



Frequently Asked Questions

What is Music Together?

Music Together is a research-based, internationally recognized early childhood music and movement program for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and the adults who love them. First offered to the public in 1987, it pioneered the concept of a research-based, developmentally appropriate early childhood music curriculum that strongly emphasizes and facilitates adult involvement.

What does a Music Together class look like?

In a Music Together class children and their parents or caregivers meet weekly to sing songs, dance, play with simple musical instruments, have fun with chants, rhythm games and a rich variety of other music and movement activities. Classes are informal and designed to be lots of fun, so the adults, regardless of their musical ability, feel comfortable and encouraged to sing, dance, and play as part of the group, giving the children a joyful experience of community music-making. The children are free to participate in any manner which suits them that day; each child develops at his or her own level in a noncompetitive, nonperformance based environment. Live music making rather than passive listening is the name of our game! See classroom footage at www.musictogether.com.

How long are the classes? How many classes in a session?

The classes are 45-minutes each. There are ten weeks in the Fall, Winter and Spring sessions and six weeks in the Summer session.

What is included in my tuition?

Tuition includes the weekly 45-minute classes, plus each family is given a beautifully illustrated songbook, a CD containing all the songs they'll be singing during the session, and a code to access Music Together's Family Music Zone. There, they will be able to download the songs from the current collection, in addition to exploring fun and enriching content.. The songs collections are a mix of traditional songs, world music, instrumental play-alongs, original music and rhythmic chants. There is a different song collection for each session Having the CDs to play in the car, at home, or at grandma's lets the whole family share the joy of music making every day; these song collections quickly become family favorites. New families will also receive a Parent Guide DVD and booklet, outlining Music Together's educational philosophy.

As a parent, what is my role in class?

Enhance your child's experience in class by remembering to sing, sing, sing. Your active participation is the key to your children learning and growing musically. Since it is difficult for a young child to mask out adult conversation please wait to socialize after class, and instead contribute to the creation of a musical environment for the children to absorb. Try not to give verbal directions. It can be tough to restrain the impulse to give your child directives such as "Do what she is doing, hold your instrument this way" but children respond best by just seeing and hearing you doing (and enjoying) it yourself! Wandering toddlers are fine, but if you want your child to come back to you, avoid calling to him from across the room. If necessary, redirect your child physically back to you or the circle. Of course watch out for your child's safety, but mostly your job is to just relax and have fun!

Is it OK for more than one adult to come to class?

Yes, both or either parent, grandparents, caregivers and other special grown-ups in your child's life are always welcome to attend class. Whole family music making in your home is extremely valuable to your

child's musical development, and attending class occasionally helps the other family members to join in at home.

How many children are in each class?

There is normally a maximum of 12 children enrolled in each class. Occasionally there may be one or two extra families doing a preview or making up a missed class. Each child or set of siblings is accompanied by a parent or caregiver.

What is the age range of the classes?

Classes are aged birth through 5 years.

Is my child too young to learn music?

From the time children are born, they are immersed in the language of our culture. That is how they learn to talk. In Music Together we immerse children in the music of our culture. That is how they will learn to sing.

Are Music Together classes appropriate for children with special needs?

Yes! All children are musical, and we welcome children with special needs. Our classes are structured to offer a wide variety of musical activities and experiences, which children can process at their own pace and developmental level, regardless of age or individual need. Further, research has shown that music can help to strengthen gross motor, fine motor, speech and socialization skills in *all* children and often proves an invaluable resource to parents, who through music find a deeper way of interacting with their child.

May I bring both my 3 year old and my 10 month old to class together?

Yes you may! Researchers have found that a mixed-age group tends to foster a more natural, family style learning environment. Older children learn from being in a leadership role, younger children benefit from the example of an older child. Siblings can attend class together, making it easier for parents to enjoy a true family experience. We know that children of the same age are not necessarily at the same point in their musical development so the mixed-age model is a natural opportunity for them to learn at their own pace. Children benefit from opportunities for social interaction with other children of different ages.

What kind of instruments do you use?

We have a wide variety of unpitched instruments such as Drums, Triangles, Tambourines, Bells, Shakers and Rhythm sticks. The reason for unpitched instruments is so that the children will never feel they are playing a "wrong" note and can join in however they like. You too will be playing along on these instruments! The teachers may play keyboard, guitar, flute, recorder, etc. to accompany the songs as well as using some recorded selections.

What is the music like?

Finally some children's music you will love to listen to! Music Together® created research-based materials of the highest quality to carry the music from class to your home – a recording, a songbook, and educational information for parents. The music is pitched in just the right range for children's voices and includes songs, rhythmic chants, tonal and rhythm patterns, and instrumental play-alongs that are all in a rich variety of sounds and rhythms.

There are many original songs and unique, original arrangements of folk songs, graced by the playing and singing of outstanding performers on a variety of instruments. They are classroom and family-tested. Since 1987, the feedback of hundreds of teachers and thousands of families has been incorporated into these constantly evolving materials.

Do you do the same songs every week?

No, each week we do twelve or thirteen songs from the 25-30 songs in each collection. So each week we do mostly familiar songs with three or four new ones added until we have covered the whole collection for that session.

Do you have the same songs each session?

No, There are nine different song collections so families can take the course for 3 years and not repeat the material.

I'm not musical, can I still come with my child?

You are your child's most important role model, no matter what kind of singing voice or dancing feet you have (and most people have the ability to sing better than they think they do!). It is less important how well you sing than it is to model making the choice to sing. By your example, children will learn that music is a natural, enjoyable and important part of their lives. No CD can impart that! What your child loves and needs most is to hear your voice at home or in class.

My child won't sit still for 45 minutes!

We don't expect children to sit still. Music Together classes maintain an informal atmosphere. Children are welcome to sit and observe, move around, copy the adults or invent their own way to play. Whatever style works best for them is accepted and welcome. Often we find that a child may not look like they are participating or are doing something different than the group. Then they go home and "practice" what they learned in class by re-enacting it! Children at this stage of development are learning ALL THE TIME, whether it looks like it or not!

Each child has their own unique learning style. Some children are more visual learners, some learn more by listening, and some are kinesthetic learners - those children learn through movement. It is just fine if they do so in class, just as long as it is safe behavior. In Music Together we encourage and acknowledge each child's need to learn in their own way, at their own level, and at their own pace. The most important thing that parents and caregivers can do is be ready to fully participate and model how much fun you are having making music which will inspire them to adopt your positive attitude.

What happens if I miss a class?

You can make up any missed classes by coming to another class that week or any other week in the session. Make-up classes cannot be carried over to another session.

Can I try one out first?

You are welcome to come to a free demonstration class. It's best to come to the first class of any new session. That way if you love it (and we're sure you will) you can sign up for the rest of the session and not miss any of the fun. If it is not what you expected, you are under no obligation to continue.

How can I find out more about Music Together?

For Music Together nationally, you may call the Main office at the Center for Music and Young Children in Princeton on 1.800.728.2692 or check out their website at www.musictogether.com.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF THE MUSIC TOGETHER[®] PHILOSOPHY

All children are musical.

Therefore, all children can achieve basic music competence. We define basic music competence as the ability to sing in tune with accurate rhythm.

The participation and modeling of parents and caregivers, regardless of their musical ability, is essential to a child's musical growth.

This growth is best achieved in a playful, developmentally appropriate, non-performance-oriented learning environment that is musically rich yet immediately accessible to the child's-and the adult's participation.

