PLAYful Musical Environments that Foster Learning:

Listening, Making, and Moving to Music in Early Education Settings

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In Language

Conversation - easy to create and improvise even by 3 years old!

In Music

? Most symphony players do not create or improvise.

Stages of Music Development

(audio)
- Absorption - a 3-month old just listening
- Random Responses - a 5-month old kicking
- Purposeful Responses - eye contact, engaging
- Imitation - not recognizing differences yet
- Assimilation - recognizing differences and correcting using the breath and movement
- Absorption never stops. [Older kids listening live on stage next to Baltimore Symphony players.]
Toddler twins chatting
(audio)

Creativity/Improvisation

Diego's Melody
Diego (3 years old)
Musical “diet”: an analogy

Chicken wings or salmon souffle?
Why not both?
And then add Thai food,
chocolate covered ants,
and sushi, too!

Everything you need to know about music:

- Tones
- Rhythm
- Melody
- Harmony
- Expression
- Timbre
Tonal Content and Context

Melodies are made up of tones and rhythms. Tones need a place to end called a “resting tone.” This provides context.

Once understood in the voice and ear, the resting tones can be named:

DO, RE, MI, FA, SO, LA, LA, TI

Rhythm Content and Context

Rhythms make sense when there are two kinds of beats: BIG beats and little beats. This provides a context for rhythms.

The biggest pieces missing in early childhood music education:

- one-on-one interactions
- musical conversations
- spontaneous music making
  with no agenda but to PLAY
  **MUSICALLY**
The biggest piece to try to eliminate during music playtime?

**TALKING**

Talking distracts the child’s aural learning brain from the musical components.

Talking and noise short-circuit music learning.

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**Takeaways:**

- Just be musically playful with children—and with yourselves too. Spontaneously.
- Interact individually with children—tonally and rhythmically.
- Play great music and be expressive.
- For babies and toddlers, get into their world. Don’t always be trying to bring them into yours.
- Sing, dance, play, be happy, and just have fun!

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This vision is a tall order, but

*Remember, it’s for the children.*

*Take it one small musical interaction at a time.*

*When in doubt, just remember to sing, chant, move, and dance!*
Thank you!

Please be in touch.

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Music to move to: playlists on Spotify
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www.bit.ly/DrEric2, 3, 4, 5