

Welcome to

“First Steps in Music”

What is “First Steps in Music”?

“First Steps in Music” is a series of group music classes intended for babies to five year old children. The music classes use folk and traditional songs/ rhymes and classical music to help children grow to be tuneful, beatful and artful. The music series has been written by John Feierabend PhD who is a leading expert in early childhood music education.

What happens in a class?

Birth to 3 years: In these classes, children will be bounced, wiggled and tickled by their parents/carers. Children will be encouraged to tap, clap and explore different instruments. And children, with the help of their helper, will participate in simple circle games and movement to music activities. Each class ends with a beautiful lullaby to soothe and relax the children.

Three-five years: In these classes, children will explore pitch with fun vocal warm-ups, sing simple songs, make up their own songs and listen to expressive song tales. Children will also be able to participate in many different movement activities:

Movement exploration: these activities help children develop body coordination as well as expressive sensitivity. Children might whirl and stop, do glue dancing, build an imaginary house, play mirrors and walk through a room full of jelly in movement exploration.

Movement for form and expression: these activities help children experience the expressive qualities in music through movement. During this time, children might participate in fingerplays, action songs and circle games.

Beat motion activities: these activities help children develop a feeling for how the beat coincides with a song or rhyme. Children might bounce, swing, flap, pound, walk or play an instrument to discover the beat.

Who takes the classes?

Katherine Ruhle is the teacher for the “First Steps in Music” classes. Katherine completed a Bachelor of Music degree in 1998 and has specialized in early childhood music education since. She has taught early childhood music and movement classes in preschools, daycare centers, music academies and even a gym and she is excited to be able to work with The Gap Uniting Church to provide these music classes for the community.

Goals for Children:

It is hoped that children experience activities that will prepare them for the later development of:

Accurate rhythmic skills (tuneful)
Accurate singing skills (beatful) and
Sensitivity to the expressive qualities in music (artful)

And it is hoped that all children HAVE FUN!!!

Guidelines for Parents

It is hoped that all parents/grandparents participate in the classes – yes, that means singing, dancing, bouncing, tickling and laughing!

These classes are for the parents to learn the activities as well as for the children's enjoyment. Why? Because we all know that it is normal for children react in different ways on different days – during class, some children might feel like roaming the room, some might want to watch quietly, some might just want to be grumpy. If parents can participate in class, they will learn the songs, dances and skills to be able to have fun with music at home when the child is in a responsive mood .

I am happy for children to roam around during the class as long as they do not divert other children's attention. Occasionally, invite a roaming child back to the group but please don't feel the need to force a child to participate.

This is a hard one – try not to talk too much with other adults during the class. Please try to focus on your child.

Do not compare one child's accomplishments to another's. Children develop at different rates. Later development is sometimes better!

REGISTRATION

All new participants will be required to fill out the "First Steps in Music" registration form and pay a yearly \$10 administration and resource fee. It is then up to you how you would like to pay for the classes – you can pay at the beginning of term (10 week term - \$60, 7 week term - \$42 etc) or you can pay at a casual rate of \$8 per lesson/family.

I will ask families to register for each term and encourage families to attend as many classes as possible during each term so that parents and children can learn the songs and also feel comfortable during class time.

I think that is all you need to know for now. Each term I will hand out song sheets and newsletters and also let you know of other family fun activities that you may be interested in.

Please feel free to talk to me before or after class or email me with any questions.

Katherine Ruhle

kathruhe@gmail.com

Ph: 3300 6740

The Gap Uniting Church: 3300 2712