

# The Magic of Music

by: Doug Paterson

From the very beginning, music enriches our lives. Long before a child takes her first breath, she lives with the comforting rhythm of her mother's heartbeat. Later, as Mom and Dad rock baby in their arms and in the cradle, humming or singing softly, a bond of love between parent and child is created.

Creating a musical environment for your child does more than provide moments of contentment and affection. It enhances his physical and intellectual development by stimulating his brain and senses.

Babies have a great sensitivity to sound, and they love to hear their parents' voices. Parents can make music part of the daily routine of meal times and bath time, singing to baby as they tend to him, and listening to him gurgle and coo in response.

When music is part of baby's life and continues to play an active role through the years, the child's life will be healthier and richer. A child is too young to enjoy and respond to music. Research shows that children who learn to play musical instruments at an early age will also have an educational advantage.

Music's importance does not diminish as your child moves through adolescence to adulthood.

One of the reasons given for the serious student drop-out rate in Victoria schools is that students don't feel connected. There is nothing to match music for uniting and motivating people and building relationships and communities. High school students involved in music have better attendance records, stay in school longer and do better academically. Could the erosion of music and performing arts from our curriculum be one of the contributors to the high dropout rate in our high schools? For our students, music could be the difference between being in a rut and being in a groove. The student dropout rate in Victoria schools is

Experiences of the first five years last the rest of our lives. Therefore the presence of music in a child's life starts with the parents. Enrol your child in music as early as possible. Go to community dances and musical events. If you as parents love and respect music and make it an essential part of your lives, then your child will blossom.

Let's make the sound of music a daily part of our lives.

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