



Family Music Month*

Singing songs with kids is *magical!* Making music in any way stimulates the brain, brings happiness, and creates a sense of belonging. How about making your house a singing house—regardless of how well any of you stay on pitch. Babies, toddlers, preschool children, elementary students, middle-school kids, high-schoolers—all love to sing together. When you have time with your kids and want to do something fun, make music in your home. *Whenever you get a chance, sing!*

Here's what you can do:

- 1) Almost everyone in our culture knows certain songs like “Old MacDonald,” “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star,” “Row, Row, Row Your Boat,” and “I’m a Little Teapot.” Sing these and other common tunes to your kids. If you don’t know them, get a recording and play it for your children.
- 2) *Make up your own songs* to familiar tunes. Choose words that fit your family’s interests like, “Dribble, dribble, dribble your ball...” or “Mom and Dad, they had a house, e-i-e-i-o...”
- 3) Sing when you’re driving somewhere. Sing when you’re out on a walk. Sing every day. Singing conveys love. It touches us deeply.
- 4) Do you remember songs you learned as a child? Songs you learned at school, in your place of worship, or from radio or TV ads. Do you know lullabies? Have you passed them on to your children? It makes a great family tradition to pass songs on. Do you love *opera or gospel or blues?* Sing those with your kids.
- 5) Moving with music activates parts of the brain that might not get exercise another way. Play a lively song and *dance free-form.* March to your own music. Strut to your own songs.
- 4) Have your kids teach you songs they’ve learned. If they have a favorite song and don’t know the words, look them up on the internet or in a song book. Write the words down and carry them with you until the kids know them. *Create a list* of “Our Family Favorite Songs” in the **Our Treasures** section of your **WAY TO GO!** FAMILY LEARNING JOURNAL™.



“When my kids were young, we sang a lot in the car. It’s a great way to pass time on a long trip. They loved singing the same songs over and over. It was a chance to be silly and laugh. Please, never tell someone they can’t sing. Encourage any singing, on pitch or off. What’s important is enjoyment, not perfection!”

— *Grandma Anna*

*Family Music Month supports the English-Language Arts Content Standards related to listening and speaking strategies.
Next month, go to www.familylearningjournal.com for a new Family Activity!

