

- Ask your teen to describe what they like about their favorite music.
- Tell your teen about the potential risk of lifelong hearing loss by listening to music too loudly, especially with headphones or “ear buds.”
- Be patient as they listen to different types of music. They are exploring and developing their identity for adulthood.

There is so much recorded music available for children. Discovering music together can be lots of fun. Use your local library as a resource to explore and “try out” different kinds of music. You can also use the Internet to sample the sounds of different artists through music Web sites or read about what music reviewers post on blogs. Warn your child about computer security risks and copyright issues with music sharing sites.

However you decide to enjoy music, trust your own ears and have fun making and listening to music with your child.

TO LEARN MORE

- Children’s Resource Line (206) 987-2500 or (866) 987-2500 toll-free Washington, Alaska, Montana, Idaho
- Your Child’s Health-Care Provider

Children’s will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Please call Marketing Communications at (206) 987-5205.

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Children’s Hospital. However, your child’s needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child’s health-care provider.

Music and Your Child

From the youngest babies to senior citizens, almost all people respond to music. Babies in the womb respond to their mothers’ singing or the sound of a stereo by moving around or “dancing.” Many people like to sing or move their bodies to their favorite music.

Researchers have found that listening to music and especially playing music uses many areas of the brain. In fact, it even helps the brain develop and helps children learn language and math skills.

Music can also promote parent-child bonding by giving family members a free activity to enjoy together.

Here are some tips for how to share music with your child.

Babies:

- Smile, look into your baby’s eyes and sing.
- Play music in your home.
- Sing special songs or use recorded music to ease transitions such as nap, bath, bedtime and outings.



Toddlers:

- Sing songs and do finger plays – one example is the Itsy Bitsy Spider.
- Sing the ABC song to help your child learn to say letters.
- Use songs like the Hokey Pokey or Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes to help your child identify body parts.
- Use music to promote movement and get your child dancing.
- Try singing a song to distract and console your child during tough times. It often helps parents through stressful moments.
- Encourage your child to clap along to music.
- Introduce your child to different kinds of music.

Preschoolers:

- As your child stops taking naps, try using music in their room during quiet time.
- If your child attends preschool, ask if music is used during the day. If not, ask the school to start a music time.
- Encourage your child to listen for the beat in music and use different body parts to keep the rhythm. Try clapping hands, stomping feet or shifting weight from side to side.
- Practice listening when you go different places and play a “What sounds can you hear?” game.
- Make homemade instruments. Some ideas are adding rice or beans in a plastic container with a lid for a

shaker, putting rubber bands on a shoe box for a toy guitar and using pots and pans for a drum set.

- Use music to help your child understand concepts such as up/down, loud/soft and start/stop. Try moving a scarf up and down to model movement of a melody.
- Attend performances and talk about the music afterward.
- Have your child “make a performance” for your family at home.

School-Age:

- Listen to different kinds of music.
- Encourage your child to notice music in different public settings.
- If your child shows an interest in an instrument, is physically able to play it and can focus their attention on one thing for more than 15 minutes, consider formal music lessons.
- If your child has not had much experience with music, encourage them to clap and move their body to the beat of music.
- Find music that your child enjoys and encourage them to play this music when they are dealing with tough emotions.
- Find music that your child can relax with and consider using that music at bedtime.

Teens:

- Show interest in the music your teenager likes.
- Find lyrics to your teen’s favorite songs and make time to review the lyrics while listening to the music.