



Music for Preschoolers

A Checklist for Choir Directors and Parents

- ❑ Avoid stressing your child through clock hurrying, which involves asking preschoolers to perform psychological and physiological tasks quickly. (Elkind, 1987, p.48)
- ❑ Avoid stressing your child through calendar hurrying, which involves asking preschoolers to complete developmentally inappropriate tasks. (Elkind, 1987, p. 49)
- ❑ Remember that music activities should be presented to ages conception to three, as “*unstructured informal guidance*.” (Gordon, 1990, p. 1)
- ❑ Remember that music activities should be presented to ages three through five as “*structured informal guidance*.” (Gordon, 1990, p.1)
- ❑ Preschoolers learn music through repetition, just as they learn language.
- ❑ Tape record your preschooler’s music activity group at church as often as possible and play the tape throughout the week for your child.
- ❑ Understand that a direct correlation exists between a child’s musical environment (home, day care, church) and the child’s musical aptitude (*potential* to learn music based upon innate plus environmental factors).
- ❑ Mothers need to sing to their children (Reynolds, 1960, pp. 65-66) and move their bodies rhythmically while singing. (Gordon, 1990, pp. 89-90)
- ❑ Provide quality recordings in the home.
- ❑ Attend concerts with your child.
- ❑ Sing at church as a member of the congregation.
- ❑ Listen for your child’s attempts to musically babble, to imitate songs, or to create songs during routine or play. Encourage your child’s attempts to make music, but do not force them to participate.

- ❑ Try to instigate a child’s interest in music. (Reynolds, 1960, 65-66)
- ❑ Provide a well-tuned piano or a keyboard in the home.
- ❑ Try to learn and understand the importance of music in child development.
- ❑ Listening activities are the most important in preschooler’s musical development.
- ❑ Remember that children begin to exhibit strong musical preferences between the ages of four and five and that the music most often heard at that time will become the child’s musical preference. (Peery & Peery, 1986; Schuckert & McDonald, 1968)
- ❑ Demonstrate rather than explain. Many preschoolers lack the appropriate vocabulary to share musical understandings conventionally with adults. (McMahon, 1984; Van Zee, 1976)

References

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