

DOWNTOWN BALTIMORE CHILDREN'S CENTERS DBCC NEWS

DOWNTOWN BALTIMORE CHILD CARE, Inc.
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August 2008

PUT MUSIC IN YOUR CHILD'S LIFE

By Susan Sandstrom

Many parents have children who are very musical. These children love to listen to music and even as babies were soothed by it or danced whenever they heard a tune. So, how do you encourage musical ability or better yet (since we know children learn through play) how do you allow children to play with music while they are so young?

As a classroom teacher I wanted to model making music, thereby encouraging children to make music themselves. That's why I was never shy to practice my violin in the classroom for 5 minutes (any longer and

the children would definitely complain). One year I thought the children should also have access to musical instruments so they could play an instrument along with me. I went to many garage sales to buy used musical instruments for the children to play.

I purchased several drums, a trumpet, rhythm instruments, an Autoharp, a violin, a couple of ukuleles and a clarinet and slowly introduced them all, emphasizing their delicate nature. After months of child initiated music making, many of the instruments had to be thrown away-but it was a glorious year of music!

The children loved playing the instruments. The classroom had a raised staging area where the instruments were displayed and we had lots of music. Often I accompanied the group on the guitar. Several of the children showed real aptitude on the instruments. One little boy could sit behind a set of drums (a snare drum, bass drum and symbol) and keep perfect time tapping out rhythms. Sometimes the cacophony of our musical group actually hit a rather lyrical passage, and we'd all stop and applaud.

Children built microphones out of blocks. Children wrote songs and we displayed them on the wall and

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Debria, Morgan, Lindsey and Isaac enjoying the sprinkler!



**BUY A YANKEE CANDLE AND HELP
SUPPORT DBCC'S SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM!**

See page 3 for details. Thanks for your generous support!

PUT MUSIC IN YOUR CHILD'S LIFE

(Cont'd. from page 1)

learned to sing them. Children put on concerts, made tickets, learned to be an audience and to be a performer. Sometimes, days would pass and no one picked up an instrument but there were also intense periods of musical activity that lasted for weeks. Children practiced on the instruments and it was interesting to see which children were drawn to a particular instrument.

Marshall was four years old, had no father in his life and his mother was addicted to drugs. He rode the school bus to school and entered the classroom at full speed. He was often angry, extremely active and always had a hard time settling into productive play in the classroom. He grabbed toys and threw them, he broke things, and he spilled every glass of milk ever poured for him. Before too long he was driving everybody crazy!

Marshall was rough with the instruments. I always made a point to join him so I could supervise his activities, but I let him play with the instruments for as long as he liked. Life changed for Marshall the morning I put out the clarinet for the first time. He loved the clarinet. I showed him how to take it apart and how to fix the reed. [I bought reeds by the case that year because we could go through several in a morning.] The introduction of the clarinet changed Marshall's morning routine. He came into the classroom and went directly to the clarinet. He started every day playing the clarinet. He played and played, rarely making a pleasing sound but he didn't care. He walked around the room tooting and after about 15 or 20 minutes, the clarinet was put back and his behavior was much calmer and more focused. The clarinet seemed to have a soothing effect on him. Eventually, when Marshall was out of control, we began sending him to play the clarinet. "Marshall, I think you need to play the clarinet. Go play the clarinet!" It worked every time! [I ran into Marshall's mother years later and she told me he was a teenager now and doing very well. He loved sports and was in the school band playing, what else, the clarinet.]

What follows are some suggestions to foster an interest in music for young children:

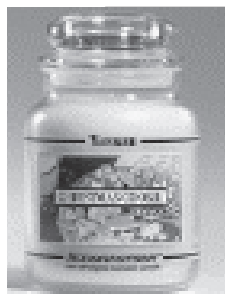
- As soon as your child is old enough allow your child to have a CD player of his/her own. They make CD players for very young children now. A child will quickly learn to handle a CD player but s/he will be rough with it so buy a very cheap one or one specifically for young children. If you have the technology, burn a few CDs for him/her to use on his/her own, recite a favorite story, sing some songs, etc.
- Go to outdoor concerts in the summer. Keep it fun and if need be, leave before it is over, without making a big deal of it. Sometimes a walk up to the orchestra or band is helpful so your child can see the instruments. Indoor concerts are fun too. Just being in a concert hall may feel exciting to your child.
- One of the most popular instruments at DBCC is the djembe drum. It is the perfect height for a toddler and they love to bang on it with their hands. Drums are wonderful for young children but don't spend too much money so you begin to worry about your drum investment. Things will break.
- Sing! Sing in the car, sing at home, make up silly songs, sing at dinner, sing all the time. It is a happy, fun thing to do and you will be surprised at how quickly your child imitates you. Being a good singer is not a prerequisite!
- One of the best instruments for a three or four year old is the ukulele. An old tie can be a strap to hold it up and the tuning doesn't really matter. Ukuleles are cheap enough so you don't have to fret about your child wrecking it. Find them in any music store. If your child is interested in an instrument, please avoid lessons until s/he is MUCH older - unless you find a teacher that understands that young children learn very differently from school age children. You don't want to kill the interest!
- Another great prop is a microphone. I preferred having a block microphone in my classroom; one that children built out of unit blocks, but it is also fun to have a real microphone. I would often hear those quiet shy children singing into the microphone very softly at the back of the classroom!
- Play a variety of music for your child. You will

find that s/he may be drawn to a particular style of music. One class I had played a Mahler symphony every day! Another class obsessed on Michael Jackson's Thriller. Children's music is fine but don't limit your child to only children's music. Remember, you have rights too, and your child doesn't need to be the music dictator in the car. Variety is good for everyone!

Musical education is magical. Studies now show the importance of music in cognitive development, mathematics, critical thinking skills and creativity.

It is important for your child to have fun musical experiences even if you are not a musical person. The key is to have fun with your child and, who knows, you could be encouraging the next musical prodigy!

BUY A YANKEE CANDLE AND HELP SUPPORT DBCC's SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM!



DBCC is trying a new fundraiser! We are selling Yankee Candles. Tuition and fees only cover 90% of DBCC's operating expenses, so DBCC needs to raise funds.

DBCC will earn 41 cents for every Yankee Candle sales dollar. This year we are setting a goal of \$8,000 in sales, and the profit will help fund our scholarship program. We encourage you to purchase items and extend this offer to neighbors, friends, relatives and co-workers. You may view the brochure at www.yankeefundraising.com and then call or email your orders to DBCC.

- The Yankee Candle Sale starts immediately and will continue through Friday September 26, 2008.
- Even though DBCC is a non-profit organization, we must charge a 6% sales tax.
- Delivery is expected on November 11, 2008.
- Please make checks out to DBCC, Inc.

Thanks in advance for your generous support! If you have any questions, please email us at evelyno@dbcckids.org or call DBCC at 410-669-1010.

CHILDSPEAK

• **Julia Mammen**, age 4, wants a "zucchini bathing suit."

• **Nora Clemons**, age 3, was injured in a freak accident at her dance recital and received 10 stitches on her face. Her twin brother, **Walter**, saw the stitches and said, "Why do you have a ladder on your face?"

• **Julia Mammen**, age 5, asked Center Director, Edith, "M's Edith, do you and Susan live together?" (Susan is the Education Director.)

"No," replied Edith.

"Then how do you know her?" asked Julia.

• **Ramona Pyke**, age 4, was talking to her mother on the phone. Mom was out of town and calling to say goodnight. As was their ritual, Mom said, "I smooch you."

Ramona paused and said "You can't, mommy, you're somewhere else."

• Dad said, "Gee, how did it get to be 8 o'clock all ready?" **Julia Mammen**, age 4, said, "I don't know. I should have brought my stop watch!"

• **Kayla Robeson**, age 4, usually greets Susan in the office every morning. Her mom said, "Do want to go say hi to Susan?"

Kayla replied, "I'll do it tomorrow!"

• **Joey Caporizzo**, age 3, and his mom were in the post office talking to a man who worked there.

The man left and Joey asked, "Why did he have to go?"

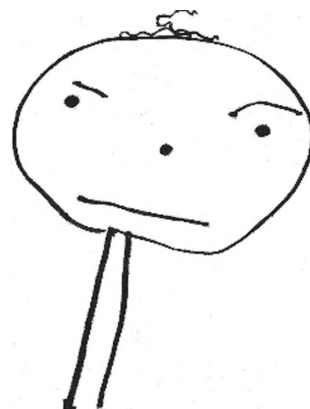
His mom explained to him that it was time for him to go home and see his family and be with his wife.

Joey was quiet for a moment, looked up at his mother and said, "Do we have a wife?"

• **Julia Mammen**, age 4, has been saying she doesn't want to be a grown-up.

"Why?" asked her mother.

"Because I won't be able to laugh the same way."



Daddy,
by Josie
Kalbfleisch.
age 3

DBCC's 5-YEAR CLUB

It's that time of year again . . . time to say goodbye to families who have been with DBCC for five or more years. We acknowledge these families because they have made a special long-term commitment to DBCC. We call it the 5-Year Club!

♥ **Curtis and Melanie Adams** enrolled their son, **Trey**, in 1998 as an infant and Director Edith Garrett was Trey's Care Provider! Trey is now 10 years old and attending McDonough School. The year Trey left DBCC, **Emily** started at DBCC as an infant! Emily is now 5 years old and ready to join her brother at McDonough School! We have delighted in watching Trey and Emily grow and develop over the years and they will always have a place in our hearts! Curtis and Melanie have been two of our favorite parents - always supportive and understanding, generous and loving. We will truly miss Curtis, Melanie, Trey and Emily! All the best in the coming years!

♥ **George and Kate Chang** brought their daughter, **Grace**, to DBCC in 1996. Grace is a dancer and will be starting the ninth grade at the High School for the Performing Arts. Then, 8 years later, **Julien** started at DBCC. He is entering the third grade at Roland Park Elementary School. **Isaac** started at DBCC in 2005 and he will be joining Julien at Roland Park in the fall. It has been a pleasure watching the children grow through the years! George and Kate, thank you for your support over the years. We will miss seeing you and the children!

♥ **Patrick and Rhonda Okolo** started **Sage** at DBCC in 2002 when Sage was three years old. Sage is now 8 and attends Bryn Mawr School. **Patrick** started at DBCC two years later in 2004 and he will be attending Bryn Mawr Little School for kindergarten. Best of luck Patrick and Rhonda and your wonderful family! We will miss seeing you everyday. Thank you for all of your support over the years!

♥ **Karen French and Michael Lamason** started their son, **Jacob**, at DBCC in 2003. He now attends Southwest Charter School. His sister, **Elega**, started at DBCC in 2005. She will be joining her brother at Southwest Charter in the fall. It has been a pleasure watching the children grow and getting to know the family. Thank you Karen and Michael for your support over the years!

Where are DBCC's Children going to Elementary School?

Roland Park Elementary School - 7
Mt. Washington Elementary School - 5
Southwest Charter Elementary School - 2
Midtown Academy - 2
Federal Hill - 1
Waverly Elementary - 1
Rodwell Elementary School - 1
Liberty Elementary School - 1
Gilmore Elementary School - 1
Mt. Royal Elementary School - 1
Grace and St. Peter's School - 1
Bryn Mawr School - 1
Bryn Mawr Little School - 1
McDonough School - 1
Father Kolbe school - 1
Bradley Hills Elementary School,
Bethesda, MD - 1

IT'S A GIRL! IT'S A BOY!

 DBCC Substitute Teacher, Aisha Washington is a mom! **Clifton Lewis Boston III** was born on April 4, 2008 and weighed 7 lbs. 14 oz. Congratulations to Aisha, A'nya and Clifton!

 Mio is a big sister! **Teru Jenny Aoki** was born on May 29, 2008 and weighed 7 lbs. 2 oz. Congratulations to Mary, Yutaka and Mio!

 Mary is a big sister! **Lucy Beatrix Nichols** was born on June 16, 2008 and weighed 8 lbs. 4 oz. Congratulations to Hazel, George and Mary!

 Alum Maggie Menard is a big sister! **William "Will" Nelson Menard** was born on June 17, 2008 and weighed 3 lbs. 2 oz. Congratulations to Lizzy, Chris and Maggie!

 Alec is a big brother! **Gavin John Borer** was born on July 23, 2008 and weighed 7 lbs. 11 oz. Congratulations to Leilani, Mark and Alec!



Ask Aliceanna...

Dear Aliceanna,

My toddler is 14 months and very smart. He knows what he is doing and yet will deliberately do things that he is not supposed to do. If I reprimand him he will cry and sometimes he will try and hit me. Then, he will go right back and do it again. I find this behavior unacceptable but nothing I do seems to work. His latest trick is to hit me in the face for absolutely no reason and then laugh.

Help me understand his behavior, please!

Signed, Ineffective

Dear Ineffective,

It sounds like you have a very typical toddler. This is classic toddler behavior and probably the only way to get the behavior to stop using *your* tactics is to escalate them until your child is afraid of you. That will stop the behavior - but do you want your child to fear you? You are using *power* and *logic* to control his behavior and your baby is too young for that.

Okay let's remember some child development. Toddlers are just beginning to understand the world and learning how to move their body. You are the first teacher and you are giving your child data that adds to his knowledge everyday. Your child is always testing this data to see if it is valid. *If I hit mom will she always get that scrunched up face and loud talk? Yup! I can count on that same reaction. She gets that same face when I dump over the trash or pull her hair, too. I wonder what else will get that reaction? Wow! There is a whole lot of stuff that gets that face!*

Instead of reacting negatively, keep things positive. You know that he hits you when he is close to your face so be prepared to catch his hand, if possible. If he hits you, take his hand and say lovingly, *Gentle hands, gentle hands*. Don't get angry. Don't react negatively!

Baby proof your house. Keep the trash out of reach, distract him, have interesting things for him to explore. It is important to keep things positive and offer acceptable alternatives because attention is attention to a young child. They really don't care if it is positive or negative attention as long as they get attention. So make sure the attention is positive. Your child is just building his self-esteem and figuring out who he is. You don't want your child to decide *I am someone who always makes people scrunch up their face and get angry*.

Your child is too young to reprimand for negative behavior. Save the sharp tone and angry face when eminent danger or safety is involved. But keep even those reactions to a minimum or the cycle will start all over again.

Aliceanna recommends reading some child development books. Try Your One Year Old by Louise Bates Ames and Frances Ilg. It's an oldie but a goodie and DBCC keeps multiple copies in the office. You are welcome to borrow it!

[Aliceanna loves to answer your questions. You may email her and put Aliceanna in the subject line or drop your question in the office]



A large branch fell onto the playground and Jeremiah collected a trophy!

Janusz is an expert on the horizontal ladder!



.....Children and Contingencies.....

As children discover how to live with others in this world, it is vital that they perceive that they are truly responsible for their own behavior. Tempting as it is for parents to manage and micro-manage their children's actions, the most lasting gift they can give youngsters is the ability to cope with life issues, both large and small. With young children, we are talking about learning how to complete tasks, to manage time, to follow directions, and to understand that they bear responsibility for what happens.

A contingency is something, usually desirable in the child's mind, which is related to a prior action having been completed. For example, if a child has responsibility for picking up toys BEFORE story time each evening, story time is contingent on the completion of that task. Here's an example from the social realm: If a child has been screaming at a sibling, cooling off and calming down must occur before the child can again enjoy being in the company of the family. The first behavior must occur before the second--the contingent and desirable activity--can occur. Parents make clear that it is the child alone who is making the decision about when to complete the first requirement.

Contingencies really help children experience their own power to control events in their lives, rather than having all-powerful parents or other adults totally in charge of everything. The advantage to relying on contingencies (to allow children to develop understanding of how to complete tasks and manage time) is that they have the responsibility for what happens, instead of being able to resent those grownups that swoop in with limits and punishments.

For adults, contingencies help prevent a lot of nagging. The need for lectures disappears. If adults talk at all, it is to reinforce how the child's decisions and actions lead to desirable results: "Goodness, you got the

toys picked up so quickly tonight we might have time for an extra story." Or, to gently point out the true connection: "I'm sorry it took you so long to calm down. Jason has to go to bed now, but you can finish your game with him tomorrow." With contingencies, parents have the responsibility to follow through.

While guiding children with contingencies does not make life painless for either parents or children, their consistent use helps children come to recognize their own responsibility in controlling their actions - pretty powerful tools, when you think about it.

Excerpt from Growing Child: Grandma Says

You can receive a free subscription of Grandma Says at www.GrowingChild.com/FreeGrandmaSays

(c) Growing Child 2008



*Wanikiya with an octopus in the water table.
His class was studying invertebrates!*



If people throw trash in the ocean they might get sick and also the animals that live in the ocean - even the mermaids.

Lindsey Brown, age 5

Getting Ready for a Change

As the school year draws to a close, parents, teachers and children begin to anticipate a change from the familiar. Most children will be in new classrooms with different teachers and classmates. How can parents help?

It's important that parents not make a BIG DEAL out of the change of classroom (or the new school). If too much importance is placed on this, a child's anxiety grows. It becomes difficult though because parents naturally get excited about the change and children are great experts at reading their parents reactions. If parents talk too much about the new classroom or how they are going to be one of the big kids at school, children will worry and fret ("... but I'm still little."). A good time to discuss the change is when your child brings it up or if she doesn't mention it, talk about it the last week or two of school. Teachers will have all ready laid the foundations for discussion. Remember, children do better if they don't have to wait very long for an upcoming event.

It is very helpful if parents can spend some time--even a few minutes--in the new classroom with their child for several days during the last week of school in the morning (or afternoon, if there's time).

It is very important for children to have information about things that may seem obvious to an adult. Reassure your child that some things may be different--new classroom, new teacher and some new friends--but most things will be the same. He'll still get to school the same way (car, light rail, etc.), he'll still have breakfast at school, he'll still go outside on the playground, he'll still play in the classroom ("I wonder if your teacher knows how to make cookies?"), he'll still bring his lunch to school, etc., AND, most importantly, mom (or dad or grandma) will pick him up at school and take him home every afternoon.

Don't be surprised if your child has some separation problems for the first few days--even if she's been at DBCC for a while. It's still a change. Be sure to keep the teachers informed about how you want to say goodbye to your child in the morning ("It would be a big help if you came to the window with us every morning." etc.) and any other important information you feel they may need. It is very helpful for teachers to receive written notes about your preferences. Teachers try hard to communicate with their team but it's very easy to forget things when you're caring for a classroom full of little children. So, since schedules change, you want every teacher in the classroom to have the same information. Everyone will see a written note.

How do the teachers help their new students adjust?

Even though the children are still in their old classrooms, teachers are taking every opportunity to get to know their new students. A teacher's first job is to develop a relationship with each child and it makes the

job easier if the teachers start early. Once the children are in their new classrooms the teacher will concentrate on developing these relationships learning to "read" each child to see what he or she needs and trying to provide it.

Teachers are also establishing the all important routines. Children need to be able to predict what is going to happen in their life and only then do they feel secure and safe. We hear teachers in these early days often telling the children: "We're going to go have a story and then eat lunch." Children need to know that to expect. Soon, the children will know they can depend on the daily schedule which gives them a feeling of control in their life.

The classroom limits are also set in these early days. These are the basic rules that are established as needed: Be gentle with your friends. Make sure what you're doing is safe. Stay with your teacher. Be careful of materials. The children will hear these words over and over again followed by the teacher's intervention if necessary. These limits help a child to feel safe and to develop trust. He learns that he can depend on his environment and the teacher for security.

So, the new school year is fast approaching! Don't worry too much because DBCC is very experienced in supporting children through this transition. However, many children eagerly embrace the change and view it as a promotion! Parents who need some encouraging words can call the center for an update on their child at any time. If parents call between 1:30 and 3:00 they can talk directly to the teacher. It won't take long before the children fall in love with their teachers and the teachers fall in love with their students--and school becomes an extension of home!

Susan Sandstrom



"The Giant and her Cell Phone" by Lindsey Brown, age 5



"People", by Merriwether King, age 4

REMEMBER #3537

It's workplace giving time again. Please consider helping DBCC's kids with a designated pledge.



Polly and Saleigha at the water table

For the United Way Campaign,
just use our name and address,
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For both the Combined Campaign
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- MD State (MCC), use

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*Childhood should be
a journey, not a race.*