

Music at Home to Promote Bonding, Development & Learning



Music is a social glue, a motivator and an ‘Open Sesame’ for children. Wishing you the best during this difficult time. This is a list of resources I hope some of you may find useful. Music promotes creativity, parent-child and sibling bonding and can foster a range of developmental skills and academic learning in children with all levels of ability. Short music sessions can be put together which can be an engaging part of your child’s day. You can access all of the playlists in this document here <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNyM3ITP7FkJzzzhA2fydWg>

On pages 7-9 I have listed some excellent music apps as well as a sample session plan that can be tailored and adapted to suit your child’s needs. Let the creative juices flow and most importantly, have fun together. Stay well! *Bill Ahessy, Music Therapist*

Days of the Week Signifier

This music is used in the school to signify the day of the week and is very important for orientation for some of our students with more complex needs. There are 7 instrumental pieces which are appropriate for all ages and they can be used in the morning when your child is getting up, having breakfast or during any activity. https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLc_7eJO5zxRpDExvze12lzuemtinbz0gc

As well as You Tube you can download the pieces to your device here https://drive.google.com/open?id=1Dz9mqBYj_U6yiOxSYwRh-STZLsl9gKC5

Day of the Week	Music	Instrument
Monday	You’re So Cool	Xylophone
Tuesday	Chan Chan	Guitar
Wednesday	Barcarolle	Strings
Thursday	Green Onions	Organ
Friday	St. Thomas	Saxophone
Saturday	Blackbird	Fiddle
Sunday	El Condor Pasa	Flute

Some children may be challenged in a listening game using these or other pieces of music. Which instrument did you hear? Was the music fast/medium/slow? Was it loud or soft? What genre was it? Can you describe it? How did it make you feel?



Weather Songs

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Z6gRXMCKuBAYptmT3hGhgS4PXJi74Vlr>

I have recorded a weather song “How’s the Weather?” and a song for each type of weather. The weather song can be sung each day and asking the child to identify the weather and then the corresponding song can be sung. Lyrics and audio files can be played or downloaded from the Google folder. Language on a range of levels can be promoted in these songs, focusing on key words & phrases as well as complete lyrics. Sensory additions can be added like a fan for wind and water spray bottle for rain...



Greeting Songs

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLc_7eJO5zxRrphSS7CrJj-Rk4vjASg7cr

Greeting songs are a great way to connect with your child, to model social skills and promote expressive and receptive communication. Multi-modal approaches can be used successfully including vocalisation, Lamh, PECs and switches. Hello songs in music therapy can support the promotion of positive social skills like eye contact, hand shaking, high fives as well as vocalising and verbalising hello. I have compiled a playlist on YouTube of greeting songs which you can access through the link above. These can be adapted to suit your child’s needs. For non-verbal children there are a range of ispeak apps you can download for iPad which can be used in greeting songs

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/ispeak-button/id471583149>

You can then record ‘Hello’ or other phrases onto the button and the child can be encouraged to press it on cue as part of the hello song. Adapting songs that you already know and using emphatic pauses is a great way to motivate. A simple example to the tune of “Oh Dear What Can the Matter Be” is “*Hello, my name is ..., Hello, my name is ..., Hello, my name is ..., It’s time to say _____ [ispeak button with ‘hello’ recorded].*”



Movement & Actions Songs

I have put together a range of action and movement songs for children that can be fun to sing together with siblings or as a family. You can access them here: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLc_7eJO5zxRqXyrAjkd-6xPWBXKP3kWWn

These are great to promote movement and coordination, body awareness as well as sustained attention. Simple movement games like musical statues or musical chairs can be used with any music the child likes. Easy songs to sing for smaller children such as 'Open Shut Them' or using familiar songs such as 'If You're Happy and You Know It,' are great for working on motor skills. Another simple one where body parts can be changed is to the tune of London Bridge: *"Pat Your knees and rub your tummy, rub your tummy rub your tummy, Pat your knees and rub your tummy, just like this!"*

These can be used to promote independent movement, hand over hand or on-body for children with limited movement. 'This is the Way We' (Tune: Round the Mulberry Bush) can also be used in similar ways for independent, facilitated or hand over hand activities of day living such as washing face, brushing here. This could be slowed down with a sensory focus for children with massage or hand cream used to relax. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4XLQpRI_wOQ

For children with limited movement, hand over hand can be used for many of the songs. Songs such as 'Little Snowflake' can be sung as the parent uses a feather or their hand to touch the body part on cue. This will promote and reinforce body awareness, support understanding of cause and effect and promote bonding. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tbbKjDjMDok&list=PLc_7eJO5zxRqXyrAjkd-6xPWBXKP3kWWn&index=7

Another easy one which you can sing to the tune of "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow" is "I'm coming to Tickle your Tummy." You can change the body part each time, extending the pause to promote cause and effect.

*"I'm coming to tickle your tummy
"I'm coming to tickle your tummy
"I'm coming to tickle your tummy
Just like [pause] this!"*



Language Songs

Songs are an effective way to encourage vocalisation at any level. I have compiled a folder of some examples that may be a starting point for different levels.

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLc_7eJO5zxRr08y8pfwMQsyWmf_nJRcfE

Free vocalisation can be promoted through making sounds (babbling), mirroring the child's sounds and call and response type interactions. Try to build up turn-taking routines making sounds. Speech and target words/phrases can be promoted through 'Fill in the Gap' methods, which children respond very positively to. Children will often finish a phrase or line of a song if cued. Lamh signs can also be used or apps such as *ispeak*. There are many songs that can support language on YouTube.

Call and response songs are fun for children. They can model and support expressive language and promote short term memory. Some favourite are

Down by the Bay <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cAMbqRWqLXQ>

I am a Pizza https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0O16-V_JtYs

There was a Moose <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHmzOMVBcgU>

There are also some more examples

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zRfuEBh6pM&list=PLF5a_HhJ9FSqLYOAj9Fc_fHHmn_OJ4UsUM&index=3

For some songs with academic concepts please check out this playlist

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLc_7eJO5zxRpsUdf_LVGvstBJsSF4_s



Instrument Songs

Small handheld instruments such as egg shakers, maracas, bells or tambourines can be used for interactive music making, focusing on social skills such as turn-taking, waiting and responding to cues. If you don't have instruments you can make some from everyday items around the house. Some rice in a plastic bottle will work well for

a shaker and almost anything can be used as a drum. There are a few egg shaker songs in this playlist and you will be able to find many more on You Tube.

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLc_7eJO5zxRoVLY5r6xjeenrS-YLGYG

I have also some instrument songs recorded in a Google folder that you can access <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1IZShpjgS1URyR-og8pbAie8N2MNd3f3H>

You can encourage impulse control by getting children to play and stop, support social skills through taking turns, playing together and sharing, promote directions by playing instruments up high and down low, left and right and work on psychomotor skills by varying soft and loud playing.

I have also recorded some instrument songs which you can find in this Google Folder <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1IZShpjgS1URyR-og8pbAie8N2MNd3f3H>

Backing tracks can be found on this playlist and can be used to play along with. Encourage your child to play in creative ways, expressing themselves. For some children this might be a receptive experience as the parent plays an instrument for them to listen. For other children, they could take turns being a conductor, using signs to make the others play fast or slow, loud or soft or simply pressing start and stop.

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLc_7eJO5zxRo9CwU2Rcd1ekvnb3vu7phA

Homemade Instruments

- <https://redtri.com/homemade-instruments/slide/1>
- <https://redtri.com/homemade-instruments/slide/1>



Relaxation & Mindfulness

Below you will find a playlist of mindfulness activities and mediation for children.

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLc_7eJO5zxRrMERkHPurBjL-cj8hE_--D

Some of these are with guided imagery or in story form. These can be used at any time of the day for relaxation and quiet time. The audio from stories such as *Sleepy Paws* or *Dragon Story Time Mediation* can be used before naps or bed.

There is also an excellent website/app Headspace that has meditations for under 5s, 6-8 and 9-12 year olds <https://www.headspace.com/meditation/kids>

Stop Breathe Think also has some nice options

<https://www.stopbreathethink.com/kids/>

In this playlist you will find a range of environmental soundscapes which vary in length. These can be used for relaxation, massage or just listening.

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLc_7eJO5zxRqhgyPqxt7zv_tZi7lQTGzR

There is a further playlist of relaxing music that can be used for down time or sensory work and massage.

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLc_7eJO5zxRrhA8qFzts_uM5wAP5zRIEA



Other Resources

Laurie Berkner has a great music channel on YouTube for children with some really catchy songs as well as 30 min live videos.

<https://www.youtube.com/user/TheLaurieBerknerBand>

Pattie Shukla also has a great You Tube channel with plenty of engaging, fun songs including those that promote phonics, and academic concepts for small children.

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1J5R-2zsrrlCAYmkt5g_6Q

EFL Kids videos can also be very good for promoting language and concepts.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=EFL+kids

For some songs about food or meal times, please see this playlist

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLc_7eJO5zxRpChSO-crRcAEY3RL2osbeR

You can find albums such as 'Sing & Grow' (for parent-child bonding), Language Songs, Get Fizzical, songs for 4-7 years Olds and other albums in this folder.

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1y6uTSpqJ92AH-S8XHO4OrVjLfd04X0Jo>

There are some really nice stories on You Tube with animation.

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLc_7eJO5zxRr00taqiCD1gHR_6uXOcEou

Environmental sounds to developing auditory attention and listening skills.

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLc_7eJO5zxRrdKcdam0NABb4i0-Ubuag3

Finally, here are some hand washing songs

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDHJW4r3eIE>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S9VjeIWLnEg>

Music Apps

There are lots of great music apps online which can be fun and interactive.



Kapu Bloom Tunes 0-3

<https://apps.apple.com/ie/app/kapu-bloom-tunes/id920305238>

This is a lovely easy app that toddlers and parents can use together. Kapu Bloom Tunes combines creating music and painting. Melody making through painting and nature.



Brown Bear Animal Parade 4+

<https://apps.apple.com/ie/app/eric-carles-brown-bear-animal/id1132542642>

Colour the animals and have fun creating your own unique sounds and music. Children can record their voices as they sing along and make their own animal noises.



Singing Fingers 4+

<https://apps.apple.com/ie/app/singing-fingers/id381015280>

Singing Fingers lets you finger paint with sound. Just touch the screen while you make a sound, and colourful paint appears. Touch the paint to play back the sound again! You can paint your own musical instrument and play it, play with your voice, and experiment with sounds.



Loopimal 5+

<https://apps.apple.com/ie/app/loopimal-by-yatatoy/id964743113>

This is by far one of the cutest children's music apps you will find. Children can create quirky animation sequences for different animals and create endless loops of melodies, rhythms or movements. A brilliant introduction to creating musical loops for children as young as 5. It's also non-lingual, intuitive, fun and easy to use.



Sound Forest 5+

<https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/soundforest/id1194745290>

SoundForest is a mini music maker that allows you to instantly compose a song using a collection of musical creatures. Compose a loop by tapping animal instruments and mix them into a hypnotic tune. Make a musical ecosystem.



Bloom 5+

<https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/bloom/id292792586>

Bloom is a beautiful app that combines making music and art. It is simple to use; and is both visually and aurally stimulating. The effect is very calming and It's recommended that the app be experienced with headphones to get the full effect.

Apps to Promote Communication



Talking Tom Cat 4+

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/talking-tom-cat/id377194688?mt=8&ign-mpt=uo%3D4>

This animated cat repeats words and sounds in a funny voice. Encourages vocalization and interaction with the iPad



Sounding Board 4+

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/soundingboard/id390532167?ign-mpt=uo%3D4>

This app allows you to create communication boards using simple symbols with voice output. Very good free communication app.



Make a Choice 4+

<https://apps.apple.com/vc/app/make-a-choice-aac-buttons/id1295966224>

A simple yet extremely versatile app that turns your iPad into a communication switch that allows for an array of customisations.

Apps for Cause & Effect / Motor



Cause & Effect Sensory Light Box 4+

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/cause-effect-sensory-light/id533976433?ign-mpt=uo%3D4>

Well-made cause-and-effect app that creates sounds and lights when your finger is on the screen. Perfect for children with low vision or CVI.



Bebot 4+

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/bebot-robot-synth/id300309944?ign-mpt=uo%3D4>

Bebot is a simple sound cause and effect app that makes funny synth robot sounds. Touch the screen and make the robot sing!

Example Music Session

This is an example of a session that would take approx. 30 mins and it can be adapted to your child's needs. For some children, new material can be introduced each session and activities can be varied. For others, the session could be kept the same for familiarity and security, introducing changes slowly.

Day of the Week Music	You can use the day of the week music to start the session while you are setting up, or another preferred piece of music.
Greeting Song	Work on social communication, greeting your child, singing, Lamh, gestures.
How's the Weather & Weather Song	Sing the weather song and then use the corresponding song for the weather.
Movement / Action Song Movement to Music	This can be a structured action song or movement song or dance freely to music with your child, use scarves or ribbons, be creative!
Instrument Song	Work on creative expression, turn-taking, imitation, leading and following. Shakers, bells, drum, tambourine or whatever you have to hand)
Vocalising or Singing	Use preferred children's songs, songs working on academic concepts, expressive language and most importantly creative self-expression.
Percussion	You can use a backing track from the playlist, a preferred song or play call and response rhythm games.
Story	Some nice down time together
Music & relaxation	This can be combined with gentle massage, bubbles or sensory input.
Goodbye	Goodbye song or music to close the session.