

Curriculum Development to Improve Self-Expression in Children

Posted on September 17, 2018

Self-Expression and the Goals of Childhood Curriculum

Self-expression is understood to be vital for Childhood development. For a child to be able to express what he or she requires freely, it gives them a sense of safety and freedom. It is essential for teachers in an educational setting to develop self-expressive techniques and a curriculum that is both appropriate and interesting for young children. It will help provide a variety of different opportunities for self-expression for them, as children respond differently to different methods. An environment that promotes an atmosphere of creativity and self-expression carries numerous benefits, and parents and teachers are responsible for facilitating such an environment for them where their daily routines involve engaging in a wide variety of creative processes, which promote cognitive and physical development.

To improve self-expression in children, they should be given the opportunity to engage in musical activities and receive training from qualified and motivated teachers. These programs not only enhance self-expression in students but have also been known to increase attendance, increase participation in school events, and enable the contribution of pupils who are not performing well in the overall curriculum learning. The program is tailored to allow students to play strings, brass, woodwind, keyboard, electric guitar, electric bass guitar, and percussion in an orchestra setting. Each orchestra is made up of a string, wind, and rhythm section, in which gaining confidence in performance is an essential part of musical learning. (DECD SA, n.d.)

The Suzuki method for music education is a globally recognized curriculum and training philosophy that will be used as part of the project. The method includes what is termed Tonalization. This method teaches a student to generate and identify harmonious ringing tone quality on their preferred instrument. It also involves using recordings that are common to all musical instruments to help students practice and recognize notes, terminologies, rhythm, subtleties, and harmony by ear. The sizes of the instruments are customized to give the children the ability to use them. Music festivals are arranged to encourage the students to perform what they learned to an audience. A global student body is established for learners of each instrument that allows them to participate in group activities with fellow players and fosters a global musical community to provide them with more motivation. Various tuned and untuned percussion instruments are given to the students to practice finger play on songs and nursery rhymes. Musical activities are combined with storytelling and other activities to assist in the progression of different skills. Social-emotional development, pitch, size,

rhythm, motor coordination, listening, observation, sequencing, memory, vocabulary, and literacy skills. (Suzuki Talent Education Association of Australia (Vic) Inc, 2005)

Music Education, Cognitive Development, and School Readiness

Music training in childhood not only improves self-expression but also helps brain development and enhances reading skills and language improvement. Skills necessary for school readiness such as social, motor, emotional, intellectual, language, and literacy. The mind and the body work together and help children understand different sounds and grasp the meanings of words (Brighthorizons, n.d.). By communicating together through their instruments using their voices and bodies, children absorb and express ideas more confidently, develop empathy for others, and have improved self-image. It also helps children become self-aware and develop imagination and greater creativity (Marsh, 2015).

Music's emotional qualities and unique characteristics have remained a useful tool in developing powerful self-expressiveness; vocal and non-vocal. The different rudiments of music, like its tune, pitch, tempo, or harmony, all function as communicative means of engagement. For children with speech impairment, this can be a powerful type of non-verbal communication for them (Jones, 2012).

Music training as part of the curriculum helps children in school develop four essential components of their selves. Cognition functions that music training can improve include physical hand-eye coordination, eye-ear sharpness, arithmetic sequencing, improvisation and creative processes. Music can recreate an experience using language and instruments; its study, therefore, engages almost all part of the intellect.

Collaboration, Leadership, and Social Learning Through Music

Music classes can also help build social and leadership abilities in children. Music involves learning to utilize social skills to make group decisions. Students playing different instruments learn to cooperate, collaborate, and communicate their opinions through their instruments. Learning to sing in choir allows them to feel connected and involved in a positive way. It also helps children develop a greater acceptance of others when learning to work together with them.

Students that study and play music together also develop self-esteem and build better confidence. Public performances after practicing together help them tremendously in developing composure and self-confidence, because it helps them overcome barriers, performance anxiety and nerves. This also stimulates collegiality, tolerance and a sense of humility in them.

In their emotional selves, engaging themselves in school music projects helps children express that

they are not able to communicate using words or language. Children find an emotional balance within. Learning to play through improvisation can help them build imagination and learn to cope with testing circumstances. Children playing together with their parents allows them a kind of self-expression that can forge deeper bonds between their two generations, whereas energetic songs help boost their school spirit for sporting events and create a sense of more social engagement in them (AATS, n.d.).

Creative Teaching and the Practical Design of Music Lessons

The teachers of the music curriculum should find ways to make the study more creative. Music is a form of art that is best learned more by practice than reading or writing. Therefore, the lessons should be more active and full of energy. For younger children, music theory can be taught through fun physical games that incorporate elements of music theory to make them easy to learn. Something as simple as singing and clapping out rhythms can get the class engaged without any specialized equipment.

Lessons should be broken down into shorter activities of 5 to 10 minutes instead of a single more extended task. Activities should be mixed up in the class, and playing and singing can be combined with writing lyrics or learning about musicians. The atmosphere in the course can be kept engaging by matching the task requirements with their age groups or by teaching them through their preferred songs and genres. Classical or baroque genres can be combined with the student's favorite genres to make things interesting to them while teaching elements of traditional music. Chord progressions, melodic patterns, and rhythm lessons could be taught using collaboration between students. School-based education should incorporate these elements as collaborative education can help acquire skills such as problem-solving, cognition, and decision-making in a team context. These skills, if developed through music training in Childhood, can create good employability skills in Children for the future, and those can be learned and developed easily from one's beginning in early childhood. Playing in an orchestra or band together should be encouraged as children will learn to collaborate with one another as they learn to play.

Music by itself is a very social activity, whether played or listened to. Therefore, Children learning together as part of their curriculum can lead to higher benefits than studying alone. This also helps Children retain their lessons more, and the skills they develop can mature when they enter their adult lives, even if they do not take music as a career later on. (SOLFEG, 2017)

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