

20 Ways Parents Can Create A *More Musical* Home Environment



Music has the power to transform lives through playing, listening, teaching and incorporating music in as many ways as possible. For children, it is especially powerful and a major benefit of music exists in its ability to help children learn both creatively and academically in our schools.

Unfortunately, due to budget cuts, many schools across the country continue to lose music and arts programs and this negatively impacts our communities. As a long time organization providing music education to children in our local schools through trained music docents (music teacher volunteers), we at ***Music For Minors II*** encourage all parents, friends and advocates to be involved and active in protecting music, music education and arts in our school systems.



While we continue to fight that fight, **we also want to help parents find fun and easy ways to incorporate music into your home environment for your families.**

By helping to *instill the value of music in your home with your children*, you are providing a strong foundation for your children that will help them excel in every way — physically, emotionally, spiritually and mentally for their entire lives. **Did you know that music...**

♪ Develops skills for the 21st century workforce and life: critical thinking, creative problem solving, effective communication, team work, and more

♪ Helps communities share ideas and values among cultures and generations; unifies a classroom, school, society, nation and world

♪ Is vital to providing a well-rounded education for children because music feeds the brain while touching the heart; it's what makes us human!

♪ Students with music education score higher on standardized tests and college entrance exams especially on in English and mathematics.

Why should we teach music?

- ♪ Music is **science**.
- ♪ Music is **mathematical**.
- ♪ Music is a **foreign language**.
- ♪ Music is **history**.
- ♪ Music **develops insight and demands research**.
- ♪ Music is **physical education**.
- ♪ Music is **all these things – but most of all music is art**. — Kathryn Hull

And music can teach these subjects effectively, enjoyably, and for long lasting results.



Music is essential for a child's healthy development.

♪ “...music **stimulates** specific regions of the **brain** responsible for memory, motor control, timing and language.” (1998 Findings, Society for Neuroscience)

♪ Music provides tremendous benefits to children's **emotional**

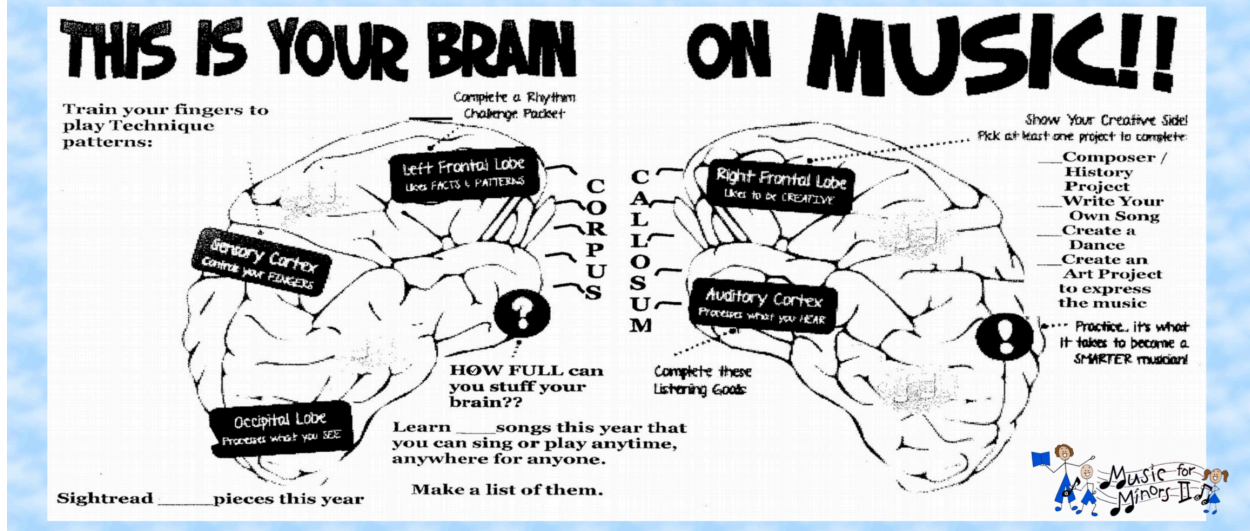
and behavioral maturation according to one of the largest scientific studies into music's effect on the brain, by the University of Vermont College of Medicine.

♪ Music can be a **powerful treatment of cognitive disorders like ADHD, autism**.

♪ Music develops spatiotemporal faculties, **aiding the ability to solve complex math**.

♪ **MUSIC CLOSES THE ACHIEVEMENT GAP!**

Music Grows Brain Cells



Did you know?

♪ The corpus callosum (nerve fibers joining the two hemispheres of the brain) is larger in individuals who study a musical instrument?

♪ Crossing the midline of your body by doing windshield wipers with your arms or making waves with one arm at a time integrates both brain hemispheres?

♪ The whole brain lights up on a brain scan when we make or listen to music?

Music is a moral law...

*It gives **SOUL** to the universe. **WINGS** to the mind. **FLIGHT** to the imagination And **charm and gaiety** to **LIFE** and to everything.*

— Plato

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1. Add your child's name into a song as part of the lyrics. Its silly to them but also helps make music a more personal and unique experience.

2. "Read" musical stories to your children.

Check out the "Raffi" story books and "Pete the Cat" books. This will encourage literacy in your child.

3. Play good quality music in the home. It doesn't have to be loud, just background music. Studies show playing Classical music helps us retain information when we are studying.

4. Sing to your children, even if you don't consider yourself musically talented. They love to hear your voice and its a fun way to communicate normal everyday things through song. Expose children to excellent children's recording artists and educators: Charlotte Diamond, Red Grammer, and Linda Arnold as their music is not only singable and motivational but whose song lyrics teach positive and beautiful age-appropriate messages for young and old.

5. Sing on the road! Teach some of your favorite songs to create fun memories in the car or while traveling and help pass time.

6. Encourage your children to study music with a private teacher, or even with an online course. Learning to play music when they are young will forever help them achieve at school and beyond.

7. Use calm, quiet or soothing music to help your children fall asleep. This can be a music box or nighttime playlist.

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8. Use music to reinforce studies. When you learn and memorize studies to music and songs, it becomes significantly easier to remember long term.

9. Music can help you relax. Use it for yourself in stressful times.

10. When you have a timed activity, consider making a playlist for that length of time instead of using a traditional timer. Create 5 minutes or 10 minutes as a playlist for clean up, or the amount of time left to play, and when the music stops, they know the time is up!



11. Take a music class together. Check your local area for classes that encourage parents and children to play together if they are young.

12. Bring the band back together! If you play an instrument, great! If you don't, you can still practice rhythm and sound by playing around with objects around your house.

13. For those of you with babies at home, it can help to sing while changing diapers, before naps, while brushing teeth, during bath time, folding laundry, etc. Children will learn to recognize these varied songs and

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it will help them understand the structure of their day and extend their language skills beyond regular every-day conversation.

14. Use the internet creatively to help introduce them to a wide variety of different instruments. The way they look, how they are played, the sounds that they make, and have them try to make the same sounds using their voice and bodies.



15. If you say a prayer or grace before a meal or bed, consider making it a song or adding a song to your nightly routine. It's a great way to get everyone engaged together.

16. Become familiar with musical broadcasts like NPR and KQED and find your favorite programs.

17. Go to local musical performances, live concerts and sing-a-longs. This is a great way to expose your children to a variety of music while practicing their social skills.

18. Dance with your children - take dance breaks while you cook in the kitchen, or just help them find their own rhythm and dance to the beat of the music. If your young child has trouble finding the beat, don't fret — research suggests they may not be able to find a strong sense of rhythm until well into Kindergarten.

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19. Make your own instruments! There are many DIY instrument guides online using Pinterest, for example. Homemade shakers or maracas, and drums are very easy.

Here are two examples we love: [example 1](#) [example 2](#).



20. **Listen for “Nature’s Music” when outside on a walk or playing.** Show them how to identify rhythm and music in our natural world all around them, from the bumps in the road to the wind in the trees - music is truly all around us!

About Music For Minors II

Music For Minors II (MFMII) is a nonprofit 501©(3) organization which provides music enrichment programs in elementary schools in the East Bay area and performance opportunities for children on professional stages and family music events at local schools and community events since 1988.

- Music For Minors II **recruits and trains community volunteers** to serve as music docents in the schools.
- Each trained docent commits to **teaching a one half-hour music lesson weekly** during the school year.

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- Lessons include **singing, rhythmic movement /dance, instrumentation and listening appreciation.**
- MFMII docents **work in partnership with classroom teachers** to integrate music into their curriculum.
- Many classroom teachers have been trained by MFMII and have become music docents in their own classrooms.



Our Mission

The MFMII mission is to nurture the love and literacy of music in children's classrooms and lives through instruction, participation, and performances, enhancing academic education with musical arts.

Learn more about Music For Minors II by clicking [here](#).

www.musicforminors2.org or (510) 733-1189

