template or routine, each session includes a variety of music and movement activities and opportunities for instrument-play. Song materials, movement activities, and instruments are also available for children and teachers to play with throughout the day, at circle time, and during transitions, to enrich learning in other curricular areas, as well as in the classroom's music-making area.
- Music Together provides each family with a CD and songbook that includes the same songs children and teachers are singing and moving to at school, which can help to create a tangible connection between the home and the classroom. Teachers are encouraged to facilitate at-home music-making, which promotes fun and family bonding and also supports music, language, physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development at home. Song activities suggested in the family songbook can be facilitated during family-school events, helping to deepen the parents' connection to the school and to their child's classroom.

Relationships: Central to Learning

Like HighScope, Music Together emphasizes the importance of the adult-child interaction and relationship. Music Together trainings, in-service workshops, and supportive materials provide teachers with guidance on how to interact musically with children, regardless of music training or skill, giving them the tools they need to form a music-learning relationship with each child. Also, through singing, moving, and responding to the rhythm patterns and tonal patterns on the CDs, classroom teachers may find that they, too, are developing musically along with the children and parents.

Monitoring and Maintaining Quality

The music and movement section of High Scope's Child Observation Record can be used in any classroom with Music Together. In addition, the music specialists who teach weekly can assess children's development in tonal and rhythm competency by using the Music Together Observation Record. This record can also be used to document music areas and circle areas, materials, activities, equipment, teacher-child interactions, and support for music at home. This checklist is designed to make roles, teaching principles, and materials specific, so understanding can be shared and improvements made.

Training Model

Music Together supports an active teaching and learning community through:

- Online videos, webinars, and interactive teacher websites.
- In-person workshops held nationwide throughout the year.
- Ongoing teacher development in the classroom during the weekly active music-making visits by the Music Together specialist, along with post-class discussions, regular in-service workshops, and individual mentoring embedded in the program model.
- Nationally, internationally, and locally, teachers share ideas, concerns, breakthroughs, and song-presenting techniques, thus raising the general level of teaching.

Music Together Curriculum Supports the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) Program Standards

PreK-K

Creating

Common Anchor #1: *Imagine*

- Includes a non-formal approach that is developmentally appropriate for young children so that they can participate freely in music and movement activities. (MU:Cr1.1.PKa/ MU:Cr1.1.Ka)
- Supports children’s disposition to create their own songs, movement, and accompaniments. (MU:Cr1.1.Kb)

Common Anchor #2: *Plan and Make*

- Includes opportunities for improvisation of lyrics, melody, body movement and rhythmic accompaniment to a variety of songs and movement activities. (MU:Cr2.1.PKa/ MU:Cr2.1.Ka)
- Includes opportunities for creating and improvising tonal and rhythm patterns. (MU:Cr2.1.PKa/ MU:Cr2.1.Ka)
- Includes recordings that serve as a home support for creating music and improvising. (MU:Cr2.1.PKa/ MU:Cr2.1.Ka)
- Includes an adult education component to support and encourage the adults in children’s lives to extend improvisation and creation to the home or classroom. (MU:Cr2.1.PKa/ MU:Cr2.1.Ka)
- Provides a songbook that includes engaging, child-friendly illustrations, ideas for the adult to use the songs at home, and pages where children can invent and use their own original graphic or symbolic systems to represent vocal and instrumental sounds and musical ideas. (MU:Cr2.1.PKb/ MU:Cr2.1.Kb)

Common Anchor #3: *Evaluate and Refine*

- The Music Together Teacher Training prepares early childhood music specialists to facilitate developmentally appropriate music classes that engage children in active decision-making processes to demonstrate and refine their music ideas and in understanding how to informally evaluate children’s rhythm and tonal development so that they can offer scaffolding opportunities. (MU:Cr3.1.PKa/ MU:Cr3.1.Ka)

Performing

Common Anchor #4: *Select*

- Includes American folk, multicultural, and newly composed songs in various tonalities, meters and musical styles. Early Childhood Music Specialists are trained to honor and include children’s ideas for lesson planning and music activity development. (MU:Pr4.1.PKa/ MU:Pr4.1.Ka)
- Includes activities where children can select and experiment with a variety of instruments and other sound sources such as “kitchen equipment” while accompanying singing and recorded music. (MU:Pr4.1.PKa/ MU:Pr4.1.Ka)

Common Anchor #4: *Interpret*

- Includes song, chants, and speaking activities that encourage children to use their voices expressively. (MU:Pr4.3.PKa/ MU:Pr4.3.Ka)
- Includes opportunities to sing, play instruments, move, or verbalize to demonstrate awareness of the expressive elements of music such as rhythm, dynamics, tempo and mood. (MU:Pr4.3.PKa/ MU:Pr4.3.Ka)

Responding

Common Anchor #7: *Analyze*

- Includes opportunities to identify and create sources of a wide variety of sounds such as a guitar, car horn, etc. while singing, moving, and playing instruments. (MU:Re7.2.PKa)
- Includes opportunities for children to play accompaniments that are based on the “levels of beat” [macro/micro/elongation/diminution]. (MU:Re7.2.Ka)
- Includes a songbook where children can identify the instruments and environmental sounds that they hear on the recording with the illustrations. (MU:Re7.2.PKa/MU:Re7.2.Ka)

Common Anchor #8: *Interpret*

- Includes opportunities to use their own ideas to create a wide variety of sounds such as a guitar, car horn while singing, moving, and playing instruments. (MU:Re8.1.PKa)
- Includes opportunities for children to use their own vocabulary, and standard music vocabulary, to describe voices and instruments from diverse cultures. (MU:Re8.1.Ka)

Connecting

Common Anchor #10: *Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make music*

- Includes opportunities to demonstrate a disposition to use music as part of daily life by coordinating and making music and movement relationships. (MU:Cn10.0.PKa/ MU:Cn10.0.Ka)

Common Anchor #11: *Relate musical ideas and works with varied context to deepen understanding*

- Includes a songbook that has engaging illustrations and has ideas for grownups on how to use the music and movement activities in their daily lives. (MU:Cn11.0.PKa/ MU:Cn11.0.Ka)
- Includes opportunities to demonstrate a disposition to use music as part of daily life by coordinating and making music and movement relationships. (MU:Cn11.0.PKa/ MU:Cn11.0.Ka)
- Includes recordings that are artistically conceived and support and encourage children and grownups alike to make music as part of their daily lives. (MU:Cn11.0.PKa/ MU:Cn11.0.Ka)
- Includes an adult education component to support and encourage the adults in children’s lives to extend their growing understanding of music to the home or classroom. (MU:Cn11.0.PKa/ MU:Cn11.0.Ka)
- Includes “Take Home Flyers” for parents of children participating in the Music Together In School curriculum that connect how music supports learning in other domains such as language, cognitive, social-emotional, physical, and approaches to learning. (MU:Cn11.0.PKa/ MU:Cn11.0.Ka)
- Includes an on-line Family Music Zone where parents can find song activities, inspiring videos, informative articles, helpful tips and how-to’s, coloring pages, concert clips with the Music Together “family” heard on the recordings, and more. (MU:Cn11.0.PKa/ MU:Cn11.0.Ka)
- Singalong Storybooks that are beautifully illustrated picture books that bring favorite Music Together songs to life and inspire bonding, pre-literacy skill development, and imaginative play between children and their favorite adults. (MU:Cn11.0.PKa/ MU:Cn11.0.Ka)

Music Together® In School

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