

Exploring

infants and toddlers

Capital District Child Care Council

a tipsheet for parents and caregivers of children ages 0 to 2

Music and Movement

All children are born with natural musical potential. Music can soothe a fussy baby, help with self-expression, have a positive affect on physical, cognitive, language, and motor skill development. Research has found that from birth, music encourages intellectual development and makes important connections between brain cells.

Here are some activities and tips that will help bring positive musical experiences into the life of infants and toddlers:

- ✓ Play different types of music for even the youngest baby from classical to folk music. The younger the child, the slower the music they tend to enjoy.
- ✓ Make sure to keep the volume of the music low as to not damage hearing.
- ✓ Make sure that music is used as a part of what is happening at certain times of day. Avoid a radio on all day long in the background. It can be confusing and chaotic for little listeners.
- ✓ Adults should experience music with the toddler, join in and follow their lead.
- ✓ It's never too early to sing songs, rhymes, and finger plays with children.
- ✓ Create music with babies. Caregivers can clap, hum, or even bang on a pot with a wooden spoon.
- ✓ Dance to music together.

- ✓ Use props for dancing to music. Scarves cut out of tulle are great for tossing in the air, or swooshing around with your hands. Long pieces of party streamers can serve similar functions.
- ✓ Make singing a part of daily routines, for instance sing clean up or diapering songs.
- ✓ Pay close attention to what sounds a baby enjoys hearing.
- ✓ Remember to add to baby's lives with cultural musical experiences.
- ✓ Encourage toddlers to participate in music and movement activities. Always make it ok for children to choose not to participate. Even if a child is not with the group, he is probably listening and observing, and still learning.

**Make
music a part
of everyday
life**

