CultureCase

# Music can enhance children’s transition to school



This research was conducted by **Shulamit Ritblatt, Sascha Longstreth, Audrey Hokoda, Bobbi-Nicole Cannon** and **Joanna Weston** at **San Diego State University, USA.**

## Summary

In the United States the notion that by school age 'all children will be ready to learn' is a national education goal. In reality this is often not the case. This study examined the effects of a school-readiness music programme on pre-school children’s transition to kindergarten. The results indicated that the programme improved skills such as social cooperation, social interaction and social independence – all of which are deemed important in relation to a child’s successful shift to formal education.

## A music-based curriculum can help foster social skills in school-age children

122 children were recruited to participate in the study, alongside their parents and teachers. Half of the children took part in the music programme, while the others were assigned to a control group. The programme taught children 20 songs that were about socio-emotional skills, daily routines, self-esteem and self-care. The songs were practiced over a period of four to eight months. After this time, teachers reported that the programme had reinforced the social and self-regulation skills needed for success in school.

## Encouraging music helps one’s ability to function and learn

While the researchers acknowledge the study’s limitations, namely its sample size and demographic (the children in the study were the children of university

students or professors), they nonetheless highlight the potential of such music programmes to be useful tools for educators. They recommend that future iterations of the programme could be beneficial to a wider variety of pre-schools as well as be deployed in the home environment of young children.

This summary is by **Alexandra Talbott, King's College London**

## Keywords

**music** **experiment** **USA** **education** **children**

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