



## Exciting New Program for Young Children on the East End - MusikGarten

MUSIKGARTEN PROGRAM REPLACING KINDERMUSIC PROGRAM

I am please to inform you that I will be offering a completely new music and movement program based on curriculum created by MusikGarten. I have taught the Kindermusik curriculum for over 7 years and although I found it exciting to offer such a creative program....still, I am always asking the questions, "But how do children learn to read Music?" "What is the best way to offer appropriate music activities to 1 year olds, 2 year olds, 3 year olds, 4 year olds and 5 year olds?" How can I contribute to the development of the whole child?" How do we capture the magic and wonderment of the Young Child? I am not alone in these queries. Some the most gifted of thinkers in early childhood education have come up with some unique answers to many of these ponderous questions. Montessori was the first to address the developmental needs of the young child; Kodaly taught children using solfege and "ta" and "ti-ti"; Dalcroze created eurythmics; Suzuki presented prenatal music; more recently we have Lorne Heyge and Audrey Sillick who were the founders of Kindermusik. Five years ago they sold the Kindermusik program and moved in a new direction based on the questions stated above. As I continued to teach the Kindermusik curriculum I kept tabs with Lorna, speaking to her on the phone and attending her excellent workshops. I began to notice that the Kindermusik programs were not meeting the

needs of the children in my studio. Yes the packaging was prettier and glitzier (and more expensive), yes it seemed more entertaining, and yes by the final year of Kindermusik children were being introduced to formal music instruction through the glockenspiel, and dulcimer and recorder. Yet I could see the children beginning to show signs of unrest, that perhaps we were not necessarily following their musical needs but rather the time schedule of a prepackaged music program. I wanted a program that would move and change with the children. Boy, have I have grown as a teacher! Like a butterfly bursting out of its cocoon I am now ready to use the superior program that Lorna and Audrey have developed. You will find the home CD's to be artfully arranged with high quality music selections. Skill work will be carefully sequenced throughout the classes. Nature themes will be incorporated throughout the year. This program flows with the children as shown in the two-year-old program that we used last semester. So join me this next year as we embark on a journey that is grounded in the latest answers to those questions about early child and lets have fun together.

**Boys and Girls come out to play**

**The sun is shining as light as day,**

**Leave your teddies and leave your toys**

**And come to play with the girls and boys.**

### IMPORTANT DATES !!!!

Classes begin the week of the September 11th. I am scheduling special parents meetings on Thursday evening September 7<sup>th</sup> beginning at 7 p.m. and on Saturday morning September 9<sup>th</sup> at 10 a. m. I expect at least one parent of a registered child to attend one of these sessions so I can properly introduce the program, go through studio policy, answer questions and hand out any material for the classes. **Mark these dates on the calendar and plan to be there!!!**

Please read the article the back of this page reprinted from the parent site of Musikgarten.org - written by Jill Hannagan, Hockessin Music School, Delaware.

This is a very exciting time to be involved in music education. Recent research has revealed so much about how we learn in general, and more specifically, how we learn music. We no longer proceed on the premise that a few chosen people are talented and the rest of us would be better off to confine our singing to the shower. We now know that all of us are born with an aptitude for music, and that music aptitude, like intelligence, is normally distributed. We also know that music aptitude

diminishes if it is not nurtured by early and repeated appropriate experiences. This means that a person's ability to fulfill his music potential is determined by both his innate music aptitude and the quality of his early music experiences.

We also know that we learn music the same way we learn language. Therefore, if we examine the way a child learns the language of his culture, we will have a guide as to what is an appropriate early-childhood music experience.

Using fiber optic cameras, Dr. Alfred Tomatis discovered that a five-month-old fetus is capable of hearing and responding to the sounds of language. This means that babies are absorbing the sounds and rhythms of their native language from as early as five months in utero. Since most children do not begin to speak until sometime near the end of their first year, it is safe to say that they were bathed in the sounds and rhythms of their language for well over a year before actually being expected to speak. They will then spend many months experimenting with isolated words, eventually combining them to make phrases. With the passage of even more time, they will be able to speak in complete sentences. All the while, we continue to bathe them in language, never considering the idea of "holding out on them" until they are ready to answer us in complete sentences. It is the very fact that we continue to talk to them, regardless of their ability to respond, that allows children to become fluent in language. In this sense, children are not taught language, they acquire language when:

1. They have a strong aural foundation comprised of their sensory experiences while in utero and during their first years of life;

2. They are given ample time to organize and assimilate those experiences;
3. The sensory experiences have an emotional component.

In a 1997 special edition of Newsweek devoted to brain development, Janellen Hullocker of the University of Chicago, suggests that, "Information embedded in an emotional context seems to stimulate neural circuitry more powerfully than information alone." This idea is substantiated by neuropsychologist and educator Carla Hannaford, Ph.D., who states in her book *Smart Moves: Why Learning is Not All in Your Head*, "In order to learn something, there must be sensory input, a personal emotional connection and movement...Emotions interpret each experience and help us to organize it in terms of our view of the world."

From this information we can conclude that live music making provides the child with a much richer sensory and emotional experience than recorded music could ever hope to. In fact, it's hard to imagine a more sensorially and emotionally charged experience than that of a mother singing to and dancing with her child. The baby is not only hearing her voice, he is feeling the vibration of her voice as his head rests on her chest, he smells the familiar scent of her body, all the while his vestibular system is being stimulated by the rocking, bouncing and spinning of their dance. This is a far cry from a baby lying in his crib listening to a cassette.

So in answer to a mother's question, "What in the world do you teach babies?" I would have to say: The goal of all my parent/child music classes is not to teach anything! Rather, it is to

guide parents and children as they engage in musical activities that will help the child fulfill his music potential; it is to bathe them in the sounds and rhythms of the music of our culture; it is to provide an environment which encourages musical interaction between parents and children, and gives parents the chance to get ideas from other parents as they make music with their children; it is to guide parents as to what movements are most beneficial for development; it is to pass on the songs and rhymes that are part of our cultural heritage; and it is to add to the collection of emotional, sensory experiences that will make up the aural foundation on which all future music learning will be based.

Having said all that, my primary goal for both the parents and children in my classes is that they experience the joy of making music with others. The feeling created by engaging in active music making with other people is quite special and becomes even more special when experienced by parents and children together.