

WEBINAR TRANSCRIPT

Making Music and Building Brains: How to Maximize Listening and Spoken Language (LSL) Through Musical Experiences

>> MARGE EDWARDS: Thank you so much, Karen, welcome, everyone. It is my pleasure to welcome and introduce Amy McConkey Robbins. Amy is a speech language pathologist and Auditory Verbal practitioner in private practice in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Amy has contributed over 100 research and clinical publications in professional journals and textbooks. With Chris Barton, she has published two music resources, TuneUps and Auditunes, for children with hearing loss, caregivers and clinicians. Amy is the recipient of the Richard Miyamoto Award for LSL service and was named a

Distinguished Alumna of Purdue University. In addition, Indiana's governor appointed her Vice Chair of Healthy Hoosiers Foundation,

which focuses on public health issues in Indiana.

Please join me in welcoming Amy for today's webinar.

>> AMY MCCONKEY ROBBINS: Hello, everyone. I'm so pleased to be here, and I'm so pleased to have you with us. Thank you for joining us. Thank you to Hearing First for inviting me to present this information for you today and for acknowledging that music is such an important part of a successful LSL path.

I have three goals for us today. We're going to learn about the many benefits that music has for children on a LSL path. We're going to review 13 practical top tips for using music at home with young children who follow a LSL program. And I hope you will leave the webinar with the confidence to create at least three different kinds of songs for the children in your home, or the children you work with, or your grandchildren to create and select songs that are personalized to the children in your life.

Music is a gift to us. And I do want to say that if we're not using music with our LSL children, we're withholding a gift that is there for the taking.

Some say, well, gee, isn't this a new phenomenon that people are interested in music and using music with deaf children? The answer is, music has been used for decades, recommended by some of the pillars of our field, Arthur Booth Roid, Daniel Ling, Warren Estabrooks. They noted some of the benefits they saw clinically from music. Those are all still important. We have an advantage today. That is the fact that we have modern tools to investigate and to report research results on how music helps children who are born deaf and receive hearing technology. All of the statements that you see on this slide are

verified by research evidence. And look at some of them. I want to see, as you glance at these and they're in no particular order I to see if you might focus on one of them and tell us in the chat, why is that skill important to a child? Why would one of those things be considered something important that we would want to develop? We would want that advantage? I'll show you the next slide, which would be those findings again. Take a look at those and let us know what you think.

One said music helps auditory memory. You will notice on this slide I call music a memory magnet. Things that are learned through music stick. We hold on to them for a long time. Heather you note that we develop better intonation and pitch. Rhythm in speech and timing in speech was documented decades ago by Osburger and Collins. You can say all the consonants and vowels correctly, but if the timing is off, speech is not intelligible. Helps with prosody. Absolutely. And this comment about feeling a part of a culture, of a country, of your school because you know your school song of the religious tradition and your team. Absolutely. Oral reading fluency. You are way ahead of the game on this. You are doing brilliantly on this. I can tell you are very experienced. I want to point out a couple of things on the slide we might not have mentioned. One of them is that music actually having music in your background helps us discern the emotional meaning in a speaker's voice. That was one of the most interesting articles that you can read. And why would that be important? Because that is the link to social integration, to understanding subtle nuances that are communicated by the voice. And if you don't understand those, you may be among some of the LSL kids who are successful in school and have good speech and language, but they are not included socially in a complete way. Music can help that. Musical experiences make us better listeners in noise. Every child that wears technology has to deal with noise every day. Every adult that wears technology like me has to deal with noise every day.

When we can benefit, we can sort out the signal, the language from the background noise, that benefits us.

What we believe. I would be remiss if I didn't include my colleague Chris Barton in what I talk about today. She's taught me everything I know about music and in LSL in children. She's a board certified musician and brings a different bend to our co partnership. We have co treated a lot of kids over the years.

Here are our premises. Your voice is the most powerful musical instrument you have. Not the DVD player. Not YouTube. Not your streaming service. Your voice. Your voice is live. Your voice is reflective of your child's mood, your voice can alter things. Here's the most important reason. Your voice comes from within you. And this is what I tell children. Your voice is inside you. You don't need batteries for it. You will never forget it in your backpack. It is within you. I like kids to understand the resources they can bring forth to help them in this world in their thinking, remembering, school those resources inside them are the most effective. To show kids they have a voice we have to use our voice.

Musical is joyful. We have neurotransmitters and various secretions in our body when we hear and participate in music. It physiologically lifts us up.

The music therapy community considers music a verb. So they talk about doing music. It is active. We don't watch. They say "musicing" sometimes. It shares principles with language but not exactly like spoken language, of course. The fact it is different works in our favor. Because spoken language can be confrontational. Music on the other hand is invitational. I will give you an example of that.

Looking at you, my child in a practice. And I say Billy, what color are your shoes. There is uncomfortable silence, eye contact and now it is Billy's responsibility, according to conversational rules to respond to me. Maybe Billy doesn't know the answer. Maybe he doesn't know the answer, maybe he's too shy to give the answer, if he knows it. Maybe he doesn't know the color of his shoes. There is a group of children I have seen all these years that don't respond to this kind of confrontational language. They're slow to get started with spoken language. I don't know if you have seen those kinds of kids. They're the ones that when you invite them to participate in music, they tend to respond and we open the door with music, and then we can flow through with language.

I'm going to give you another example. You complete this musical phrase. Ready?

(Vocalizing)

I invited you to participate. Right? Some of you went (vocalizing) some of you thought in your head and audiated. Some of you checked your phone. So you received my invitation, but could respond as you wished. And that is the same thing that children can do when we use music. I wish I had known this at times when I was working with children that seemed to be resistant or lacked motivation for spoken language. I would have medium light started using more music. The preeminent researcher in the area of the benefits of music, Dr. Nina Kraus from Northwestern University wrote this in an article. Probably the healthiest thing to do for our brains is to make music. If that is not an endorsement for music, I don't know what is.

We have a six word motto. Do music, rule music hopefully with your voice every day.

We have a jump start. For those that are in this webinar and don't have experience with music, you are farther along than you know.

The reason for that is nature has made our early communication with babies musical. We naturally do that. People in different languages do it. They use Motherese, which is that lovey voice that we will go over. That has musical melodic intonation and that sound that is musical. We use this rhythmic motion when we hold babies, we sway, pat, rock. I call it SPROCKing. It is easier to say we need to SPROCK. Amazingly, if you read the work of Tonya Butler in Indianapolis. She studies how mothers get their baby's attention in the first year of life by using this love language that is unique to that mom. They call this mom's signature tune. It could almost be a musical fingerprint because it identifies to the baby that's my mother.

Thank you.

So top home ideas for LSL parents of young kids. I listed 13 of them here. You will notice seven of them have double asterisks. Those are tips that actually help you learn how to create songs, how to compose them. We're going to go over each of the tips as we go through the webinar.

So the first one is SPROCKing. People do this naturally. Parents do this. Fathers, mothers do this. We pat, sway, and rock. Notice both parents are SPROCKing, we notice babies are responsive to their baby's mood.

So what the mom is humming or singing at the bottom might be (vocalizing)

And what the mom at the top is probably doing as she SPROCKs. Oh, oh, oh, it is okay, I love my baby, no, don't cry. We respond to the mood of the baby and our music at the top we SPROCK reflects their mood. And there is a big payoff to SPROCKing, which is that this teaches babies when I hear music I respond by engaging in what we call the Baby Bop.

The Baby Bop is rhythmic movements and eventually clapping and other types of signs that babies give us that they recognize that music is present.

So we're going to see a video now of Annabelle, she was nine months old. She failed her newborn screening and was aided early. She wears hearing aids. She's been in LSL therapy and done a lot of SPROCKing and musical exposure. You will see her sitting on the floor distracted and music starts in the form of my voice. I want you to observe some of the musical things happening in this video.

(Video)

>> KAREN HYDER: A reminder to participants, as the audio changes you might need to adjust the audio settings in the lower left corner of the screen to make it louder or more quiet. I will mute my mic and click play. Stand by.

(Video)

>> Round and round and round and round, round. You are hearing music. Annabelle is listening. Round and round and round and round (sing songy)

Oh.

>> AMY MCCONKEY ROBBINS: All right. I invite you to share your perspective. What musical elements or techniques did you see happening there? What was the LSL clinician doing to use music with Annabelle?

Repetition, absolutely. Repetition is a big one. Singing, narrating what the child was doing. Fantastic. You are hearing music. Yes. Getting the attention of the baby. Getting attention and holding attention are so important. A slower rate. Yes, Becky. Wonderful, Lisa. My voice round and round matched the rhythm of the toy that was spinning and then Annabelle matched the rhythm in her bopping. I used her name, absolutely. I called her Annabelle. I told her what she was doing. Annabelle is listening. Wonderful contributions, thank you, everyone.

I want to lift up a couple other things. The tune I was using is one of the easiest tunes you can use when you create songs. It is called the Mama Interval. We'll learn how to do it in a minute.

Another thing I did was in addition to all the things you all pointed out, which was terrific, I used a motion in my voice. You can hear when someone is talking and they're about to laugh. Right? You can hear that. You can hear that in musical recordings. You can hear Paul McCartney who is has a big smile on his face when he's singing.

Annabelle could hear that I was so happy and proud of her by the way that my voice changed when I smiled. All of those were factors that contributed to Annabelle being a successful Baby Bopper.

Okay. Second home idea. Outside Motherese, Fatherese, Parentese. This is that language that is already very musical. It is slower than speech. And it has more exaggerated contours, doesn't it? Little baby. Daddy's here. Daddy's here. What are you thinking, hmm? Daddy's here with baby. You gab the baby's attention. Which is a huge thing. Some of you mentioned that in what I was doing with Annabelle. If you know the work of Derrick Houston, who was my colleague here in Indiana University Medical School, he studies the attention of babies. It is difficult to secure their attention. When we can do that, wonderful.

The other thing is look at the close proximity, look how beneficial and good the environment is for listening. The acoustic, auditory environment here. Some said, this is like baby talk. If you want to call it baby talk, baby talk is really good for babies. So we encourage all caregivers to use this.

Home idea number 3, make up a song using just two notes. That is what I did with Annabelle, back and forth, back and forth. That is called the Mama Interval. Imagine you are a 19 month old on the side of the crib, you are holding on you want out. You want to get out upon you yell mamma. I invite you to do that now out loud. If you do something out loud, your brain can hear yourself think. You'll remember it better. Be a baby yelling at mama. If you continue that, mama, mama, mama, in musical terms, this is a minor third interval. It is universal. Children use it. Nana nana booboo, you can't catch me.

It is raining, it's pouring. When we would jump rope, the rhymes are on the Mama Interval. Mama told daddy and baby told Pa. This is (vocalizing)

This is natural, easy interval to put words to. Here we are with mom. Look at the picture with Tommy. You can see what they're doing with the cars. This ramp too. I'm inviting you to create a song on the Mama Interval, again, out loud so your brain can hear yourself think. And use the Mama Interval and talk about what's happening here.

While you do that, I am going to do it as well.

Mom says ... Tommy likes to play with cars and the ramp. Blue cars, red cars, green cars and yellow. The ramps go down, down, down they go. The cars go down, down, down they go.

And I think you had probably created something like that. Mom is using that interval to create a little song that describes what Tommy is doing.

I want to remind you, there is no such thing as a bad voice, a bad singing voice. I urge you to never say I can't sing, I don't have a good voice. If you say that, children hear it and think, well, if it is possible to have a bad voice, maybe I have a bad voice. Maybe I can't sing either. Your voice is beautiful to your child. Use it with gusto.

Okay. This Mama Interval, remember ... (vocalizing) sometimes it has a third note. Two or three notes. This is a really good suggestion is sing books on the Mama Interval. I have shown you three of the tried and true books I use a lot when I show parents how to use the Mama Interval to read a book. These are simple books that have phrases or even single words, short language that is repetitive. Is rhythmic. That is the kind of book you would use for a Mama Interval.

Like hand, hand, fingers, thumb, one thumb, one thumb, one thumb, drumming on a drum. One hand, two hands, drumming on a drum. Dum, didity, dum, didity, dum, dum, dum. Why do this instead of read

this book? I think by now you know the first answer is capture his attention, keep his attention, the mom's auditory is more salient. The kids can read to themselves (babbling) earlier than read the words in the book. They will eventually read the words. They can show their competence earlier with the Mama Interval.

I will just caution you that you don't use the Mama Interval when reading books that have beautiful narrative language. That wouldn't make sense.

We wouldn't read let's say good night moon. In the great green room there was a telephone. No, because the lyrical language of that book is already beautiful. In the great green room, there was a telephone, and a red balloon, and a picture of the cow jumping over the moon.

So that is musical enough. We will use the Mama Interval with the simple repetitive books.

Okay. Fourth idea. This is a tried and true LSL strategy that you know. Which is alerting young children when sound starts. We often do this with environmental sounds, or with speech. And I am proposing that you do it when music starts. Ah, ... excited face, curious expression. And then start SPROCKING.

You are showing the child when I hear music, it makes me move. Another thing that will contribute to kids doing the Baby Bop. Which is a milestone that is very important. When you see the Baby Bop, lift up parents, say oh, my goodness, she did it, she did the Baby Bop, look at that. She has category categorical perception. In her brain, less than a year old, think of Annabelle. She has a category now called music. She only bops when she hears music. The other category is everything that is not music. She's already established that.

So this Hand to Ear Cue helps. It is equally important to point out when the sound stops, the music stops. Oh, ... the music stopped. I don't hear it.

Use a variety of accents and voices and pitches when you are reading stories in books. You change your voice in ways that are musical. This makes reading so much more interesting, but it also identifies for children something that will become important, which is what we call the indexical features of speech. It means the things that give away ourselves through our voice. Our gender, our age, our health condition, those things are all portrayed in our voice. Indexical features. So in our family, we celebrate Saint Patrick's Day with a big party. Every year, we read Jamie O'Roark and the baked potato. And it is a terrible accent. Saint bridges and the saints preserve us not only the laziest man in Ireland but a fool as well. The kids laugh because they recognize this is something different. It is speech and it sounds different. But it has a lilt to it.

What about one of my favorite children's books. Are you my mother. And the bird falls out of the nest and asks different animals, even nonanimals. He goes up to a bulldozer, are you my mother. The bulldozer said I'm not your mother, I'm a bulldozer. What you can do with your voice by manipulating it in pitch rhythm accent has musicality to it.

Okay. Narrate your day by singing what you are thinking and doing. Years ago, I would have said by singing what you are doing. We know now how important it is to talk to children about what you are thinking. This is theory of mind. For kids to already get exposed to the words that express thought, feeling, belief.

So here we have mom and Luke, her toddler has been fussy.

And she is trying to entertain him using wooden spoon as a microphone. Look at this scenario. And see if you can come up with a little narration that you say out loud so your brain can hear yourself think that would reflect what's happening here. Luke is fussy. Mom is trying to keep him under control. So your melody is going to be just random notes. Okay?

Like let's say, I made some bread but it looks so dry, so dry, so dry. We're going to melt the butter. To pour it on that dry bread. Luke and mom are melting the butter. Just random notes.

I watched one of my sons with his newborn go round and round his kitchen island when the baby was fussing talking about we're in the kitchen, I see mommy's plants. He was holding the baby. And we can also play with the sink, turn on the water, water, water. Just narrating. The repetition is always good. That is another way to create a song that is happening now.

I love that the mom has a microphone, because now she can turn it over to Luke and give him a turn.

What about using songs somebody else wrote? I like that idea. Publish songs. Chris Barton has come up with so many cute songs, including this one, what's in the box. The words and the music to it are in the chapter in the Estabrooks book that is referenced. We sing it when we are going to present something. When something is coming into view, as soon as we start singing that song, the child knows something is going to appear.

It is a WH question. What's in the box, what's in the box? I can't wait to see what's in the box. You can say the bag, the drawer, my purse, my pocket, whatever is appropriate.

Let's watch Danny, who is 3. He'll be singing two songs on this video. He was born deaf. He had his first CI at 13 months and the second about six months later.

So these songs were both composed by Chris Barton, as I said. So he knows them both. He's going to sing what's in the box with me. And then we're going to song hoppity hop as I way of expanding vocabulary.

We're working on depth of lexical knowledge.

(Video)

(Singing)

>> What's in the box, what's in the box.

>> I can't wait to see what's in the box.

>> Very.

>> Oh, boy, a baby frog.

>> A baby frog on top of the mommy frog. They go hypothesis, hoppity, hop, hop, hop, hoppity hop. I love this rhythm.

>> Hoppity hop, hoppity hop.

>> I have something else you can do. He can leap. Leap, leap.

>> Lalala.

>> Leap, leap, leapity leap.

>> I do it.

>> You can do it. Okay.

>> Leap, leap, leapity leap. Leap, leapity leap. Leapity leap.

>> Leapity leapity leap.

>> AMY MCCONKEY ROBBINS: What musical techniques did you see happening there? What responses or behaviors did Danny demonstrate?

Yes, repetition for sure. Pitch matching. There was a little part of what's in the box. When he sings, I can't wait to see he's right on pitch. And then he loses it. What's in the box. If you look at the music milestones we have a nice handout that has been developed for you that is user friendly that shows milestones for children in activities that correspond to achieving the milestones.

Danny might be a little delayed in his pitch replication of the songs, but not by much. Now, he is certainly not matching most of the melody. You wouldn't know how the song sounds if I weren't singing along. But that is developmentally appropriate or slightly delayed.

The movement to music, yes. There's an action with the hopping of the frog that matches and then he added the little when it goes leapity, leapity, he actually has the little dotted notes, which I find fantastic for a child born deaf that he can enjoy music like this. The basic beat, Val. That is right. He's always on beat, never off. His rhythm is very good. His pitch and melody falls behind, which is the way children develop music, after all.

Oh, Karen says that the clinician allowed the child to interject and say I can do it and allowed him to take over. And hopefully I'm as flexible as that all the time. I'm not sure I am. Thanks for lifting that up.

One other comment I was going to make is that Chris Barton originally wrote the pop song as zip, zip, zipity, zip. Zip, zip, zipity zip. When she unzipped the cases for her music. She went to Saint Joseph institute. She would walk in and the kids would say music is here. Then she did the zip, zip. And we decided to include the song in our TuneUps curriculum. And we discovered you can insert any verb in there. And now she has the hop, hoppity version on her YouTube channel. We will get you the link to that. I invite you to go to Chris Barton's YouTube channel and see most of the songs from TuneUps and other things she's written with some really cute, simple illustrations.

How do we spell her name? You mean Chris Barton's name. B a r t o n.

Thank you, Karen.

Piggybacking. This is going to be another thing you will use over and over again. Let's just use the melody that somebody else wrote and put our own words on it. Here is a list. This comes from a chapter that Chris Barton and I wrote for the recent Jane Maydel and Jung Hewitt book on Auditory Verbal. You

use the melody there. And they're better than the melodies I make up and more interesting than the Mama Interval. I tend to use the Farmer in the Dell a lot. I had a child who wouldn't who started throwing a tantrum at the end of every session. He didn't want to leave. We tried several things. Finally leaving one day, mom and I were at the bottom of the stairs, I started singing. It's time to say good bye. It's time to say good bye. I looked over he had stopped crying, he was looking at us, and I was like come on mom. We are going up the stairs, and he followed us, it's time to say good bye.

And we repeated, it we got to the door. He got his treat. It is time to say good bye. Bye bye. For the first time in a long time, the session ended really well.

Look at some of the tunes. You know almost all of them. You just Piggyback by putting your own words to it.

Let's say pick a tune. Try this. Everybody pick a tune.

Any tune that is familiar you to. I want you to create a little ditty about the need to wash your hands. Which is something we always tell kids they have to do. And to do it out loud, to yourself on whatever tune. I will pick a tune here. Goodnight ladies. Wash your hands, wash your hands, they get really dirty, so wash your hands.

Pick another tune.

We the wheels on the bus. We the wheels on the bus go round and round we wash our hands when we come inside, come inside, we get under our dirty nails then our hands are clean.

Somebody said they're using head, shoulders knees and toes. That is good one. Row, row your boat is so good. Wash, wash, wash your hands. That's a perfect one.

Here we go round the mulberry bush. There are certain tunes you will Piggyback on more often than others. Each of us has a preference. That's fine.

Use songs as time markers at home. In other words, they occur repeatedly to signal something in the daily schedule. You will find that children can anticipate better when they know the routine, you already know that. But when they can do it with song, even before they understand an explanation, a verbal explanation, this can really help with compliance and behavior.

I want to sing a song Chris Barton wrote for me when I told her that I had encountered parents who said it is really hard to get the technology on my baby first thing in the morning. She's grumpy, doesn't want to put them on. We go downstairs we have breakfast, and then I don't want her to get oatmeal in them. We don't have them on. And all of a sudden, two hours have passed. You think oh, my goodness, this is two hours of the richest most important language and the child isn't hearing it. Chris said you need a song. Of course, you need a song to sing for putting on the technology. The words and music in this are in my chapter, the Estabrooks chapter. I will sing it to you. Babies in the crib. The technology is very nearby, no place the baby can get to, obviously, I walk in the room as she's stirring. I sing while putting on the Cochlear implant and hearing aid.

Good morning, little darlin'. Good morning to you. Put your ears on little darlin' let's count them, one, two. Can you hear me say, ah? Hear me say ooh? Can you hear me say, I love you. And now the

technology is on, we can go down and have breakfast. And she's hearing everything. And that song signals I put my technology when I hear my mother's lovely soothing voice. I'm not guaranteeing the technology will stay on all day of course. You will have the typical resistance we have from kids but we'll put them back on until that kind of behavior ends.

Just a few more suggestions here. Be sure we label the words we're using that relate to music. Talk about your voice. You're singing! I said to Annabelle, you are hearing music. This dad is playing those games with perhaps imitation and then he says I love it when you make music. That's awesome. I love your singing voice. That's good singing. We're all about language in our field, right?

We need to use the specific vocabulary that relates to music. And in a little while, when this little boy is a bit older, we're going to emphasize the difference between the singing voice, the humming voice and the speaking voice.

And if you haven't ever worked on that with kids you will be surprised how early they figure that out. That is a really important, verbal and auditory distinction to make.

The greatest hit technique. When you don't know what to say, go back in your memory to a song that was meaningful to you. To a song that evokes a good feeling. Often these are things with our own parents, with caregivers. And sing that to your child.

You will feel a connection and baby will feel the connection because that song is comes from your heart.

You will find for families who say it is really hard for me to know what to do with music, this is one of the important ones to use. This is very important for bilingual families. Encouraging them to use songs that come from their cultural tradition, to sing them in their language.

I had a family the mother was perfectly bilingual, in Afrikaans and English. She said I cannot sing and do lovey music with my baby in English, I can only do it in Afrikaans. Maybe because that was always early in Afrikaans. Encourage bilingual families to do that in the language that they're comfortable.

Of course, we don't want to forget about nursery rhymes and finger plays with hand motions. You know like patty cake patty cake. Or itsy bitsy spider. Or here is the church, here is the steeple. Open the door, here's all the people.

This is if you use these repeatedly with kids and you try out of their sight you try starting the rhyme, starting the music, if you see the baby respond by making the hand gestures, that's a big deal. That is a big deal to lift up to parents. Your baby made a connection between that tune and these little motions. It is a kind of comprehension. It is a comprehension baby can show before they can show us linguistic comprehension.

Our final home idea, I want you to sing a simple familiar song and then pause as you get to the end of the line and see if baby can fill in that word or that phrase. Now, you can do this. You know, in spoken language we call this auditory closure. In musical terms you can do it with a commonly known song like old McDonald had a farm ... right, I'm looking right at the baby and I'm looking for anticipatory expression. It is your turn. You want the child to say E aye, E aye oh. This is a situation where the siblings come in handedly. Lots of the techniques, the tips include siblings. Siblings get a big kick. The child doesn't

complete it, the sibling can do it. The other parent can do it. Model it, don't put pressure on the child to do it until they're ready.

So we will close with a song about a cat. Our little patient that Chris and I co treated had her cat called Kay Kay. I had cat toys because this is the type of thing where I would probably have something that would represent a cat. And your job in this musical masterpiece (humming) is to sing one word, which is cat. Try that out loud. Cat.

I will use this guy. Cat. You got it? I will sing the lines. You are going to finish each line with cat. Here we go. Oh, my kitty, oh, my kitty.

Oh, my kitty, oh, my kitty. Oh, my kitty, oh, my kitty, oh, my kitty. Cat. Oh, my kitty, oh, my kitty, oh, my kitty cat. Oh, my kitty cat. It is a three word song. This little girl, every time we did it got so excited because we were singing about Kay Kay.

In conclusion, I just want to remind you of our motto and encourage you, do music. Real music. Every day. I want to wish you all the best of luck. You deaf and hard of hearing very important work with your children as a clinician, as a parent or grandparent.

And some resources have come on the screen that I think you will appreciate. Sharing music with your baby at home reviews a lot of the tips that we covered today. And the music milestones will show you what is expected in children and how to work on achieving that milestone. Thank you.

>> MARGE EDWARDS: Amy, thank you so much. This was wonderful. I want to remind everybody, we have a few minutes here in our Q&A. And we would love to receive your questions. We do have several individuals that have asked questions. So I think a.m., I'm going to start with it's not necessarily a question, but it is a story from one of our participants.

So Anita shared, my kids always made fun of my singing voice because it was very high pitched. My grandson was born, my daughter continued to make fun of me. I told her, she was shutting off a mode of communication between me and her child and she relented. Months later, she said she just loved to see her son's reaction when I sang. I think she had totally forgotten our initial conversation.

>> AMY MCCONKEY ROBBINS: Wow! Bravo to you for making it clear this so important. For not denying this the gift. This is something you don't want to deny. We don't want children to think some people have a good voice and some don't because they will perhaps turn that on themselves. Bravo to you for your bravery. You did the right thing.

>> MARGE EDWARDS: I agree. Thank you, Amy. I have another question here that came up actually in the chat during your presentation. This is from Theodora. Is the minor third interval equivalent to the Mama Interval?

>> AMY MCCONKEY ROBBINS: Yes, absolutely they're the same thing. Musicians call it minor third interval and clinicians call it the Mama Interval. The Mama Interval is the euphemism for it.

>> MARGE EDWARDS: I have one family that insists their toddler doesn't like music or doesn't respond to it. How do you respond to parents when they say their toddler doesn't seem to like music that much?

>> AMY MCCONKEY ROBBINS: You have to show them by doing. You have to engage in an activity where the child really shows interest. I don't know the age of the child, but you can point out things like look, it got her attention. That alone is a big learning advantage. We got her attention. We held her attention. Look at this, she's interested in this. Oh, my gosh, she's imitating me rocking back and forth. You will have to breakdown music in very small pieces for them to understand that all of the pieces she's trying to demonstrate those. And that they're all part of the foundation that is going to build if we don't use music, we're denying the child some of the benefit that can help her learn faster. I would say that to parents. Children learn faster when music is part of their background.

I know you love your child and you want her to do her best. Let's think about how to help her with music. I wouldn't confront them and say you are wrong. I know you wouldn't do this. Your child does love music. Just demonstrate by showing.

>> MARGE EDWARDS: Perfect. I love that Amy. I remember hearing you say earlier in the presentation, musicing. I just love that as a verb. It is wonderful.

A couple more questions here. We have several more. So we'll see how many we can get to here. When do you introduce musical instruments?

>> AMY MCCONKEY ROBBINS: Musical instruments can come into play as early as the child can hold them. I'm going to emphasize here musical instruments. There aren't many mechanical what is the word for this? Battery operated toys that make music that impress me very much for helping a child learn music. The audio isn't good, the fidelity is bad. If you talk about having little clackers and a xylophone and drum and a kitty. A little kit. Kids can be exposed to those as early as possible and they can be part of it.

I will just say they should accompany voice. Since my focus today was on the beginning level of working at home with young children, I wanted to make sure everything we did was with voice but if kids are interested in instruments and you have them out, absolutely. Because that is another auditory experience for them.

>> MARGE EDWARDS: Perfect. I see we have another question here in the chat. Is there a way to slow recordings of music down since so many songs for kids are sung so fast? This is from Kathryn.

>> AMY MCCONKEY ROBBINS: Okay. Somewhere in the recesses of my brain I am remembering something about this. That Chris has told me. One thing I can do is investigate this with Chris Barton and I can post it in the learning community, Marge, if you think that would be helpful.

>> MARGE EDWARDS: Sure, yeah. That would be. Yeah.

>> AMY MCCONKEY ROBBINS: I do know that there are specific types of instruments and recordings that are more audible. Simple voice with one instrument is the most understandable for children. So voice plus a guitar. Because music is much more complex than spoken language. If you combine the voice the guitar and voice, there are layers of sound that children have to sort out.

So we start simple. If you listen to Chris's recordings on her YouTube channel, she's using just voice or one simple instrument. Sometimes a banjo. She always introduces what the instrument is. Here's my

banjo. (Vocalizing) listen to how a banjo sounds. So when they do hear a recording or see a video, they say oh, yeah, that's the banjo sound. We're demystifying music for them.

>> MARGE EDWARDS: Perfect. I love that. Again, nothing replaces live voice, listening to mom or dad or anyone. Live voice is wonderful for our little ones.

I have another one here from Beverly. I do continually sing nursery rhymes to my granddaughter. Is it okay to play music for her? She calms down with instrumental music and gets excited with my favorite, Elvis and several oldies.

>> AMY MCCONKEY ROBBINS: Absolutely. Play music in your home. We have a very musical home here. We have a lot of instruments, we play instruments. There is music going all the time. That is fine. Background music, I will tell you, that where we don't point it out and children can't delay it, will probably not be very salient. In other words, the family is at the dinner table and you have background music, honestly, that is more of a hindrance. It clogs up the auditory field. But if you and your granddaughter are alone, maybe in her room and you turn on music, and you are SPROCKing her and let that instrumental music play, and you're patting and rocking, in tune to it. That is absolutely beautiful. If you are singing Elvis, you know, go big! Go big with Elvis! Ain't nothing but a hound dog! Make it fun.

We talked about the emotion in music. If you love Elvis, get two little sticks, pretend to play the guitar and have your granddaughter do it. Those are the joyful moments between caregiver and child. It is absolutely great to do that.

>> MARGE EDWARDS: Thank you so much, Amy. I see this is absolutely wonderful. I see we're at the top of the hour just to let everybody know, we will have a recording available hopefully within tomorrow or within the next couple days on our website. You will be able to have access to the recording as well as the handouts and we will have some links to some of the resources that Amy mentioned during her presentation.

Thank you everybody for joining us today. This has been a great experience. Thanks for all your participation in the chat. It's been wonderful. Thank you.