

Pointers For Parents

Music: How It Benefits Your Child

Music lessons for children — it's an activity that has often struck a responsive chord among parents. But many are still surprised to learn that when children join band, orchestra or choir, they are learning more than just music. They are also learning the critical thinking skills needed in today's work force.

Children in band, orchestra or choir develop higher cognitive skills and increased ability to analyze and evaluate information. They also learn about teamwork and conflict/resolution skills required for success in the modern work place while enjoying the healthy, positive activity of music with friends.

Nevertheless, many school districts are cutting school music budgets — or worse, cutting out entire music programs because many school officials don't understand these benefits. As a result, the number of students enrolled in music classes has dropped 30 percent since the 1950's.

According to Robert Palmer, president of United Musical Instruments, "School music gives children confidence in themselves as well as develops many of the skills they will need for successful futures."



Music education can give a child self-confidence and develop critical thinking skills.

A growing number of parents are making sure their local school board knows of their commitment to music education as a matter of educational principle.

For a free booklet about how music education can benefit your child, write: *The Future of Music Project*, c/o United Musical Instruments, P.O. Box 727, Elkhart, IN 46515.

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Music Education Can Improve Your Child's Scholastic Skills

Did you know that when children study music in school, they also improve their reading, spelling and math skills?

Educators agree that abstract concepts such as counting, fractions and ratios become more concrete when applied in a musical context, making the relationship between mathematical theory and practice become noticeably clearer. Music increases a student's learning capabilities in many other areas, as various studies show:

- In 1987 to '89, students taking music courses scored an average of 20 to 40 points higher on both verbal and math portions of the SAT's than students who took no arts courses.
- During the same period, students who took more than four years of music and the other arts scored 34 points better on verbal SAT's than those who took music for less than a year.
- Students who participate in their school band or orchestra are 52 percent more likely to go on to college and graduate than are those who major in other subjects.
- A recent Rockefeller Foundation study discovered that music majors have the highest rate of admittance to medical schools.

What can you do to encourage music in your child's school?

- Strike an alliance with your child's band/orchestra/choral director. Find out



Music education is hitting the right note with many parents and children.

how you can support, at home, what the teacher is trying to accomplish.

- Make sure your local school board, administrators and politicians know of your commitment to music education as a matter of educational principle.
- Work with your music booster club and local school music dealer to prevent music from becoming a "bargaining chip" in school budget battles.

For free brochures about supporting music education in your school, write to *The Future of Music Project*, c/o United Musical Instruments, P.O. Box 727, Elkhart, IN 46515.

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School Band and Orchestra: How They Benefit Your Child

What is it we want for our children? Obviously, many things, but most responsible parents include some of these traits: good self-esteem and self-expression; good self-discipline; individual creativity; good academic and social skills. When a child participates in his or her school's music program, all of these traits may be developed.

- When a child succeeds at such complex tasks as playing an instrument, self-esteem is enhanced.
- When a child learns by experience that creating music links one's self to the world, self-expression becomes more fluent. Creating music helps the child interpret "who I am."
- The child who is taught how to make music learns much about his or her innate creativity.
- As a child begins to understand the connection between hours of practice and the quality of a performance, self-discipline becomes self-reinforcing. It may then be a short jump to making the connection between self-discipline and performance in life.

Music programs alone may not be the answer to all the educational and social problems among youth, but many agree it would be foolish to discount music education's contributions to finding solutions in these areas. Music



Studying music can enhance a child's creativity, self-esteem and self-discipline.

is one of the few areas of study available to children that can bring such a diversity of positive factors together in the same classroom at the same time.

What can you do to encourage music in your child's school? Among other things, make sure the school board, administrators and local politicians know of your commitment to music education.

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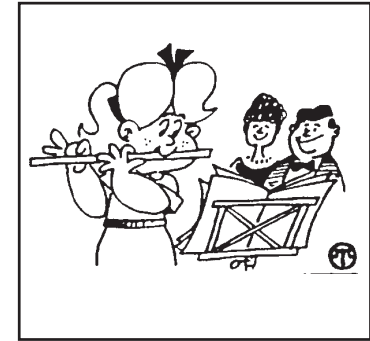
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Shaping Your Child's Cultural Values

Music is a form of beauty. Music, too, stirs the memory of our people. It connects us to our history, our traditions, our heritage. It is a dominant force in the world, shaping every culture's senses as well as the values of its children as few other forces can.

It is critically important that our children understand their place in today's world by making these connections. In the folk songs of Appalachia, in the emotional reverberations of the blues, in the soaring spirituality of Leonard Bernstein's *Mass*, in the vigor of Aaron Copland's *Rodeo*, our children can awaken to a knowledge of themselves—their community and their world—in ways that cannot be duplicated. We want our children to know and understand music precisely because it has intrinsic value on these and many other levels.

Yet, today, only nine states in the U. S. require arts courses for all High School students; 55% of all school districts in the nation do not have even one full time music instructor. This is more alarming when you consider that studies in other countries have demonstrated that along with these



cultural benefits, there is a significant relationship between music instruction and education performance in reading, spelling, mathematics, listening and verbal abilities, and motor skills.

What can you do to encourage music in your child's school? Among other things, make sure the school board, administrators and local politicians know of your commitment to music education.

For more information about the importance of a music education for your child, write to: *The Future of Music Project*, c/o United Musical Instruments, P.O. Box 727, Elkhart, IN 46515.