



SANTA ROSA AREA MUSIC TOGETHER NEWS

A newsletter for Music Together families in Santa Rosa, Windsor, and Healdsburg.

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Normal Behaviors, Acceptable Behaviors

Hmmm... A few parents have asked me lately, "What do I do when my two year old child runs in class?" Or "What should I do if my child continues to throw the egg shakers after I have told him not to?" And, "I feel so bad when my child pushes other children, what can I do?"

Making the distinction between normal behavior and acceptable behavior is an extremely useful way to approach classroom issues. For example, if a 12 month-old tosses her egg, this is a normal behavior, she's likely not throwing it at anyone, but simply trying to see what happens when she lets go. If a two-year-old is throwing eggs, there's some force behind it, this can become a problem. A simple statement like "eggs are for shaking not throwing" (sung of course) is usually enough but sometimes we might have to enlist the help of all the parents in the room. Two-year-olds throw and have little impulse control. These children just need our help while they are learning what is appropriate and what is not. If a three-year-old is throwing eggs, it's appropriate to set limits and expect compliance. We can appeal to their sense of "grown-up-ness": Singing something like "You're a big girl/boy now, so I know you can understand me when I ask you not to throw eggs."

There is no one right way to deal with any behavioral issue in class. The best thing to do is not to judge the behavior and to love and nurture each and every child through all these stages. Simply understanding that so much of what children do is absolutely normal for their age can take some pressure off parents.

If the behavior your child is dealing with on a particular day seems really distracting to you, it probably is, and in this case you might need to step outside the room just to take a break. Sometimes that few minutes away is all they need. Other times, more likely for older children, stepping outside the room can work as a consequence, not that the child is bad, not even that the behavior is bad, the behavior is just not appropriate for music class. If this is the case it could take a few times a class; **consistency** is the key. This really does work, I have witnessed it time and time again. In a few weeks you probably will not ever have to leave the room again. The key is how it is handled from the very first time the behavior presents itself. Again, consistency is the key.

Remember, there are a few things you can do to make it easier on your child. Arriving on time is important because it is difficult for a child to transition into an activity that is already started. Participation is essential; your child looks to you as an example on how to behave in the world. Finally, not talking in class is really important because you are your child's musical role model. Talking in class is simply not musical and can be very distracting for the children and the adults in class.

Thank you for reading this. We love working with all of you and your children and want you to have the best experience in music class possible! If you have any questions or thoughts, please e-mail. Your thoughts are important to us, after all it is music **together**.

Re-registration News...

• **Summer classes!** Summer session will run from Monday, July 7 through Friday, August 22. We will offer the same schedule of classes for summer as we have now. All summer classes are first-come, first-served, so they are all *wide open*. Look for the schedule in class, or go to www.santarosamusictogether.com to register online. You can register for a summer class any time, starting now! All summer classes are mixed-age.

• **Priority registration** for FALL session will begin Monday, May 19, and go until Friday, June 6. If you register in this 3-week period, you will be guaranteed your spot for fall session. You'll be given registration materials in class the week of May 19; *read your materials carefully!* I'll also send an email reminder out. You must pre-register for fall by check, since I am taking summer registrations on the website (I can't register two sessions at once!) **If you wish to change your class day or time in the fall, registering early in the priority period will put you in the best position to get your first choice to switch.** Fall session will start the week of September 15, and run for 10 consecutive weeks.

• **Fall Session** Look at the schedule you'll be given in class for the details, but basically the class offerings for fall will be the same as they are now, with one exception, hopefully. I'm hoping to re-open the Thursday afternoon Big Kids class, and mixed-age classes. When I find a new location for them, I'll let you know.

• **Why continue in music classes anyway?** The average stay in Music Together is about 2 years per child! Why do so many people consistently re-enroll? Most families choose to keep their children in classes for several sessions, because the development of music skills, like language development, is ongoing, continuing to build in a deep way with focused experiences. Brain research shows us that music aptitude can actually increase or decrease depending on environment. In other words "use it or lose it"! The brain is making important neural connections in early childhood that must continue to be exercised so they're not "pruned". In classes, you can be sure your child will have exposure to a meaningful and powerful group music-making experience each week!

And besides all that - it's a fun thing to keep doing with your children as they become older and more confident of their skills! We look forward to your family continuing this journey toward musical confidence and expression with us!

If you have any questions regarding your child's musical progress please ask your teacher about it, or call me (Ginger). I love to help parents interpret what's happening for their children from a developmental standpoint - it's such an amazing journey to watch your child grow through!

Please look at the calendar on the next page for important session dates.



Song Collections

In the **summer**, we use "Summer" collections, made up of songs chosen from the nine song collections used during the school year. There are three summer collections. The summer songs are carefully chosen to not include songs from the session just prior to or immediately following it, so you can enjoy some different songs.

Coming up in **fall**, we'll be using the Bongos song collection. This is honestly my favorite of the nine!! I can't wait to teach it again! It has a lot of old favorites like "She'll be Comin' Around the Mountain" and "Shoo Fly, Don't Bother Me" as well as some very cool original MT songs!



Demo Classes Coming Up

There will be four demonstration MT classes coming up before summer session. Experienced families are welcome to attend a demo as long as there's space - please contact me if you're interested! If you have friends who'd like to see what the program's all about, please send them my way!

The demos will be:
Wednesday, June 11 -
10:30 AM and 5:30 PM in Windsor and
Saturday, June 14 -
9:00 and 10:00 AM in Santa Rosa

Our Teaching Staff

I'm happy to report that our teaching staff of **Helen, Star Tom, and me (Ginger)** will be staying put for the summer and for next year, too. We all love what we do! We'll run basically the same schedule for summer and fall that we have this spring.

You can take a look at our "bios" on the website to read more about us. We are all delighted to be able to bring this wonderful curriculum to so many families!! Thanks for singing with us!



Regression is Review

Have you noticed that sometimes in class children regress to younger-child-like behaviors? Sometimes you may see an older child revisit early behaviors you thought she had outgrown. It's important to remember that, for young children, regression is a form of review, and that most children need to go back and practice early skills in order to keep building and refining their repertoire. How can you respond when you sense your child is regressing (in class or at home)? . . . Join her in the activity and at the level she shows you. If she becomes

shy or withdrawn, accept it, give her space, and keep participating yourself.



The Tiny Ones...

Congratulations to all families who have had a new baby since last fall! I love seeing the newborns in class, as they grow (fast!) and respond so stunningly to our music activities. With a very young baby in class, please remember to give yourself permission to adjust what the class is doing to fit the needs of your baby. If you never got the "infant suggestions" handout, ask your teacher for one. ...And don't forget - singing to your baby every day!



Big Kids' News!

"BKFM" -The new Music Together curriculum, called Big Kids Family Music™, will return in the fall. BKFM is a new 60-minute class geared for children ages 5 and 6. (To attend, your child must be 5 yrs. by the start of the session.) Adults still play an important role in this class, although the adults and children may have different musical roles. It's a fun class! We are hoping to meet Thursdays at 3:30 PM in Santa Rosa, like we used to. No prior Music Together experience is necessary.

Scheduling Make-Ups -Go to:

<http://makeups.musictogether.com>
 The access key is: **wiggle**
 (Also, www.santarosamusictogether.com has a link on the home page.)
Don't wait!! They get filled at the end of the session!! **The scheduler is best, but if you can't do it online, you can call me (Ginger) at 544-5747 to set one up by phone (don't email me for a make-up please!!) Thanks!**

MAY / JUNE

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
11 May	12 Week 7	13	14	15	16	17
	Regular classes	Regular classes	Regular classes	Regular classes	Regular classes	
18	19 Week 8	20	21	22	23	24
FALL 08 Pre-Registration:	Regular classes	Regular classes	Regular classes	Regular classes	Regular classes	
	Priority begins →					
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
	NO CLASS Memorial Day	Regular classes	Regular classes	Regular classes	Regular classes	
1 June	2	3 LAST DAY	4 LAST DAY	5 LAST DAY	6 LAST DAY	7
	Regular classes	Regular classes	Regular classes	Regular classes	Regular classes	Open registration for Fall Session begins
					Priority Reg. period ends!	
8	9 LAST DAY	10	11 Free Demo Classes - 10:30 AM & 5:30 PM in Windsor! - Tell your friends!!!	12	13	14 Free Demo Classes - 9:00 and 10:00 AM at Ellington Hall! - Tell your friends!!!
	Regular classes					

Summer Session Classes will begin on Monday, July 7!