**USING MUSIC FOR FUN AND STRESS MANAGEMENT FOR CHILDREN**

Music is a universal way that we relax. The same is true for children. Aside from exercise it may be the most studied and effective method of benefitting from recreation and leisure time activities.

In the short time that COVID 19 has affected worldwide culture and created a need to practice safe distancing the following activities are offered as a means of enabling your children to benefit from in home music activities. The activities are not exhaustive. You can do the recommended activities with your children or grandchildren and do them together as a family. You can modify the activities to accommodate the age and musical experience of your child. The most important thing is to have fun together.

**There a list of supplies such as percussive instruments that can be made from Tupperware, spoons, headphones, etc. that you can gather for children before beginning.**

**Introduce a structure to your lessons. For example:**

 **Opening activity**

 **Child picked activity**

 **Instructor/parent picked activity**

 **Movement based activity (dance, clap, etc.)**

 **Child picks a song to share and discuss**

 **Parent picks a song to share and discuss**

 **Parent shares something from your home**

 **Child shares something from their home**

**Have a rough lesson plan and stick to it unless your child is very engaged and suggests specific activities.**

**Don’t be afraid to direct your child’s activities.**

**Ask your children a lot of questions.**

* **Homemade instruments:**

Simple ideas include making percussion instruments such as drums and shakers (an oatmeal container with a balloon drum-skin sounds amazing).

More advanced children might be able to complete a homemade straw-pan flute. This should only be done with PARENTAL SUPERVISION at home, as a lighter is used to close the straws.

[Pan Flute Tutorial](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sglOT1J80Ss)

* **Dancing:**

Have a song that you and your child dances to every lesson. This can be done on a schedule, or as needed.

* **Sing Together:**

Sing a song with your child. Trade who will pick the song. Take the opportunity to share some of your favorite songs with your children.

* **Clapping/Stomping:**

Without instruments, clapping, stomping, finger-snapping, tongue clicking, etc., can be used for percussion.

Try the following games:
HORSE: Same concept as the basketball game. Parent “plays” a pattern and child must replicate; parent and student can switch roles.

Similar to the electronic game, the parent begins with a single percussive note. The child then repeats this note. Parent then plays the first note and a new note; child repeats. The pattern continues as the pattern gets longer and more complex. As soon as the child or parent fail to replicate the pattern, the round is over. After round 1, switch roles.

* **Rhythm Cups:**

Use plastic solo cups as percussive instruments. They can be clapped in many different ways to produce a multitude of tones and patterns. These can be used with the HORSE or Simon games, or can be used for instructor and student to collaborate together.

* **Water Glasses:**

Demonstrate to your children how wine glasses can be used with water to produce different tones. If appropriate, children can participate along at home.

[Wine Glasses with Water](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BTbwlgEUSPk)

Additionally, water glasses can be played like chimes. This should only be done with guardian approval and supervision:

[Water Glass Chimes](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oGj1rZEu1y8)

* **Name That Tune:**

Instructor chooses a song that the student is vaguely familiar with. The child has a total of 5 seconds to guess the song. Points are awarded in the following way:

Parent begins playing the song and keeps track of the countdown

from 5 to 0.

Child guesses the song. However many seconds remain is the number of points the child is awarded. For example: a child guesses the song in 3 seconds; 2 seconds remain, so the student is awarded 2 points. Next round: Child guesses the song immediately, before the first second can expire; child is awarded 5 points. Next round: Child struggles to identify the song until the last moment, one second remains, and child is awarded 1 point.

This can also be modified for multiple children by having students “bet” how many seconds they can identify the song in. Whoever bets the fewest points participates first. If the guessing child fails, the other children are allowed to steal the points if they can identify the song in the “wagered” number of seconds or fewer.

* **Percussion Alternatives:**

Spice canisters or vitamin bottles, etc., can be used as shakers.

Use an ironing board as a surface for percussion. A step ladder might also work.

* **Introduce Children to YOUR Set-up:**

Share your music set up such as instruments, listening equipment, etc., with children. For example, in the last few years I dove into record collecting and bought a quality turntable and amplifier. Many children may not have experience with music outside of YouTube or other digital media--share how you listen to music with your children.

If you own various instruments or recording equipment you can also show your children your pedal-board set-ups and demonstrate the various effects. Explain to the child what each one does and have your children dictate what pedals to turn on and experiment with different combinations. Think about having your pedal-board set-up in front of you for the first time and all the crazy combinations of sounds you’d want to explore--bring that passion to your children.

* **Use Stuffed Animals:**

Use stuffed animals, action figures, etc., as characters during your video-lessons. This will keep things exciting and fun, especially with younger children.

* **Show-and-Tell:**

At the end of every lesson, set a few minutes aside for the child to share something from home that they care about. This could be a favorite stuffed animal, toy, decoration, etc.

* **Chrome Music Lab:**

Employee these “music games”, exploring them might inspire an idea for an activity you could do with them.

[Chrome Music Lab](https://musiclab.chromeexperiments.com)

* [Spectrogram](https://musiclab.chromeexperiments.com/Spectrogram/)
	+ This is a visual representation of the spectrum of frequencies of a signal as it varies with time and intensity.
	+ Useful for teaching the **concept of frequency** and the range of frequencies humans can hear.
* [Chords](https://musiclab.chromeexperiments.com/Chords/)
	+ Very useful for visual aid for teaching major and minor Chords on **Piano**

<https://www.myinstants.com/favorites/> - Started collecting sound effects.

**Watch Music Videos Together**. This integrates both music, dance and performance. Discuss this with your children.

The above recommended activities are far from exhaustive. Remember the goal is to have fun, play together in these difficult times, and allow music and the arts to benefit you and your family.