



Quality ChildCare

For Registered Home-Based Providers

LEARNING TO GROW ★ WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE Vol. VII, No. 5

10 Hallmarks of Quality Child Care

- ★ Build trusting relationships
- ★ Provide consistent care
- ★ Support children's health
- ★ Provide a safe environment
- ★ Provide positive guidance
- ★ Provide a language-rich environment
- ★ Foster curiosity and development through play
- ★ Individualize care and learning activities
- ★ Partner with parents
- ★ Pursue personal and professional growth

This Month's Hallmark of Quality Child Care

Partner with Parents

Born to Sing!

Baby shark dodododododo, Baby shark, dodododododo, Baby shark dodododododo.... Anyone who's been around a young child lately probably recognized these lyrics immediately, and may have even witnessed a young child respond to this song with glee and dancing and pleas to hear it again...and again!

Studies have shown that when children hear and respond to songs, it ignites ALL areas of their development and school readiness. It is important that families be made aware of information such as this so they can better support their child's learning and school readiness.

As a child care provider, you help families everyday by providing nurturing care for their young child, and you play a key role in preparing children for school success. Families naturally look to you as a source of information regarding their child's development and rely on you for guidance. One of the important ways you can prepare children for school success is by *partnering with and engaging their families in the process*.

Here are some strategies to help you partner with parents to encourage singing at home:

- Send home the words to favorite songs that you sing in your child care program. Make sure to let families know if there is a specific song(s) that their child especially enjoys.
- Make a recording for families of the favorite songs that you sing.
- Ask families to share the titles of favorite songs they sing at home, including multicultural songs or songs in their native language. Invite them to teach these songs to the rest of the children in your child care.
- Inform families about the ways singing ignites children's development.

In this newsletter, we will share how singing helps children's development, and highlight three types of engaging songs that providers and families can sing with infants, toddlers and preschoolers: *lullabies, piggyback songs, and playful songs*.



Benefits of Singing

Singing is so important that brain scientists believe that even from birth, our brains are prepared to pay attention to, process, and respond to music; and the simple act of giving children opportunities to hear and sing songs will activate multiple areas of their brain and support the formation of important brain connections, which has life-long benefits.

Here are some of the specific ways that singing ignites children's development:

- **Cognitive:** singing enhances higher order thinking skills such as, imagination, critical thinking, and problem solving.
- **Language/literacy:** it helps children learn the meaning and sounds of words/ language (phonemic awareness)
- **Social/Emotional:** it releases a chemical in the brain called endorphins which relieves stress, oxygenates the brain, boosts feelings of happiness and helps with self-regulation
- **Physical:** when children move, dance, and use motions to a song, this strengthens their motor skills.

And the good news is that you don't have to be a gifted singer to sing with children! Children will listen, even if you're off key – and will love every minute of it!



Infants & Lullabies

Infants can hear and respond to a voice in their earliest days. Studies have shown that an infant will recognize a mother's voice much earlier than he will recognize her face. Furthermore, when researchers studied the impact of singing on an infant, they found that infants listened longer to a singing voice compared to a speaking voice. You may encourage fathers to sing to children, as their singing has also been found to be highly appealing to infants.

One of the ways to support an infant's development is by singing **lullabies** to him. Lullabies, which are soothing songs, help infants develop an important skill called *self-regulation*. Infants do not yet have the ability to regulate their emotions and behaviors; therefore, they rely on caregivers to do this for them. When you help a baby transition from an active, alert state to a calm state by rocking him gently while singing a soft lullaby, you are helping him *learn how to regulate his emotions and behaviors, which is a skill highly related to later mental health and educational success*. The experience of being soothed will help the baby learn to soothe himself.

Here are some of the other notable benefits of singing lullabies to a child:

- Lullabies are scientifically proven to lull babies to sleep;
- They stimulate language and cognitive development;
- Lullabies can strengthen the bond between a caregiver and child.

Toddlers & Piggyback Songs

There are many ways of enjoying singing with a toddler. One way is to make up a song. A **piggyback song** is a song sung to a familiar tune, with new lyrics. For example, using the tune of *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*, you change the words to: “*Brush, brush, brush your teeth each and every day; Brushing, brushing, brushing, brushing; Brush the plaque away.*” Share your piggyback songs with families, and ask them to share other piggyback songs that they come up with at home.

Piggyback songs help children with:

- **Familiarity and Memory.** When a child already has a melody in his head, he can focus on memorizing the lyrics. Learning the words becomes a lot easier, and soon he’ll be singing along, and performing the actions.
- **Predictability.** Singing the same song during routine activities (such as picking up toys) helps a child know what to expect and therefore, reduces his insecurities and resistance toward the activity.
- **Repetition.** Human brains crave repetition, patterns, and order. Piggyback songs provide a good predictable pattern through an easy familiar tune that our brains can lock on to.



Preschoolers & Playful Songs

Preschoolers like to sing...just to sing! One of the best things about singing together is that it promotes joy and laughter! Laughing is a natural response to something funny, but did you know that laughing together has so many benefits? It builds connections with others, and that alone is huge. It also promotes a good sense of humor. Research has shown that children with a good sense of humor are happier, healthier, more optimistic, have higher self-esteem, can handle differences well, are better liked by their peers, and are better able to handle the adversities or challenges they may face.

One of the ways you can laugh with children is by singing **playful songs** together. Try singing the following types of songs:

- **Silly Songs and Nonsense Songs:** Enjoy old favorites together like, “*On Top of Spaghetti*,” and “*Down by the Bay*”
- **Cumulative Songs:** Preschoolers delight in songs that build and repeat like, “*The Green Grass Grew All Around*” and “*There’s a Hole in the Bottom of the Sea.*”
- **Action songs:** And of course, dancing together is sure to bring loads of smiles and laughter. Try “*Shake Your Sillies Out*,” “*Freeze Dance*,” “*Tooty Ta*,” and songs by Patty Shukla.

Kids in the Kitchen

Avocado Toast: Sing while you cook!

Recipe adapted from *Farm to Keiki* by Tiana Kamen, MSN



What You Need:

- Whole-grain bread, 2 pieces
- 1–2 avocados
- Optional toppings: sprouts, grated carrots, tomatoes, etc.

What to do:

1. While doing this recipe with your keiki, sing “*This is the Way...*,” sung to the tune of: “*Here we Go ‘Round the Mulberry Bush*” while completing each task – washing, mashing, and spreading the avocado.
2. Discuss the color and texture of avocado (prior to cutting). Together, wash the avocados and sing: “*This is the way we wash avocados, wash avocados, wash avocados; This is the way we wash avocados for our snack!*”
3. Slice the avocados in half lengthwise, and remove the pits.
4. Help him scoop out the fruit into a bowl and mash the avocados with a fork. (*sing about mashing*)
5. Toast the bread and cut it in half.
6. Have him spread two spoonfuls of avocado onto his toast. (*sing about spreading*) Sprinkle with optional seasonings and toppings.
7. Enjoy and sing together – “*This is the way we eat our snack, eat our snack.... Yummy avocado toast!*”

Training Opportunity

This online training offers a certificate for 1 training hour at EdWeb.net.

Family Engagement through Music: Stronger Home-School Connections with Music

<https://home.edweb.net/webinar/family-engagement-music-stronger-connections/>

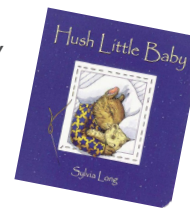
Suggested Books

Discover these books and more at the Hawai‘i State Public Library www.librarieshawaii.org

Infants and Toddlers

Hush Little Baby by Sylvia Long

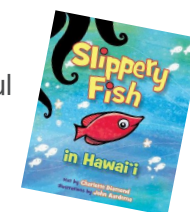
This best-selling version of the beloved lullaby *Hush Little Baby* is now available in a sturdy board book making it perfect for sharing with the youngest children.



Slippery Fish in Hawai‘i

by Charlotte Diamond

Read and sing the popular *Slippery Fish* song with this board book that features colorful illustrations that highlight Hawai‘i’s incandescent, vibrant underwater world.



Preschoolers

On Top of Spaghetti by Paul Brett Johnson

In this adaptation of a favorite silly song, a hound tells what happens when his beloved meatball escaped from a plateful of spaghetti. Includes a recipe for spaghetti and meatballs.



Shake My Sillies Out by Raffi

Animals and campers join together in the woods one evening and shake their sillies, clap their crazies, and yawn their sleepies out. Includes unaccompanied melody.



Citations

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