Healing Young Hearts
A Handbook of Practical Teaching Material for Disaster Recovery

Part Two: Healing Young Hearts Through Music

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Part Two: Healing Young Hearts
Through Music

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Healing Young Hearts was produced by a volunteer multinational team of foreign and Chinese educators, writers and psycho-social experts, who joined together in a cooperative effort to assist children and teachers in China after the devastating Sichuan earthquake in 2008. The book was approved for use in school by the China National Ministry of Education, and was used by the International Red Cross, as well as UNICEF’s Child-friendly spaces projects within the quake zone.

It is our goal to provide “Healing Young Hearts: A Handbook of Practical Teaching Material for Disaster Recovery” to any school, NGO or government agency working with children affected by the disaster. This is possible because the authors of the handbook are accepting no profit from the printing of the material. We are devoted to providing teachers with the tools and training needed to help children along the difficult long-term road to recovery in the years following the earthquake.

Make Your Classroom a Haven of Healing

The Healing Young Hearts Handbook provides examples of activities and lesson plans that will aid the emotional healing of children traumatized by the earthquake. The material for different age groups may be incorporated into teaching curriculums during the ongoing recovery phase, or used by teachers and volunteers as a guide to create their own lesson plans tailored to the children's current emotional needs. The collection of activity worksheets, coloring pages, finger puppets, and character building stories for children can be used in classrooms or therapeutic recreational activities.

The practical teaching tools found in the handbook will equip teachers with material that can accelerate the children's recovery, and guide them along the path to a brighter, happier future. It is not a form of psychotherapy, but rather draws on the principles of positive psychology as children engage in uplifting activities and opportunities for emotional expression. It is possible for traumatized children to experience deep emotional healing, and we are convinced that teachers, and those working directly with the children, are in an excellent position to facilitate the process. The love and care they show each child will be the magic that brings about the miracle of recovery.
An Overview of the Healing Young Hearts Handbook

Part One: Healing Young Hearts Through Communication
Puppets, Character Building Stories, Drawing and Discussion

Children need to be able to discuss and express their fears, worries, hopes and dreams. Teachers can use the materials and activity suggestions in this handbook to facilitate active classroom communication. Children are magically drawn to puppets, and will often relate and interact with them more easily than with adults. They also love stories, and during a time when their world has been turned upside down, their young minds desperately need to hear tales that engender hope, love and personal triumph. Puppets and storytelling can be used to reach out to children who have been affected by disaster, both to comfort them as well as to encourage them to communicate.

Drawing is a nonverbal means of communication that allows children to express their feelings and work through conflict. This section provides lesson plan ideas, worksheets, stories, and tips for guiding children through activities that promote healthy communication skills.

A section for teenagers has been included detailing ways to use discussion circles in classroom settings to help teenagers recognize the positive and negative coping skills they employ in their reactions to stress. Examples of discussion circle topics, dialogues, and activities to use when leading group discussion is provided. Additionally, get-to-know-you style “icebreaker” questions, and worksheet activities designed to help young people identify and express emotions, are included.

Part Two: Healing Young Hearts through Music
Chasing Away the Shadows of Trauma with Music

Music is a medicine for broken hearts, a magic that heals wounded spirits. Therapeutic musical activities provide a healing emotional release for children haunted by the shadows of disaster. Untreated trauma can develop into problems that affect the way children interact and relate with others, affecting their performance in school, as well as their physical and mental health. Creative outlets involving musical activities can lift the effects of trauma. Often children and adults have no words to describe their pain, but the pure emotional release of participating in a creative art can aid in healing.

This section explains the principles of musical therapy, and guides teachers in conducting activities such as making simple musical instruments, using music to express emotion, ideas for musical games, combining story-telling and puppet activities with music, and teaching children self-soothing techniques.
Part Three: Healing Young Hearts Through Play
Games for Children in Disaster Recovery

Games can teach and heal. Learning to play again after a disaster is a vital part of recovery for young people, and it is one of the easiest therapies in the world to implement. Games provide an outlet for emotions in a playful way, in a safe environment. Unhappy individuals often lack the ability to identify and express emotion. Failure to successfully communicate emotional needs and interact with others in meaningful ways is often a root cause of depression.

This section provides detailed instructions for indoor and outdoor games for both large and small groups. Examples of guided discussions for use in games can help children work through issues such as overcoming fear, self control and anger management, hope for the future, bonding and making new friends, perseverance, and team-working.

Part Four: Healing For Teachers and Volunteers
The Effects of Stress and the Need for Self-care

This section is dedicated to helping teachers and volunteers understand their own needs after a disaster in both the initial and long-term recovery phases. It briefly outlines reactions to traumatic stress, and the importance of emotional and physical self-care for those working in disaster areas.

As you provide the children with opportunities to participate in comforting, uplifting activities, you will create a haven in your classroom and the healing process will begin.

Please contact us at: healingyounghearts@gmail.com
If You Want to Change the World, Love a Child

In the aftermath of disaster, love is a potent healing balm...

At the United Nations World Summit on Children, the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child was created. This treatise, signed by all U.N. member countries, protects children’s dignity as well as their moral, social, legal and cultural rights. Of the most basic rights of the Charter, one interesting and thought provoking point is included: the child’s right “to be loved”. Who is responsible to fulfill such an obligation? Is it a duty to fall only on the biological parents? The government? The school system? Who is ultimately responsible to provide a child with needed emotional support and care?

Love is not a commodity, like rice or sugar, which can be mass marketed or dispensed in bulk with relief supplies. It must be nurtured individually and passed on personally. In all our striving to provide swift aid, let us not forget the most basic human need of all, the care and concern of another human heart. The power of love to heal is unparalleled. Opportunities to give that love abound, especially after tragic loss. What lies within our grasp is the chance to change the world, by changing the life of a child through love.

What difference will loving one child make in the big picture of overwhelming disaster? Such a question reminds us of the classic story by Loren Eisley, about the man, the boy and the starfish. After a fierce stormy night, the sea had washed thousands and thousands of starfish onto the inhospitable shore. As the morning sun arose high in the sky, a man walked along the coast and observed the situation, pitying the ill-fated creatures who would not survive for long out of the sea. He then noticed a small boy, diligently picking up a starfish nearest him and flinging it back into the surf. Again and again the child repeated his efforts, tossing one starfish after another into the waves.

Approaching the child, the man shook his head, pointed to the desolate beach that was covered for miles with stranded starfish, and remarked that the boy’s efforts wouldn’t make any difference at all. Without pausing, the child bent down, picked up another starfish, and flung it as far as he could out into the sea. The boy looked up at the man and wisely noted, “It sure made a difference to that one, didn’t it?”

J. Riether and H. de Gaalon
INTRODUCTION

“Everything was gone. I lost everything - my teachers, my classmates. I lost everything in my life.”

“Every survivor was so scared. We huddled together and couldn’t stop crying.”

“I looked back and the building was gone...I sat on the playground and wailed.”

These heart wrenching statements from child survivors reflect the sorrow that shrouds a community devastated by a major earthquake. Personal injury, loss of loved ones, and the damage or destruction of homes and property can leave victims dazed and reeling. Even children far removed from the quake zone may grapple with fear following exposure to graphic images of death and suffering on media reports. The haunting question lingers in their young minds, “Could it happen to me?”

Even though the road to recovery may be long and winding, the care and concern of loving adults can help children come to grips with such terrifying experiences, and make sense of the tragedy that has occurred. The practical teaching tools found in these pages will equip teachers and volunteers with material that can accelerate a child’s recovery. It is not a form of psychotherapy, but rather draws on the principles of positive psychology to help motivate children by providing uplifting activities and opportunities for emotional expression. The inspirational worksheets, lesson plans, coloring projects, puppet figures and stories will guide them towards a future filled with hope. It is possible for traumatized children to experience deep emotional healing, and we are convinced that teachers, and those working directly with the children, are in an excellent position to be the instruments to bring this healing to pass. The love and care they show each child will be the magic that brings about the miracle of recovery.

The Unique Ability of Teachers and Volunteers to Help Students Recover Emotionally After Disaster

Teachers and volunteers who work with children in schools, shelters and temporary living facilities are in a unique position to help students.

- Teachers and volunteers have daily contact with the students and can observe student behavior, evaluate need and identify at-risk individuals.
- Teachers provide a stable environment in the classroom, offering an anchor during a stormy time when the child’s world has abruptly changed.
- By providing students with psycho-social support activities, teachers stand a greater chance of enhancing student academic performance. Students
who successfully deal with troubling emotional issues have greater success in their studies.

- Teachers who invest in the emotional well-being of their students will reap the benefits of better class-room atmosphere, since unresolved student stress increases the frequency of disciplinary disturbances.

In using the material in this handbook, teachers and volunteers can address the following problems:

- Loss and Grief Issues: The destruction of lives, property, community, and livelihood have affected the children emotionally and physically. Opportunities to communicate about their experiences will aid in emotional recovery.

- Emotional and Cognitive Effects of the Disaster Event: These include the symptoms of post traumatic stress, fear that another earthquake or traumatic event will occur, mood disturbances, somatic illnesses and anger management. Loving communication with a concerned adult about these issues aids healing.

- Secondary and Long-term Emotional Trauma: Economic pressures and post-traumatic stress affecting adult relatives may disrupt family stability over the long term. Children need emotional support not only immediately after disaster, but in the years following. The material in this handbook can be used to help children who are at risk of physical and emotional abuse, substance abuse and the breakdown of an emotionally supportive environment at home. In many cases such secondary trauma affects the children more drastically and directly than the earthquake event itself, further increasing the need for psycho-social support.

- Displacement: Children and families living in temporary shelters face unique challenges. Repeated moves, disruptions to family and community support, and crammed living environments increase stress levels. Communicating about the frustrations and challenges in a constructive manner can ease tension, and help survivors cultivate positive coping skills.

- Lack of Trained Counselors: Unfortunately after disaster there are often not enough counselors to meet the needs of the community, particularly in rural areas. In some low income communities teachers may be the only educated professionals in contact with the children. Teachers who have been thrust into the role of counselor with minimal training or resources will benefit from the material in this handbook, and the practical activities included within.
Part Two - Healing Young Hearts Through Music

A - Understanding Healing Through Music: Principles

1) Chasing Away the Shadows of Trauma with Music

Music is a medicine for broken hearts, a magic that heals wounded spirits. It provides an outlet for emotion, as it is one of the most emotional forms of communication. Therapeutic musical activities can help provide a healing emotional release for children haunted by the shadows of disaster.

Untreated trauma can develop into problems that affect the way children interact and relate with others, affecting their performance in school, as well as their physical and mental health. Creative outlets can lift the effects of trauma. Often children and adults have no words to describe their pain, but the pure emotional release of participating in a creative art can aid in healing.

In the Middle East, where a UN Children’s Fund report declared that “Palestinian children are showing increasing signs of psychosocial distress, manifested in aggressive behavior, low achievement, nightmares and bedwetting,” musical sessions have been used to rehabilitate war-traumatized youngsters. Teachers and psychology students have been trained to run creative musical workshops in many war torn countries such as Bosnia, Chechnya and several African states. Therapeutic music sessions have also aided children traumatized by the Asian 2005 Tsunami, and survivors of the Yogyakarta Indonesia earthquake.

Professor Nigel Osborne, a Professor of Music at Edinburgh University, and one of Britain’s foremost contemporary composers, comments, “Music assists these children, helping communication between individuals and within groups, creating trust, joy, safety, cognitive repair and the incomparable self-esteem brought by creativity.” After conducting musical sessions with children suffering post-traumatic stress in Bosnia, he observed that, “It was not unusual for generally melancholic and reticent groups to leave a session laughing or dancing, or groups … of hyperactive children to leave calm and focused.”

Therapeutic music activities can involve children in singing, listening, playing, drama and motion that aid them in becoming better learners. When music sessions are coupled with uplifting stories in a therapeutic activity, children not only find an emotional outlet, but develop positive mindsets and skills needed to resolve emotional conflicts.

Many different approaches can be taken when conducting therapeutic music activities, but a typical session might utilize musical instruments or a CD of prerecorded...
sounds. These sounds can be a mixture of orchestral instruments, and as well as sound effects such as wind, rain, thunder, etc.

At the onset of the activity, children are introduced to the different instruments and the sounds they make. A piece of classical music may be played while the children close their eyes and “feel” the music, while paying attention to the power of the mood of the composition. After the children have gained an appreciation for the piece and the particular instruments, a story or theme is introduced, and different musical elements are woven into the telling. For instance, loud drumming may signal the entrance of a villain, or the approach of a storm. These stories may be folktales, fairytales or modern stories, with uplifting themes that teach positive values or coping skills.

Children particularly enjoy being active participants in a musical session. By creating sound effects, learning to beat a rhythm on drums or simple wooden blocks, sing songs, or compose new words to a song together as a group, children move from being passive listeners to active contributors in the performance. Children may be asked to sing at the tops of their voices, or reduce their sound to little more than a whisper to convey the emotion of the song. They may be encouraged to clap to the beat, or sway to the rhythm to communicate a certain mood. Dance and movement can be incorporated into musical sessions, allowing children an opportunity to unleash tension and actively express their emotions in non-verbal ways.

Teachers can conduct healing musical sessions using only a handful of simple materials, a minimum of equipment, and an abundance of enthusiasm. An enthralling musical session can inspire children to look to the future with hope that is contagious. It can remind them that they have the ability to find and create beauty in life, and the power to bring joy to themselves and others through music.

2) Easy and Practical Therapeutic Musical Activities

You don’t have to be a professional musician to conduct successful musical activities with children and teenagers. In fact, thanks to modern conveniences like CD players, you don’t even have to be a musician. The activities in this book are not typical of the types of activities that a trained music therapist would employ. This is done purposely so that any teacher or volunteer, with or without musical training, can use music as a healing medium with their class. The only necessary requirements are warmth, enthusiasm, and a desire to help young people learn to express their feelings through music.

These activities are geared towards children of primary school age, but can easily be modified to suit other age groups. Adults can thoroughly enjoy a musical session inspired by a child’s fairy tale - Tchaikovsky’s “The Nutcracker” is a classic example enjoyed by audiences of all ages. However, when planning your classes for an older group, feel free to alter or substitute the material as you see fit. Older children and teenagers have longer attention spans than lower primary pupils, so you can expand or vary the activities presented to suit their interests. Think of the activities in this book as the ingredients for a meal: you have the liberty of preparing them in any number of great ways.
If you have access to musical instruments and can play, then by all means use them. Musical instruments fascinate children of all ages, and exposure to them will cultivate an interest in learning music. If you aren’t a musician however, just encourage the children to use themselves as instruments: they can clap, stamp their feet in rhythm, hum, sing, and dance. Feel free to experiment, and most of all have fun with the children. Music should be a source of joy, relaxation and relief from stress. Many fun musical activities require little or no money to carry out, so therapeutic music sessions are possible for everyone to teach and enjoy.

a) How Do Therapeutic Musical Activities Help Children?
Music aids in self-expression, communication and socialization. It stimulates the senses, and is highly motivating, yet calming. Unhappy individuals often lack the ability to identify and express emotion. Failure to successfully communicate emotional needs and interact with others in meaningful ways is often a root cause of depression.

Children suffering from post traumatic stress have shown improvement through therapeutic music sessions. Music is a multi-purpose medicine that can simultaneously help calm those who are hyper-aroused or aggressive, or stimulate those who are despondent or withdrawn. Musical expression is an acceptable way for children to burn energy during times of stress. Singing is a valuable self-soothing technique that children can learn to employ when they are frightened or worried. (See “Self-soothing Techniques”) Combining music with meaningful stories or puppet play helps children explore ways to express themselves in both word and song, as they learn from uplifting literature set to music. In short, music makes children happier because it adds to their quality of life.

b) Connect with the Children
You can conduct successful musical activities with an individual child or with a crowd. The key is planning and connecting with your audience, so that your activity is an enjoyable, interactive experience. Music sessions can be energetic and lively, or relaxing and soothing. The younger the audience however, the more animated you will likely need to be to keep their attention. If children worry that a music class will be boring, you can easily prove them wrong with a spirited presentation, including lots of student participation. Musical activities will help you build a rapport with the children. If you share an enjoyable musical experience with them it will build a bond of trust, and provide you with opportunities to talk with them about issues troubling them, should they so desire.

c) The Use of Games in Therapeutic Musical Sessions
The healing power of music can be successfully combined with other therapeutic methods to further affect the children in positive ways. Games and music fit together nicely like a hand in a glove. Since play is an essential part of the child’s learning process, games can be useful tools to teach and reinforce concepts. You can weave a relevant game into your music session to help a subject take root in the child’s mind. A
game can be a type of “education by stealth”, when a child learns for the simple joy of learning.

Games also help the teacher build a rapport with the students. Mutual play is an effective way to win a child’s confidence and trust. It becomes easier for a child to talk about things that are important to him if you share a common enjoyable experience, such as playing a game together. Your warmth, love and acceptance, coupled with letting him know that you are available if he needs to talk, will allow him to open up to you when he is hurting inside.

Action packed games provide emotionally stressed children with a constructive outlet to burn energy. Games provide valuable ways to instill an array of positive character building traits, from team-working and camaraderie, to self-reliance and endurance. Icebreaker games are effective to help students bond and form friendships in new frightening situations. Music and games can blend together to provide children with opportunities for emotional expression, learning and fun. (For more information on games please see Games That Teach and Heal.)
B - Applications of Healing Through Music

Application One: Teaching Children to Follow Instructions: Silence is Golden

In order for the children to learn to make music successfully, they first must learn to be quiet on cue. Teaching the children to follow instructions is your first task, so turn it into a game! Get everyone to clap once in unison, and then be utterly still. Clap twice, then silence! The more dramatic your presentation, the more control you will have with your group. The idea is to get them all to follow various directions, and then be completely quiet when you signal them to stop.

Children love to compete amongst themselves, so pit them against each other to see which group can best follow your instructions. You can divide them into teams to do clapping rhythm exercises, going faster, slower, quieter, louder, or even trying to trick them by pointing to one team while calling out the other team’s name. Have fun, and keep it lively!

The popular children’s game, “Simon Says” is a useful activity to draw on. Have everyone stand up and follow your command ONLY when you say “Simon Says”. If you declare, “Simon says clap 3 times” everyone should clap, or “Simon says stamp your feet” everyone should stamp. However, if you tell them, “Clap 3 times” without adding “Simon says”, then anyone who follows the command is out of the game and must sit down.

Children enjoy playing this game faster and faster using all sorts of commands. It’s particularly fun combined with drumming. Instruct them to kneel and drum in unison on their chair until Simon says stop. Have them start and stop using the “Simon says” command, then try to catch them with a “Now stop!” and see who continues drumming. Elimination games such as this one are fun ways to teach group control and following instructions.

Application Two: Icebreakers: Effective Ways to Jumpstart Group Interaction

Once your group is well versed in following instructions and being silent on cue, you can do all sorts of activities together. It may be helpful to start future sessions with a short music-related icebreaker activity, to get everyone warmed up. Icebreakers can be useful in a number of situations: when students don’t know each other well; if they tend to think music is a boring subject; for variety if the general content of your lesson does not involve much student participation; or if the class time is scheduled immediately after lunch or some time of the day when student energy and attention is at a low ebb. There are many icebreaker activities, but here a few good ones you can try:

Musical Partners: Have all the students find a partner. When the music starts, they should dance or sway to the beat with their partner until the music is suddenly...
stopped and a number is called. Everyone must then quickly run and find partners to form a group with the same number of people as the number that was called. For instance, if “four” is called, then four partners must be quickly found. Once they have their new group of partners, the music starts again and they dance together as group until a new number is called. This is particularly fun with a large class. After trying smaller numbers for a while you could, for instance, call “25” knowing there are only 40 students in the class. It’s obviously impossible to form two teams, but it leaves them scrambling to try to work it out at first. Once they realize they can’t do it, call out a smaller number so that everyone can find a partner and keep the game rolling with lively music.

Humming Bird Search: The goal is to form teams and identify your unknown teammates by the tune they hum. Write the names of simple popular songs that everyone will know on slips of paper and pass them out, instructing the students not to show their slip to anyone. If you have 20 people and wish to form 5 teams, then you will need one different song per team (5 songs), with each song title written on 4 slips of paper (4 members per team). Some good choices are the national anthem, well-known folk songs, children’s nursery rhymes, etc. On cue, have the students start humming their tune while walking around the room, listening for others humming the same melody. As they identify their teammates they form their team. This is especially fun with a large group, and if you can get 5 or even 10 different tunes all being hummed at the same time it is challenging. The first team to gather all their teammates is the winner, but play until all the teams are formed.

Song Duel: Divide in teams. The instructor calls out a word, and Team A has 15 seconds to sing a line of a song that contains that word. Team B then has 15 seconds to do the same. Go back and forth until one team can’t think of any more songs containing the word in the allotted time. Cheer the winning team, then continue to play with a new word. If the teams are good at this you can reduce the time to 10 seconds, then 5, and so on, to keeping it fast moving and exciting. This game is more suitable for older children and teenagers, however some younger children enjoy it also, though they may need more time. Some good words to try are: love, heart, beautiful, tears, feel, and sun.

Application Three: Sounds of the Instruments Activity

Children enjoy music, but they may not be familiar with the names of the different instruments and the sounds they make. When children have an understanding of the instruments used in a song they are more likely to develop an interest in learning to play music themselves. Knowing your way around the “musical community” will also increase listening enjoyment. You can select examples of the different instrument sounds on CD and play them when teaching the children about the instrument groups.

There are many types of instruments, and they each produce a unique type of sound, and are used in different styles of music. The instruments played in an orchestra are different than the instruments played in a rock or pop band, for instance. Folk music from the countryside
is often played on simple instruments constructed of bamboo, wood, gourd or animal hides. All produce different sounds, but all can be used to create beautiful, inspiring music.

In traditional Chinese music, instruments are categorized according to the material they are made with, rather than their sound or how they are constructed. In western music, instruments are divided into four major groups according to their sound and construction: strings, woodwinds, brass, and percussion. Here is a brief explanation of how instruments are grouped this way:

**Do You Know the Groups of the Instruments?**

**String Instruments:** The instruments in the string section of a western orchestra all have four strings and can be played either with a bow or by being plucked with a finger. In an orchestra, these include violins, violas, cellos and basses. Other types of string instruments not traditionally played in an orchestra, have differing numbers of strings. String instruments well known in folk and pop music styles are the guitar and banjo.

**Woodwind Instruments:** This group of wind instruments is made up of the flute and piccolo, oboe and English horn, clarinet and bass clarinet, and bassoon and contrabassoon in a western orchestra. Woodwinds were originally made of wood, but now often are constructed of other materials. Some woodwind instruments, such as the bass clarinet or bassoon, make deep, rich tones, and others, like the flute and piccolo, make higher light sounds.

**Brass Instruments:** These are also wind instruments, and in a western orchestra, the brass section consists of the trumpet, trombone and tuba. Sounds on these instruments are made when musicians vibrate their lips against a mouthpiece at the end of the instrument.

**Percussion Instruments:** Any instrument that is struck to make a sound such as drums, cymbals, the triangle, the xylophone, or even the piano, is a percussion instrument. Pianos have small hammers that strike strings inside the piano when the keys are pressed, which makes them a percussion instrument, even though they have strings.

Worksheets that show some of the western orchestra instruments for this activity are included in this book. Younger children may enjoy coloring the pictures, and learning the names of the different instruments. You can turn this into an interactive game by using the following variations:

- **Guess the Group:** Have a few students stand up, listen to the sound of an instrument played on your CD, and compete to identify whether it is percussion, string, woodwind or brass. The first student to raise a hand who can successfully identify the instrument group wins. Play for points and keep it fast moving, using different CD sound bites.
- **What’s My Name:** Working with a CD, play sounds from different instruments, and let the children compete to guess the name of the instruments they hear.
- **Instrument Pantomime:** Play a section of a song and take turns having different students pantomime the instrument being played, such as a violin, flute, tuba, etc. Rate the “actors” by applause from the rest of the class for the best and most dramatic imitation.
- **Shouting Quiz:** The teacher names an instrument, points to a child, and the child shouts out as quickly as he can whether it belongs to the string, woodwinds, brass or percussion groups. Then reverse it, and call out an instrument group, point to a child and have him as quickly as possible shout out the name of an instrument belonging to that group.
Instruments – Strings

Violin

Double Bass

Strings

Viola

Cello
Instruments – Woodwind

Basson

Obe

Woodwind

Flute

Clarinet
Instruments - Brass

French Horn

Trombone

Brass

Trumpet

Tuba
Instruments - Percussion

- Bass Drum
- Xylophone
- Timpani (Kettle Drums)
- Cymbals

Precussion
Application Four: Orchestra Conductor Activity

It’s fun for children to learn about the orchestra and what role a conductor plays. According to the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra Website, an excellent English language site that offers free online games and materials to teach children music appreciation (www.BSOkids.com/teachers), “The conductor is the “driver” of an orchestra. He or she tells the orchestra how to play: when to stop and start, when to play loud or soft, and when to play fast or slow. The conductor does this by the way he/she moves his/her arms. Sometimes you’ll see the conductor making very large motions with his/her hands. This usually means that the orchestra is supposed to play loud. The conductor faces the orchestra during the concert instead of the audience because he/she is communicating with the musicians, guiding them through the music and helping them all play together.”

Here are several activities you can use with children to get them familiar with the role of a conductor:

- **Orchestra Pantomime**: This is a lively activity that can keep restless students busy. Seat your students by groups and have them pretend to be members of the percussion, strings, woodwinds and brass sections. Assign each student an imaginary “instrument” to play. Play a short musical piece on CD while you “conduct” your orchestra. It helps if you do this as dramatically as possible, playing along with them, and directing them with all the flare that a conductor would use in a performance. It can be great fun. Have them all stand and take a bow together at the end of their “performance”.

- **Student Conductor**: Let the students take turns conducting the imaginary orchestra themselves. Explore hand and arm motions, and how to communicate the feeling of the music by the conductor’s movements.

- **Choral Conductor**: Have the students sing a familiar song together, and use hand motions, as a conductor would, to signal them to sing faster, slower, louder, softer, etc. This can be quite fun if you get them going ridiculously fast, or hilariously slow. It will help them remember the conductor’s role in a fun way.

Application Five: Homemade Instrument Activity

A fun activity most children enjoy is making simple musical instruments together. You can use almost anything you can find around the house to make music. Bang on stacks of books to conduct rousing improvised drum sessions. Glasses can be filled with water at various levels and tapped with a spoon to make marvelous chimes. Pick things up, shake them and see if you can make music with them. Scrape it, tap it, roll it around or beat a rhythm with it. You can even hold a contest with the children to see who can invent the most original homemade instrument, and then perform a concert together as a class. They will probably surprise you with their ingenuity and creativity.

You can do a fun project together and learn how to make music from simple household supplies. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- **Shakers and rattles**: These can be constructed from disposable cups, paper, tape and dried beans or pebbles. Take a disposable cup and place a small amount of dried beans inside. Cut paper to fit around the top of the cup and tape it securely in place, so none of the beans escape. Shake and rattle to your heart’s content!
Kazoo: Nothing could be simpler than creating a comb kazoo. Take a normal household comb and place tissue or thin art paper across it, place it against your mouth and hum into the comb. You will get a rich buzzing sound that is great for a home-made band.

Comb Rhythm Maker: Use a comb to make an unusual sounding rhythm instrument. Hold a large comb in your hand and use a toothpick or small disposable dessert fork to scrape along the teeth of the comb. Vary your rhythm to come up with some interesting sounds.

Wooden Stick Percussion: Use wooden sticks to perform great drum rolls and percussion sounds. Your whole class can drum together on their desks, seats, and floor. Put them through the drills in the “Teaching Children to Follow Instructions: Silence is Golden” section, using wooden sticks instead of clapping, for added effect. Just be sure to establish some rules of order for your young musicians, so they don’t cause an accident by poking themselves or others.

Straw Whistles: With a bit of practice you can make a simple whistle by taking a plastic drinking straw, cutting off any pleated elbow ends, then cutting two narrow V shapes on opposite sides of one end. Mash the two halves of the cut V end flat, using either your teeth or the end of a spoon. By doing this you form a double reed, like a bassoon or oboe. Blowing into it produces an interesting sound, though it may take you several tries before you get the trick of it. If the whistle is shortened, the pitch will increase.

Application Six: Music and Emotions Activity

It has been said that music is one of the most emotional forms of communication. For that reason, music is ideal for teaching children to recognize and communicate emotions. If a child can recognize and express his feelings well, he will likely be better able to resolve issues that trouble him.

Psychologist and author Irving N. Berlin observed that if there is little talking at home, children may have difficulty learning to communicate verbally. Instead they communicate with actions, which may range from sullen withdrawal to violent aggression. When children are able to verbalize their feelings effectively, often their negative or destructive behavior diminishes.

You can teach children to recognize and verbalize their own emotions by guiding them in listening to the emotions communicated through music. Here are some simple activities to help you do this:

- **Guess the Feeling:** Select an assortment of songs or instrument sounds that express different emotions. Some possibilities could be lively dance music to express happiness, melancholy classical pieces to express sadness, classical marches to express pride and dignity, tense music (like what is played right before a scary scene in a movie) to express fear, loud clashing sounds to portray anger, etc. Play each sound briefly and then ask the children to tell you how it makes them feel. It helps if you use vivid facial expressions as you play each sound. This usually gets the children laughing, and they get the point that music expresses emotion.

- **Act Out the Feeling:** Play each of the sounds and act out how they make you feel. You can use either short single instrument sounds or play short sections of a song. Put your dramatic skills to the test, and the children will love it. Pretend to weep with a parting friend as you wave goodbye while listening to a touching song. Jump and spin with joy as you play a thrilling happy song. You can get them to take turns coming to the front of the class to help you act out each piece, or ask for volunteers to see who can best portray the emotion in the music. Turn
it into a drama contest if you wish, using teams. Applaud the ones who really put their hearts into it and encourage them to explore the feelings music creates.

- Emotion Freeze Dance: Prepare an assortment of musical pieces on CD that express various emotions. Have the children dance along with the song and act out the emotion the music portrays. For happy music they should be smiling and jumping, for sad music they should be slow and dreary, etc. When the music suddenly stops, they must all freeze in their position. If anyone moves, they are eliminated and must sit down. Play the game until a single winner is left. Some interesting emotions to dance and act out are: happiness, sadness, love, anger, coolness, weariness and excitement.

**Application Seven: Puppets and Music**

Puppets make interesting visual aids that you can use to enhance a musical session. Children love puppets and easily identify with them. It is often easier for a child to express his feelings through puppet play than by other means of communication. (For more on this subject see ‘Puppets and Therapeutic Story Telling’ in this book). Here are several activities that involve puppets that you can use in your musical sessions:

- Painted hands: Tuck your thumb onto your palm, then wrap your fingers around your thumb, making a fist. If you look at the thumb side of your fist, you will see you’ve formed a little mouth that you can move by wiggling your thumb. With a washable whiteboard marker, draw eyes above the mouth, and any other facial features you would like to add. Show the children your little painted hand puppet, and have him sing them a song. You will be surprised how much emotion a simple hand puppet can portray. Take turns drawing painted hand faces on the children, or let them do draw it by themselves. Play a song together and have your “choir” of puppets sing along.

- Finger Puppets: Select a musical piece and create a short and simple story together with the children based on the music. The theme can be very simple, such as finding a wonderful surprise, saying goodbye to a dear friend, working together to build a home, etc. Photocopy the finger puppet worksheets in this book and let the children color them and cut them out to use to act out the story. (Animals finger puppets are particularly beloved by children) Or, if they prefer, they can draw their own finger puppets to use as characters. Use the song as part of the story to express how the puppets feel.

- Puppet as Teacher: You can buy or make a simple puppet to use as a co-teacher. Children love puppets and listen earnestly to all they say. Use this to your advantage and create a puppet personality who helps you with your class. Give the puppet character a name and hold conversations together. The puppet can ask the students questions and help guide your class discussions in fun ways.

- Puppet as Student: Have one of the students work the puppet and join the class as the “new kid”. The other students can take turns teaching the puppet what they have learned. This method reinforces the material covered as “we learn best what we teach”.

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Application Eight: Combining Music with Storytelling

Music communicates mood and emotion so effectively that filmmakers consider background music essential when creating cinema productions. You can create your own exciting performances by combining expressive music with a storytelling session. With a bit of preparation, this easy and enjoyable therapeutic activity can bring life to stories children love to hear.

Children benefit by having uplifting and comforting literature read to them. Blending a story with music allows children to more fully partake of the emotions of the characters and the atmosphere of the tale. As the characters face peril, find hope in times of trouble, and resolve their conflicts, the children learn and relate to the experience.

An example of such a story is “Jean Jean’s Flight”, included in this book. It is the story of a little bird, alone and frightened in a storm, who must face his fears and learn to fly when his mother doesn’t return to the nest. (The story “Jean Jean’s Flight” and accompanying coloring pages, finger puppets and information on the benefits of storytelling can be found in the section “The Art of Therapeutic Storytelling”) You do not have to read the story you present word for word, since much of the drama of the experience will come by relating the tale in an animated fashion. Learn the story well so you can tell it from memory, adding or embellishing the tale as you wish. You may choose to read significant portions of the story aloud, for effect. Changing suddenly from “telling” to “reading” captures the children’s attention, and highlights the main points of the tale.

Making a Story an Interactive Experience:

When selecting a story for a musical activity, familiarize yourself with the characters. In Jean Jean’s Flight, the main characters are Jean Jean, his mother, and his forest friends, Grandmother Elephant, Auntie Squirrel, Young Cricket. 

You can involve the children in the drama by assigning groups appropriate sounds to make on cue. Homemade instruments are perfect for this purpose. (See “Homemade Instrument Activity”) Auntie Squirrel runs around shaking her tail, so you can signal the children to use “Shakers and Rattles” to represent her. Young Cricket chirps in the tree, and can be portrayed by a “Comb Rhythm Maker”. Grandma Elephant can join in with a “Straw Whistle”. Jean Jean and his mother can be imitated by a “Kazoo”. Use your imagination and have fun.

You can think up additional sound effects for the children to add as well on cue. Chopsticks can be drummed for light rain and feet stomped for heavy rain. Hands can be clapped for lightning and thunder. The children can whistle or howl with the wind, and rock back and forth in their seats, acting out the scenes with you as the events of the story dramatically unfold.

Selecting Appropriate Music:

Determine the main emotions portrayed in the story and then select appropriate music on CD to represent them. For Jean Jean’s flight, select short segments that depict any of the following emotions and use them throughout your telling:

- Peace (Jean Jean safely in his nest)
- Foreboding (The approaching storm)
- Fury (The storm)
- Fear (Jean Jean’s fright when his mother does not return and his reluctance to fly)
- Comfort (Jean Jean’s dream and his mother’s encouragement)
- Determination (Jean Jean’s decision to fly)
• Triumph and Joy (Jean Jean's flight)
Make sure to end your story with a flourish. Play a joyful piece during Jean Jean's final flight and take the opportunity for the children to join you sailing together, arms outstretched, as you act out the little bird’s triumph in overcoming his fear.

Many stories can be adapted to music to create fun learning events. You can select folk tales, legends, fairy tales, love stories, or historical events, and match them with music and sound effects to design your own original interactive activity. Use music to make tales come to life, and you will give the children a treasured experience they will never forget.

Application Nine: Self-soothing Techniques

Self soothing techniques are simple methods children can use to calm themselves when they’re afraid. These positive coping skills remind the child to relax in frightening situations. Self-soothing techniques may employ singing, deep breathing exercises, reciting poetry, etc.

Children struggle to understand disaster, and what they don’t understand frightens them. They may ask the same question repeatedly, such as “Why did the earthquake happen?”, or “Why did the people die”. Even if you already answered their questions, the child may ask again and again because he is trying to understand the events. It can be particularly difficult for children to grasp the concept and permanency of death, so they often ask for repeated explanations.

The child may need a great deal of reassurance that he is no longer in danger, even long after the danger has passed. The American Red Cross recommends, "...you can reassure your child by saying, "The event is over. Now we'll do everything possible to stay safe, and together we can help get things back to normal.""

Along with your reassurance, it is empowering for children to be taught ways to calm and comfort themselves by using self-soothing techniques. Songs, poems and controlled breathing can help children find an oasis of calm in a very troubled world.

How to Teach Self-soothing Techniques:

1) Acknowledge the child’s fears: If the child voices his fears, acknowledge them, perhaps by agreeing, “Yes, that was scary.” You may explain to the child that everyone is afraid or worried sometimes, and that it’s normal to feel that way.

2) Let him know there are ways to cope: Ask him what he does to help himself feel better when he is afraid. He might not know that there are things he can do to calm himself. Let him know he can choose something that he likes that can help him learn to relax.

3) Introduce a technique, and try it together. Explain that you know a few things that are useful to do to make it easier to relax. This might be a song, a deep breathing exercise, or a short meaningful poem the child can memorize and repeat. Try it together with the child while encouraging him to relax and calm down.

Below are several examples of dialogues you might have with the child to explain the technique:

Song: “Sometimes when I feel afraid it makes me feel much better when I sing a song to myself. You can find a special song with beautiful words, and sing or hum it when you feel yourself getting shaky and afraid. What is one of your favorite songs? Let’s try singing it together softly while we close our eyes and relax.”
Deep breathing: “Do you want to know a good tip? When I feel afraid I take deep breaths and try to feel every muscle in my body relax. Did you ever try that? Let’s do it together. Take a deep breath. Good! Now relax your shoulders. Take another deep breath. Good. Now let your arms go limp like a noodle. Take another deep breath. Now feel your legs relax all the way down to your toes. Very good. Take three more deep breaths, nice and slow and relaxed. You can do that to help yourself calm down next time you feel frightened.”

Poems: “Poems have beautiful thoughts that speak to our hearts. Sometimes, when we’re afraid, if we’ve learned a special poem that reminds us of peace and beauty, it can help us relax and calm down. Find a short poem you like, and either memorize it, or keep it written on a piece of paper you carry with you. Then, whenever you start to worry and fret, you can close your eyes and repeat the poem to yourself. Did you ever try writing poetry? You could even write a special poem about peace yourself.”
Credits, Bibliography and References

Credits:
We would like to thank the following individuals and agencies for kindly granting their permission to allow portions of their work to be adapted for use in this handbook for non-profit purposes. Their timely response to our requests after the Sichuan earthquake, as well as their assistance and advice has been most appreciated.

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