



MUSIC EDUCATION ADVOCACY KIT



This kit has been developed in Australia for parents, teachers, principals and community members who are passionate about ensuring that music education is included in their school program, and need to act as advocates to build or develop programs in their area.

Many children have little or no opportunity to benefit from an education in music. It is often left to parents, music teachers or other committed people to advocate for music education programs in local pre-school, primary and secondary schools.

This kit will develop and improve as we benefit from your ideas and experiences. Please!

- * Send your comments and suggestions about the kit as you now find it.
- * Send extra materials that you think might be suitable for inclusion in the kit.
- * In either case, send to music.playforlife@mca.org.au

INSIDE THE KIT YOU WILL FIND:

- Information about why music education is so important for children.

Link: [Why music education is important](#) ❖

- Information from recent research that outlines additional benefits of music education, including improved performance in other academic areas such as reasoning, mathematics, etc and developing social and team skills.

Link: [Music Makes the Difference](#) ❖

- Information for parents about what the music education program in an Australian school should comprise; and

- Some examples of good school music programs currently operating in Australia.

Link: [Your school music program](#) ❖

- What students and school principals in Australia say about their school music program; and

- Some pictures and summaries of information for use in advocacy situations.

Link: [Talking about music education](#) ❖

- What is involved in being an advocate for music education

Link: [Being an advocate for music education](#) ❖

- Other resources for advocates to access.

Link: [Resources and Links](#) ❖

More ❖





HOW TO USE THIS KIT



For Parents

We suggest that you look at the information about :

- Why your child should learn music
- When should a child learn music
- Academic, personal and social skills that improve with music study
- What your school music program should include

Link: [Music Makes the Difference](#) ❖

Link: [Your school music program](#) ❖

For Teachers and School Principals

Look at the information about the importance of a music education

Link: [Why music education is important](#) ❖

Consider the research facts and data that outline how music helps students

Link: [Music Makes the Difference](#) ❖

Use the quotes from students and principals to support your case for your school's program

Link: [Talking about music education](#) ❖

And refer to the article about being an advocate for music education for advice and suggestions on how to advocate effectively.

Link: [Being an advocate for music education](#) ❖





WHY MUSIC EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT



Music is special.

Virtually every person every day experiences music. Every person has the capacity to enjoy and make music. Every culture in the world includes music in some form: for ceremony, relaxation, communication, celebration and enjoyment.

The world would be inconceivable without music. Imagine the absence of music in our lives.

It is through schools that every child could have the opportunity to find the joy of making and understanding music. Yet many children miss out on that opportunity because schools choose not to offer it, or do not offer enough.

All children should have music as a core component of their education, from the first years at pre-school through to their senior school years.

Enriching students' lives.

An education in music enriches students' lives by providing:

- joy and pleasure,
- a transforming human experience,
- a unique way of knowing,
- access to our musical cultural heritage,
- an enhancement to quality of life,
- an opportunity to develop potential,
- an avenue for creativity and self-expression,
- a means for self-realisation and self-fulfillment, and
- a unique avenue to succeed at school.

Music is able to do this because it has many unique qualities.

Music is unique.

Music provides a unique means of communication and expression through sound.

Music provides a context for the understanding and transmission of beliefs and values.

Music has its own body of knowledge and skills.

Music functions as a means of entertaining, celebrating, relaxing and expressing.

Music brings joy and satisfaction, fosters creative expression, challenges thinking and stimulates imagination.

Music learning contributes to intellectual and cognitive growth through the development of skills, techniques and processes.

Music learning contributes to social and personal growth.

Music engages all aspects of a person: cognitive, emotional, sensory, physical and spiritual.

Music is an abstract, creative medium which allows for unique individual expression.

Music is valuable in its own right-however, it also has other qualities that bring additional benefits to students. Recent research illustrates how learning music can help students improve in other academic and social areas of their lives.

Go to Link: [Music Makes the Difference](#) to check out the latest information.





MUSIC MAKES THE DIFFERENCE



Music is a wonderful skill for any child, but new research shows how learning music can help your child in so many more ways:

- Improved reasoning capacity and problem solving skills
- Improve maths and language performance
- Better memory
- Greater social and team skills

Why should my child learn music?

For many years, we have believed that children should learn music 'for music's sake', because music was an excellent accomplishment and part of a well rounded, balanced education. And so it is.

But these days children are expected to learn so many more skills and parents have begun to ask which subjects their child could ignore or drop. The answer is: not music!

As every parent knows, their child is a mixture of nature and nurture. A newborn baby already has all his or her brain cells and as the child develops he or she naturally builds pathways between these cells or neurons. These pathways (referred to as neural pathways) are there for life.

Learning music from an early age enables those neural pathways to grow in ways that can help your child maximise the potential they were born with. Research shows that playing music can make significant differences to children's abilities related to learning, memory and social interactions.

Music is still an excellent accomplishment, but it can also make the difference for a child.

So when should a child start to learn music?

Any time is a good time, but the earlier the better. Ages given here are indicative, because children develop at different paces. Your music teacher will be able to advise more specifically for your child.

The important thing is to match your child's musical experiences with their developmental stage and to establish playing music as an ongoing part of their life.

From six months to around three years: musical experiences are important during these years. Many teachers run group classes where children develop rhythm, pitch, concepts such as high and low or fast and slow, use their voices and internalise sounds. This helps the child internalise the precepts of music and prepares them for learning to play an instrument.

From around three years to six years: children's brains and motor skills have now usually developed sufficiently to begin to consider learning to play instruments such as the violin, keyboard or piano. The child's ear is more fully developed, and they are learning to master language and abstract concepts.

From six years onwards: by now your child's fine motor skills have begun to develop and they can master a more wider range of instruments, such as a flute, percussion, guitar or trumpet. Now an important consideration is also to find an instrument that suits your child - for example, drums and percussion require a strong sense of rhythm, brass and wind instruments need well developed fine motor skills, and a string instrument requires the ability to hear the note when they tune and play.



More 



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Music teachers can advise and recommend the most appropriate instrument. In this age group it's also important for children to continue to enjoy music making in groups such as choirs, school music and drama, bands, orchestras and community music groups.

Everyone has musical ability

It's true. Every child is born with musical ability, but if it's not tapped into early enough then it can fail to develop. ⁱ Being 'unmusical' is more likely to be an outcome of poor training or lack of opportunity than it is from lack of ability, and everyone has the capacity to improve their musical skills.

Research published in early 2001 indicates that all babies are born with perfect pitch - it's how they are able to recognise their mother's voice and to learn language. But if they don't learn to use their perfect pitch, they then lose it. Early music lessons help a child to retain that fundamental musical skill, which is also so critical in learning a mother tongue as well as foreign languages. ⁱⁱ

Playing music increases memory and reasoning capacity, time management skills and eloquence

A series of research experiments in Hungary in the 1950s explored why children studying at special music kindergarten and primary schools had higher academic scores than those at the mainstream schools. The studies concluded that learning and playing music improved not just academic performance, but also memory, reasoning, working as part of a group, time management and the ability to think in the abstract. ⁱⁱⁱ

Playing music improves concentration, memory and self expression

A massive two-year study in Switzerland run with 1200 children in more than 50 classes scientifically showed how playing music improved children's reading and verbal skills through improving concentration, memory and self expression. Younger children who had three more music classes per week and three fewer main curriculum classes made rapid developments in speech and learned to read with greater ease.

Other effects revealed by the study showed that children learned to like each other more, enjoyed school more (as did their teachers) and were less stressed during the various tests, indicating they were better able to handle performance pressure. ^{iv}

Playing music improves the ability to think

Ongoing research at the University of California-Irvine and the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh ^v demonstrate that learning and playing music builds or modifies neural pathways related to spatial reasoning tasks, which are crucial for higher brain functions like complex maths, chess and science. The first studies showed that listening to a Mozart sonata temporarily improved a child's spatial abilities. Further studies compared children who had computer lessons, children who had singing lessons, children who learned music using a keyboard and children who did nothing additional. The children who had had the music classes scored significantly higher - up to 35% higher - than the children who had computer classes or did nothing additional. ^{vi}

Music training improves verbal memory

A preliminary study at The Chinese University of Hong Kong has shown that adults who had had music training before the age of 12 years had an improved ability to recall spoken words - ie. verbal memory.





MUSIC MAKES THE DIFFERENCE



The study tested 60 adults of which 30 who had had six years or more of training with a Western musical instrument, and the balance had some training through to none.

Learning music helps under-performing students to improve

Researchers at Brown University in the US discovered that children aged 5-7 years who had been lagging behind in their school performance had caught up with their peers in reading and were ahead of them in maths after seven months of music lessons. The children's classroom attitudes and behaviour ratings had also significantly improved, and after a year of music classes were rated as better than the children who had had no additional classes. ^{vii}

Music students are less likely to be delinquent

High school students who participate in the performing arts, including the school band program, are far less likely to be involved with drugs, crime or have behavioural problems, according to a longitudinal study being pursued in the US. Called Champions of Change, the study is being undertaken by a number of researchers including those at Harvard, Stanford and Columbia. This finding is supported by the Texas Commission on Drug and Alcohol Abuse which reported in 1998 that 'secondary students' who participated in band or orchestra reported the lowest lifetime and current use of all substances' (alcohol, drugs, tobacco).

To download a PDF of this information, or to order free printed copies of this material in brochure format, contact: info@australianmusic.asn.au ^{viii}

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- ^v Various studies by Dr. Gordon Shaw (University of California-Irvine) and Dr. Fran Rauscher (University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh), with others. Including those published in Nature 365:611 and Neuroscience Letters 185:44-47
- ^{vi} E L Wright, W R Dennis & R L Newcomb. Neurological Res.19:2-8. 1997
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- ^{viii} M F Gardiner, A Fox, F Knowles & D Jeffrey. Learning improved by arts training. Nature 381:284. 1996.





MUSIC MAKES THE DIFFERENCE



The impact of the arts on learning: CHAMPIONS OF CHANGE

Champions of Change is the title of a publication of The Arts Education Partnership and The President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities in the USA. It presents the reports of seven teams of researchers examining a variety of arts education programs using diverse methodologies to discover their impact on broader learning and socialisation.

The discoveries overall must be of interest to the music community and indeed the community at large. Especially relevant to the musical world is the study by James S. Catterall of the Imagination Project at the University of Los Angeles. Catterall analysed data on more than 25,000 students from the National Educational Longitudinal Survey (NELS) to determine the relationship of engagement in the arts to student performance and attitudes, and also investigated the impact of intensive involvement in instrumental music on student achievement.

For the full story go to <http://www.mca.org.au/m15231.htm>

Can Music in School Give Stimulus to Other School Subjects?

Recent reports on the effects of musical activity in school shed a very positive light on the topic addressed in this paper, the effects of musical activity on extra-musical learning and achievement. For example, the highly recognized weekly magazine The New Scientist reported on the Swiss school experiment with extended music education (called "Music makes the School") in an article titled "Children learn faster to the sound of music." Nature did similarly in presenting the results of an experiment with a special arts training in eight first-grade classrooms in Rhode Island, USA, under the headline "Learning improved by arts training." The German monthly magazine, Psychologie heute, portrayed an experimental school in Berlin, Germany, under the title "Musik macht Kinder klug" ("Music makes children smart").

As a researcher who for many years has dealt with extra-musical outcomes of music and music education, I too feel quite confident to confirm these reports and to answer "yes" to the question in the title, but: things are not quite that conclusive. We should not be simplistic about the positive outcomes of music education, and I will, after this short introduction, elaborate on five qualifications as regards this positive reply.

For the full story, go to <http://www.mca.org.au/m15217.htm>

FURTHER INFORMATION

Evidence showing the benefits of music and arts education is constantly evolving. Check the websites in our Resources section for further information and additional advocacy tools.

Link: [Resources](#)





YOUR SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAM



Parents and teachers can help to ensure that there is a comprehensive music program at their local school. Currently in Australian schools New South Wales is the only state with compulsory music education in the primary and secondary school. This falls a long way short of what music educators consider a good music education program.

What should you expect of the school music program?

Music educators agree that a good music education program provides a regular classroom music and performance program for every child.

A good music program:

- Is inclusive and meets the needs of the diversity of children;
- Is supported and valued by the school principal;
- Has suitable time allocation on the timetable which does not conflict with other subjects;
- Has strong links between classroom and instrumental programs;
- Has active support from the whole school-including resources, appropriate timetabling, recognition and support of the music staff and parental support;
- Is provided continuously from the first year of school until at least year 8, with the option of continuing through to year 12 - tertiary entrance level;
- Covers a range of activities including composing, performance, listening and responding;
- Integrates the elements of the program within the school to form a cohesive whole;
- Includes music performance activities such as: school bands; rock groups; choirs; ensembles; orchestra; music theatre performance; school musicals etc.; and
- Provides or facilitates instrumental tuition to support these music performance activities.

Important considerations for a successful school music program

- “ Every child should have the opportunity for instrumental or vocal instruction to help them reach a playing standard that is satisfying. In the earlier stages, it may be possible to provide this instruction in small groups. If a school is unable or unwilling to provide instruction, it can be sought outside school hours in the community.
- “ Time allocations for music programs depend on the grade level and curriculum requirements, but a program that is regular and consistently run throughout the school year is the preferred model.

See Link: [Resources](#) for information on advocating for an instrumental program.

- “ Children should have the opportunity to experience the excitement of live performances by skilled professional musicians. Organisations such as Musica Viva can supply specially prepared performers for school performances. Children see what magic is possible, and begin to absorb some of the special ethos around music making.
- “ Extra significance is added to a program if it has links into its community. School performing ensembles might perform in the community. Musicians from the community might play sometimes with school performing groups. There could be transition programs for school leavers that take them into community performing groups. The community could take some "ownership" and pride by giving financial support.

More 





YOUR SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAM



Links:

1 Musica Viva education programs

<http://www.mva.org.au/>

go to Schools section for information on tours by professional musicians to schools around Australia.

2 Australian orchestra education programs

<http://www.mso.com.au/education/index.asp>

<http://www.aso.com.au> go to education

<http://www.qso.com.au>-go to education

<http://www.tso.com.au>-go to education

<http://www.symphony.org.au>-go to education

<http://www.waso.com.au>-go to education

3 Australian opera education programs

<http://www.opera-australia.org.au/> Click on the Oz Opera link for education services

<http://www.waopera.asn.au/> Click on the Education link

<http://www.saopera.sa.gov.au/> Click on the Schools Company link

How can I ensure my school is providing a suitable music education program?

Check out what the school currently offers. The following questions might help.

- .. Does your child's school have a classroom music program and a performance program?
- .. Do the children enjoy being involved in the music program?
- .. Is music well taught? Are the children inspired by the music program?
- .. Does the school have sufficient music equipment: eg: a good range and number of instruments for classroom use and for instrumental programs; facilities for ; music technology experience; appropriate sound equipment etc?
- .. Is the equipment used regularly, well maintained and in sufficient quantity to suit class sizes or instrumental programs?
- .. Are there opportunities for varied and stimulating music experiences such as:
 - instrumental or vocal lessons
 - performances by music groups
 - experiences such as a composer in residence to teach and work with students on creative music making
 - possibilities such as tours for music groups-locally, regionally or even overseas, for competitions, performances etc
 - music camps for intensive music activities
 - music technology equipment
 - visits to the school by professional performers, including short residencies to develop special projects?





YOUR SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAM



What can you do to support music in your school?

Once you have identified the strengths and weaknesses of your school's program you are ready to take the next step.

Go to Link: [Being an advocate for music education](#)

Some examples of music programs in Australian schools

There are excellent music programs already in place in some Australian schools.

1. A Cool Place to be



PDF from MIA

This article describes a successful music program in a secondary school in New South Wales. Students had been dropping out of music so the school set up a new program that has been very successful in recapturing students' interest and involvement in music.

2. Link: <http://www.mca.org.au/mpfl/examples.htm>

3. Music programs in Australian schools

Music educators note music programs currently operating in Australian schools.

Tasmania

A high percentage of Tasmanian schools include a music specialist as a component of their staffing profile (around 95% of government schools, K-12). These teachers work with whole classes in general music programs using a range of activities to develop skills in creating, listening to and performing music. Additionally, it is common for them to offer elective performing groups (bands, choirs, guitar, recorder, percussion). In urban areas, their work is supported by instrumental teachers who visit the school to supply group tuition in wind, brass, percussion, guitar and orchestral strings (not necessarily all in all regions). They are funded by schools participating in the program, which operates in both primary and secondary schools. Senior secondary colleges (years 11 and 12) are generally able to supply 1:1 tuition, although there is a lot of parent involvement in this and certainly in earlier years group tuition is the norm. The Department of Education offers secondary music scholarships to assist families provide 1:1 tuition in years 8-10; these are highly competitive, with a success ratio of around 1:6. There is some system input to the 3 primary band programs which operate regionally.

Biggest problems: provision of instrumental tuition in regional and rural areas, and collaboration time for primary specialists to plan with classroom teachers.

Information from other states is to come.

This section is under development. More examples of music programs in Australian schools will be added in early 2004.





MUSIC EDUCATION ADVOCACY KIT

TALKING ABOUT MUSIC EDUCATION



Feel free to use any or all of these quotes to help you in advocating for music in your area.

'I would teach children music, physics and philosophy; but more importantly music; for in the patterns of music and all the arts, are the keys to learning.'

Plato

The vast majority (85%) of Australians agree that "the arts should be an important part of the education of every Australian kid"

Saachi and Saachi Australians and the Arts, Australia Council, Australia

In Australia, 36% of households contain at least one person who now plays a musical instrument. This equates to a rough estimate of 4 million people of all ages (5+ yrs) who play.

Australian Attitudes to Music, Nexus Research, 2001

Almost two-thirds of the population (64%) would completely agree that music is an activity that a child can enjoy all their life. Furthermore, music was viewed as being able to develop a child's creativity (58%) and that a school band was a good way of developing such skills (56%).

Australian Attitudes to Music, Nexus Research, 2001

The majority of people (63%) start playing a musical instrument when they are aged 5-11 yrs.

Australian Attitudes to Music, Nexus Research, 2001

'The arts and humanities help to lay the groundwork for accomplishment. We have seen it in our schools, where test scores are up and drop-out rates are down as a result of arts education.'

Bill Clinton, former US President

'Superior skills are needed to survive competitively in the global context. Acquiring them has to begin as early as possible in a child's education, and we see that it comes through arts education . . . Ashland support arts education-not only to build better kids but to build a better workforce.'

*Dan Lacy, Vice-president, Ashland Inc.
Making the Case for Arts Education, Ontario Arts Council*



More 

TALKING ABOUT MUSIC EDUCATION



Australian teachers and students talk about what music in school means to them

'I think it's a deeper way [of knowing]. You can get a certain experience from playing by yourself, but it's nothing to what you get in a small ensemble -an enormous experience. In a sixty-piece ensemble whose souls are intertwined, making a sound, my God, that's a pretty big thing. It's something out of this world, when you feel like you're going to burst into tears. It's that feeling, and you can't create that, you can only create the situation that makes it possible.'

Jane, conductor of a wind ensemble, describing her understanding of the value of ensemble playing to students.

'I think it is . . . actually getting to know them, through the music, and how they play and so on, and what they like to play. It sort of shows you a different side to people as well.'

Dennis: teacher

'Oh that was good, [creative projects]. I liked that. I remember doing something with James in a keyboard group and I still remember that it was good because we were [creating it] as we were going along. It was better-it was you making it, and it sounded good.'

Margaret, a sixteen-year-old piano player and composer, describing her experiences.

'I loved the creative activities. I always got excited when we were given a task to do that was creative. I remember once we were to make an answering machine jingle. That was one of my first experiences of making music for a purpose and that was really good fun. I love making my own music. I was glad that was part of the music syllabus.'

Edward, a seventeen-year-old guitarist and clarinet player, describing the opportunity for creative work in the classroom.

Linda: 'I was four years old, and it was just before my birthday And I still remember the picture of me sitting in front of the TV and there was a Philharmonic orchestra or something with a solo violinist and I remember exactly when I first went 'ohhh'. I don't remember anything else about being four except just this vision of a violin player getting a standing ovation from so many people, and sounding so good. And I just went [loudly] 'Mum I want a violin, now.' And she had never seen me so instantly interested in something and she said 'Oh my God better get her a violin now. So, I got one for my birthday. And I loved just the whole thing from there, from this one vision.'

Interviewer: 'So you heard really nice playing? What attracted you about the playing, was it the whole thing?'

Linda: 'Just the whole concept of so many people being so interested in something that you had a talent for. And just being able to stand up in front of so many people and saying look, this is what I'm good at. '

Early memories of what attracted a student to music and drove her to be a musician.

'To a certain extent, the way I think and often the way I speak is often about being able to talk about the music, [it] gives you skills, and social skills. Learning how to express [your self]-you can just play something that's hard to describe verbally . . . it's always a good thing to do, so it's helped me. And yeah a lot of things I say, a lot of adjectives, ... I'll think, ahh, that's a music term. '

Sixteen-year-old-drummer Jack discussed how his experiences with music have affected his ways of thinking.





TALKING ABOUT MUSIC EDUCATION



'It kind of makes me think in different areas . . . I think listening to music has a big effect on the way I think.'

Brian taking about music

'I'm into it because it gives me inspiration and it has meaning.'

Margaret

'I don't think anything comes near to it, I really don't. Nothing else in your school life, even academic achievement.'

Jessica talking about what music means to her at school.

What Australian school principals say about the value of the music program in their schools

'In respect to the music program here at Huonville, and to a great extent in the Huon Valley, we strongly value music as an essential part of the education of primary students. Not only do they learn music skills and appreciation, instruments and voice, the curriculum involves many areas of the Essential Learnings including thinking, communicating, creating preferred futures, building strong citizens, maintaining well being and valuing diversity.'

Great music curriculums depend on committed, passionate teachers who in turn nurture self-confident, skilled, proud young students, a simple recipe really!'

*Rob Banfield
Principal
Huonville Primary School*

'I see music as an integral and extremely valuable part of our school educational program. For many high school students, it is the one area in which they can really excel. I could cite several instances where music and the music teacher have made the difference between a student remaining at school and gaining success or dropping out and being reduced to failure. For primary students, not only does a good music program give them the opportunity to experience another medium, I also believe that there is a direct link between rhythm and the ability to learn and memorise for many students. A good music program which is tuned in to the needs of students not only forms close links between school and life for many students, but it also develops close links with parents and our wider community. Schools can't exist without one.'

*John Marshall
Principal
St Helens District High School*





MUSIC EDUCATION ADVOCACY KIT

TALKING ABOUT MUSIC EDUCATION



'Being one of the multiple intelligences, music makes an important contribution in providing a balanced education. Music promotes the acquisition and development of many skills. It enhances hand/eye co-ordination, fine and gross motor skills, SELF CONFIDENCE, CONCENTRATION and memory. Music also provides rich opportunities for purposeful interaction with others. As an integrated part of the curriculum, music aids the development of literacy and numeracy skills. There is a strong body of research which indicates children who are exposed to a rich related arts experience perform better in other areas of their academic pursuits. Some children who have difficulty in other subjects at school can shine in music, thus building self esteem and a positive attitude to their learning.'

*Peter Marmion
Principal
Lansdowne Crescent Primary School*

'The music program is a crucial part of our school. By giving importance to the Arts and show-casing it both publicly and privately, it provides a school with a soul. It is also an important part of the extra curricula program and provides another avenue for boys to focus their energies. A number of boys come to us because of the music program.'

*Ian Morgan
Principal
New Town High School for boys*

'Our program and experiences demonstrate clearly the importance of the arts and music in particular as a critical component in a child's education and overall development.'

As well as the obvious and well documented reasons relating to social, intellectual, aesthetic, spiritual and emotional etc well-being of young people music in our School has contributed significantly to continuation of history and tradition, a sense of community and belonging within and across class and grade groups, houses, the performing arts and the whole school. It is central to celebration and the concept of performance lends itself perfectly to the new curriculum developments. As well as an opportunity for performance in its own right, music and the associated arts becomes a vehicle through which many of the essential learnings can be addressed-and this is already indicated at our School in the ways in which students engage in all the 'real work'/ problem solving/ project based matters. '

*Judy Bennett
Principal
Ogilvie High School for girls*

With thanks to all involved in providing and collating quotes for this site.

During 2004 we will include pictures on this module for use with quotes and other advocacy material.





BEING AN ADVOCATE FOR MUSIC EDUCATION

What should I do to advocate for a music program in the local school?

Assuming you are a teacher, parent, principal or interested community member wishing to ensure the local school has a good music program, we offer the following suggestions. This is by no means intended to be a complete guide. There are many other resources available and we note many of these in the following information.

The following action list may help

1. IDENTIFY.

- Begin by gathering information about the school's current music program, if any. Find out what is already in place. Ask questions. The purpose here is to identify what is needed and not currently offered.
 - o Is there a music program at the school?
 - o How much time is given to music for each student per week?
 - o Do all students have music as part of their timetable?
 - o Does the school have a curriculum commitment or policy about music? If so, what is the nature of the commitment/policy?
 - o Does the school involve community musicians or identified community music programs that would be of benefit to the students?
 - o Does the school take advantage of involvement with professional musicians-or performances by professional musicians to extend the music program?
- Our checklist has further suggestions for information gathering.

Link: [Your School Music Program](#) 

2. ORGANISE

Advocacy is easier and likely to be more effective when a group of people is involved. Identify possible allies to help you such as:

- o music teachers
- o music students who are passionate about the skills they are learning
- o musicians in the community
- o employers who recruit music-trained people and value the critical skills they bring: critical thinking and problem solving
- o local businesses that value music in education
- o community leaders-politicians, local councilors etc
- o school principals who are committed to music education
- o school committee/board members who are committed to music
- o parents who want a strong music education program for their children



More 



BEING AN ADVOCATE FOR MUSIC EDUCATION

3. DISCOVER

Here we need to identify the people in the community who make decisions about school curriculum. Or, identify those who can influence the decision makers. These people might be:

- o school principals
- o school council members
- o other school administrators
- o parents associations
- o teacher associations, especially music teacher associations
- o local media
- o local and state politicians
- o federal politicians
- o teacher unions

4. DEVISE THE APPROACH

By this stage we know what is needed at the school for an effective music program; there is probably a group of supporters gathered to help with the project and the decision makers are known. Now is the time to develop strategies and tactics to approach the decision makers.

- Compile information that will be needed when presenting the case to decision makers.

Information might include the following.

- o The value of music education for children

Link: [Why Music is important](#) ❖

- o Academic and social benefits of a music education

Link: [Music makes the difference](#) ❖

- o Music educators' definition of a good school music program

Link: [Your School Music Program](#) ❖

- o Ask for help from specialists such as music teachers to assemble the information you will present.
- o Consider asking people working in music to help with information.



More ❖



BEING AN ADVOCATE FOR MUSIC EDUCATION

- Decide how the case will be presented. What techniques and presentation style will be used.
 - o Decide whether the case will be made at a parent/teacher meeting, or a principals' meeting or other forum.
 - o Musicians and specialist music teachers might help by acting as guest speakers for a presentation. Contact organizations such as:
 - ASME - Australian Society for Music Education - <http://www.asme.edu.au/>
 - aMuse - Association of Music Educators, Victoria - <http://www.amuse.vic.edu.au/>
 - MCA - Music Council of Australia - <http://www.mca.org.au/>
 - o Arrange for decision makers to be present at a music performance by school students, as part of your approach.
 - o Inform decision makers about relevant arts education activities such as Artists in Schools, performance programs etc, to encourage their interest.
 - o Encourage local businesses to sponsor a school concert so that they are included as advocacy partners to support your case.

Further suggestions are at:

Link: http://www.amc-music.org/dr_tim.htm



Essential Advocacy Resources for Music.

5. FOLLOW UP

Assuming that your contact or presentation to the decision makers has been implemented, make sure to follow up and ensure that decisions are put in place. Advocates may need to have regular follow-up sessions with the decision makers to ensure that music programs are maintained. Sometimes programs are cut by budget demands or other curriculum pressures, so it is important to maintain vigilance.

6. OTHER INFORMATION

Help is available in Australia for music education advocates

Advocates who need assistance to advocate for their music education program will be able to consult with consultants who will help with information and advice.

To discuss or arrange consultancies or workshops, please contact the campaign managers, Lou Bacchiella or Frank Panucci at lou.mpfl@mca.org.au or frankpanucci@tpg.com.au

For Teachers, the following article provides further information.
Making a Difference: Effective Music Advocacy

Dr Margaret Barrett outlines the essential advocacy components of the music educator's professional portfolio.



article from Music in Action Issue #1





RESOURCES



There are many resources available on the Web and from other sources to help you advocate for music education. Here are some that might be useful for additional information.

Publications and brochures

(1) Free publication covering all the issues about music's value in education, available in Australia.

Why Music in Basic: The Value of Music Education

compiled and edited by Bruce Pearson, published Neil A Kjos

Available from Encore Music Distributors, 227 Napier Street, FITZROY 3065 Phone: 03 9415 6677 or sales@encoremusic.com.au

(2) Free brochures about the benefits of music for children . Music Makes the Difference available from the Australian Music Association, MBE 148, 45 Glenferrie Road, MALVERN, 3144. Phone: 03 9527 6658 or info@australianmusic.asn.au

(3) Publication prepared by Australian music educators, the ASME Advocacy publication. Order via: <http://www.asme.edu.au/> and go to the Advocacy link on that site.

Web sites

Advocacy for music instrumental programs:

<http://www.musicachievementcouncil.org/>

Research about music education benefits:

<http://www.isme.org/article/archive/26>

<http://imr.utsa.edu/>

<http://www.music-research.com/>

<http://www.musica.uci.edu/>

Music and science information archive.

General sites that provide useful information for parents and teachers:

<http://www.amc-music.org/>

<http://www.menc.org/>

<http://www.supportmusic.com/>

<http://www.giarts.org/Learning.pdf> Learning and the Arts: Crossing Boundaries

<http://www.aaae.org/>

<http://www.namm.com/>

<http://www.naea-reston.org/>

Parent Advocacy booklet

Australian sites providing general music education support

<http://www.asme.edu.au/>

Mainly for teachers.

<http://www.australianmusic.asn.au/> For parents and community members.

<http://amuse.vic.edu.au/>

This is mainly for teachers.

More 





MUSIC EDUCATION ADVOCACY KIT

RESOURCES



Sites about various education methods and organizations in Australia

<http://kodaly.org.au/>

The Kodaly Australia site

<http://www.dalcroze.org.au/>

Dalcroze Australia site

<http://www.ancos.org.au/>

Orff Schulwerk Australia site

Other advocacy kits available on the web

Some of these kits are in related subject areas of the arts-dance, drama and visual arts, but the resources are equally valid for music.

<http://www.ascd.org/advocacykit>

<http://www.principals.org/advocacy>

<http://www.createchange.org/librarians/advocacy/intro>

<http://www.culturematters.ca/kit>

http://www.pta.org//parentinvolvement/familyfun/ff_neaquestions.asp

<http://www.nasaa-arts.org/publications/advo.shtml>

<http://www.aep-arts.org/advocacy/html>

<http://www.musicfriends.org/>

