Music is powerful; it can soothe us and can even put our children right to sleep. There are a variety of things that music can do for us, but what are some specific benefits to our little ones?

Music is entertaining to children, and more importantly, it helps their brain cells make connections needed for all kinds of intelligence (language, math, etc). Toddlers can benefit from music in many ways:

- Helps develop social and emotional skills, which is vital to have before they start school.
- Helps children work on their gross and fine motor skills through dancing and movement.
- Strengthens relationships between a parent and a child through shared experiences.
- Making actions to the song can be vital to cognitive and language development.
- Encourages dramatic play and helps in the understanding of basic concepts.
- Increases vocabulary; children can sing longer phrases of songs.
- Songs can introduce children to different languages.

How many of us can sing the Dora the Explorer song ‘We did it’ without giving it a second thought? Many of us I’m sure. The last phrase in that song is “Lo hicimos, we did it.” That simple song we have all had stuck in our heads at one time or another is teaching a phrase in another language.

Now that we have an understanding of how music can benefit our children, how can we incorporate it into our busy lives? The simplest way is to have music playing in the background during various routines, such as cooking dinner or running errands. Have songs to go with your child’s different routines. It makes a daily chore more fun for your child. Bring musical instruments into your house; or if that is not an option, give your child a pot and a spoon and I’m sure they will be making music in no time. Children enjoy the simple songs, like: Itsy Bitsy Spider, Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star, Wheels on the Bus, and Old McDonald.

Music has many benefits for our children and the best part is that music is portable; it can be anywhere our children are. Music is enjoyable. Have fun with it and your child!
Children are NOT Adults, But They are Humans
by Matthew Hyde, Parent Involvement Specialist

If you have ever caught yourself feeling, or worse, saying things like “Why in the world are you acting like this?”, it may be time to evaluate your ability to empathize with a child. To empathize with a child means simply to acknowledge and try to understand what they are feeling. Being able to empathize with your child could be one of the most liberating abilities you ever acquire as a parent but it may also be the most difficult to obtain.

Brian Regan, a popular comedian, addresses this issue in his act entitled “Standing Up.” He says “We saw [a] family. They had...a five-year-old boy holding a helium balloon, and he accidentally let go of his balloon. The boy started crying, and his parents were like, ‘Why are you crying? It’s a balloon. We’ll get you another one.’” He continues, “Sometimes I don’t think adults try hard enough to understand what kids are going through.”

Mr. Regan’s example brings out the crux of the matter: kids are humans, just like adults. They feel the same emotions that adults feel. The difference is that, first, their emotions may be brought on by things that seem insignificant to adults; and second, they have not yet learned the coping mechanisms to help them work through the intense feelings they are feeling.

The real tragedy is that every time we say “Stop crying!” to a child, we are teaching them how to manage their emotions, but in a very unhealthy way. Do we really want them to grow up with the idea that emotions are not to be expressed? You can try instead something like “I see you’re very sad. Now try to calm down so you can tell me what’s making you upset.”

Children are humans just like us. They make mistakes, just as you will as you try to implement these principles. Just remember, your children came from you. They came equipped with the same type of brain and the same types of chemicals that run through your body. They feel the same things you do. They just need to be trained over time to deal with emotions like a mature adult. It can take what seems like a lifetime to teach, but it’s worth it, because one day they will be an adult with a son from Mars, but they will have learned to treat him like a human anyway.

What to Do With “I’m Bored” Kids This Summer

We are fortunate to have oodles of fun parks in Utah County. Here are some of our favorites:

- Bicentennial Park • 1400 S 1600 E • Provo
- Paul Ream Wilderness Park • 1600 W 500 N • Provo
- Nielsen’s Grove Park • 2000 Sandhill Rd • Orem
- Bonneville Park • 1450 N 800 W • Orem
- Windsor Park • 1310 N 200 W • Orem
- Scera Park • 600 S State Street • Orem
- Discovery Park • 1640 N 100 E • Pleasant Grove
- Manilla Creek Park • 900 W 3250 N • Pleasant Grove
- Robinson Park • 100 E Main • American Fork
- Rotary Park • 400 S 200 E • American Fork
- Heritage Park • 4425 W Cedar Hills Dr • Cedar Hills
- Highland Glen Park • 4800 W Knight Ave • Highland
- Willow Park • 9800 W 8570 N • Lehi
- Wines Park • 500 N Center • Lehi
- Timpanogos Park • 9508 N Timpanogos Cove • Cedar Hills
- Neptune Park • 400 N 452 W • Saratoga Springs
- SPLASH PADS
  - Nolan Park • 7862 Tinamous Rd • Eagle Mountain
  - Alpine Splash Pad • 100 S 600 E • Alpine
  - Town Center Splash Pad • 5400 W Civic Center Dr • Highland
  - North Park Splash Pad • 1185 N 400 E • Spanish Fork

Are you concerned about your child’s development?

Your child may be eligible for Early Intervention Services.

Kids On The Move provides FREE developmental evaluations for children who are under age three and reside in Alpine School District. Most early intervention services are provided at little or no cost.
Dealing with Challenging Behaviors
by Christina Judd, Developmental Specialist

There are a couple exceptions to the two warnings rule: if the child is hurting themselves, others, or damaging property they are given no warnings. Someone steps in and removes them from that situation immediately using simple phrases such as, “no hit” and blocking their hand, or “no throw,” and blocking them from throwing the object. Those phrases should be used firmly. That does not mean one must shout.

When a tantrum begins, a safe room in the house may be a place they can be left alone and their behavior ignored until they calm down. Responding by leaving them in a safe place and walking away is okay. They are learning at a young age that sometimes the answer is ‘no’ and life carries on. Even at their young age they are learning to take responsibility for their actions. Once they are calmed they should receive positive attention. Calming your expectation by saying, “When you stop crying and I will [listen, hold you, get your milk],” or just quietly walking away is a great way to put the responsibility on them.

Another good rule to follow is, “First _____, then ____.” (“First shoes, then outside.”) Keeping it simple helps children who have a receptive language delay. When tantrums increase many times language decreases (and during a tantrum is not an appropriate time to expect a toddler to use language). Continually talking or ‘lecturing’ many times feeds the tantrum; sometimes children would rather receive negative attention than none at all. You may need to keep them sitting at your side blocking any inappropriate behavior and using firm, short phrases if necessary. Wait for the child to calm and then redirect them.

Above all, do not give in during the middle of the tantrum. Again, you are setting an expectation and your child will learn. Kids on the Move holds a Positive Discipline class multiple times throughout the year. Feel free to call and sign up if interested, Visit KOTM.org for more information.

Evaluating Speech Delays

When Carter Brown was 20 months old, he could stack cups into towers, do simple puzzles, and listen intensely to stories. But he didn’t talk, and that worried his mom since she noticed other children his age already could.

Kids who are 2-years old who say fewer than 50 words are considered “late talkers.” About 10 percent of toddlers are, and about half catch up on their own. These children are typically:

- **Boys**—They’re three times more likely to be late talkers than girls.
- **Premies**—They may need time to catch up.
- **Twins**—Some experts think they communicate so well with each other without words that they catch on to speaking later.
- **Toddlers with talkative older siblings**—They might find that they don’t need to talk.

Speak directly to these kids! Don’t use questions to encourage them to speak. Saying words is a better way to teach language. It can be difficult to know if your child is late to talk for one of these reasons or because of a hearing or cognitive problem. You can have him evaluated, especially if any of these issues apply:

- Your family has a history of speech problems
- Your child doesn’t interact well
- She hasn’t said a single word by 18 months
- He doesn’t seem to understand you
- She doesn’t babble or, if he does, doesn’t use consonant sounds
- He’s had persistent ear infections Kids On The Move provides free early-intervention evaluations. Check out kotm.org for more information.

How Can I Make a Difference? By Scott Snow, Development Director

Utah is one of the most generous states in the nation when it comes to donating time and money. You probably already serve and make charitable donations but you might ask yourself, what’s the BEST way I can help and truly “make a difference?” Use your talents, skills and interests – and donate to a cause that means something to you and your family.

Kids On The Move needs your help and we appreciate anything you can do to help us further our mission of empowering families. Each month, we have volunteers assisting with Child Care while parents are in a class; completing an Eagle Scout project at our facility; helping with yard work; or making bibs or therapy items to help young children grow and develop.

You can serve too—whether it be with building maintenance, making a video, or holding a fundraiser—just find a way to use your skills and interests. You could hold a fundraiser event like a Garage Sale. You could participate in a fundraiser event like the annual Corporate Sports Challenge or include KOTM in your Will or insurance policy.

For more ideas on ways to give to Kids On The Move, see the GET INVOLVED page at www.kotm.org or give us a call. We appreciate your help—it will make a difference at Kids On The Move!
Eat Out! Even With an Autistic Child

Nearly everyone loves to be treated to a restaurant meal once in awhile. But when you’re the parent (or grandparent) of an autistic child, dining out can be more hassle than it’s worth -- for you, your child, and the people at the restaurant. Avoid it no longer!

Autistic kids -- like almost all the kids on this planet -- only have so much patience. Sitting and waiting for a table gets boring and frustrating. Your child may want to explore or simply leave -- and will loudly protest being made to sit down until your table is ready. Here are some things you can do:

Avoid restaurants with anything more than a 5-10 minute wait for a table. A good way to manage this feat is to visit restaurants at an off-peak time (such as 4-5 on a weekday afternoon) so you beat the rush.

Since fewer and fewer restaurants are accepting reservations nowadays, find out if the place at least has a corner so you only have two walls behind you and two in front. Try to sit in a corner so you only have two walls

Order any of your child’s desired refills and second helpings as soon as you realize the need -- don’t wait until the cup is empty or the plate is clean. (Sometimes you might want to order two of something in the first place so you can keep the process moving along.)

Stay at your child’s side every moment -- and be sure not to get so caught up in the amazing nachos or a great conversation that you forget to pay attention to what he or she is doing. Autistic kids may not think twice about leaning over and swiping a few fries from the guy at the next table, or staring down the teenager in a nearby booth.

Once the food is gone, your child will likely want to go home, go to the car -- go anywhere else. So make yourself available to go as soon as you must... just in case. To start, request the check and have the restaurant run your card when the server brings you your main course. (Either at that point or when the meal’s actually done, you can leave the cash or sign the credit card receipt. Some people prefer to wait until the last moment before signing and calculating the tip, to ensure that service is good throughout the meal.)

When all else fails...

Sometimes there’s simply nothing that will work to calm an autistic child -- your kid is D-O-N-E. Always be prepared to take your meal to go. In this case, you might want to employ the two-part exit strategy: One parent/guardian takes your child or children outside or to the car, while a second pats the two-part exit strategy: One parent/guardian takes your child or children outside or to the car, while a second pats the check or waits for take out boxes.

Know when to hold ‘em, know when to walk away

Although it certainly is important for your child to learn how to behave in real-world situations out in public, don’t force the issue too much. You deserve to enjoy dining out, and the last thing you want to do is make the experience miserable every time. If you work at it -- but don’t stress out about it -- in time, everything will all come together.

Keep things moving. When your server comes to take your drink orders, have your full meal order ready, too. If you’re just not quite that ready, do at least mention to the person waiting on your table that you’re in a hurry (to speed up service) or explain that your child has autism, and quicker service will help keep the dining experience quieter and less problematic.

Parents often fail to evaluate their own sources of strength, coping skills, or emotional attitudes. You may be so busy meeting the needs of your child that you don’t allow yourself time to relax, cry, or simply think. You may wait until you are so exhausted or stressed out that you can barely carry on before you consider your own needs. Reaching this point is bad for you and for your family.

You may feel that your child needs you right now, more than ever.

Ask for help. Asking for help can be very difficult, especially at first. Don’t hesitate to use whatever support is available to you. People around you may want to help, but may not know how. Is there someone who can take your other kids somewhere for an afternoon? Or cook dinner for your family one night so that you can spend the time learning? Can they pick a few things up for you at the store or do a load of laundry? Can they let other people know you are going through a difficult time and could use a hand?

Talk to someone. Everyone needs someone to talk to. Let someone know what you are going through and how you feel. Someone who just listens can be a great source of strength.

Consider joining a support group. It may be helpful to listen or talk to people who have been or are going through a similar experience. Support groups can be great sources for information about what services are available in your area and who provides them.

Try to take a break. If you can, allow yourself to take some time away, even if it is only a few minutes to take a walk.

Try to get some rest. If you are getting regular sleep, you will be better prepared to make good decisions, be more patient with your child and deal with the stress in your life.

Consider keeping a journal. Studies have shown that writing that describes traumatic events and our deepest thoughts and feelings about them is linked with improved immune function, as well as improved emotional and physical health. Some parents have found journaling a helpful tool for keeping track of their children’s progress.

Taking Care of the Caregiver

Changing the course of your child’s life with a developmental delay can be a very rewarding experience. You are making an enormous difference in his or her life. To make it happen, you need to take care of yourself.

“Remember that if you want to take the best possible care of your child, you must first take the best possible care of yourself.”

Parents often fail to evaluate their own sources of strength, coping skills, or emotional attitudes. You may be so busy meeting the needs of your child that you don’t allow yourself time to relax, cry, or simply think. You may wait until you are so exhausted or stressed out that you can barely carry on before you consider your own needs. Reaching this point is bad for you and for your family.

You may feel that your child needs you right now, more than ever.

Your “to do” list may be what is driving you forward right now. Or, you may feel completely overwhelmed and not know where to start. There is no single way to cope. Each family is unique and deals with stressful situations differently. Getting your child started in treatment will help you feel better. Here are some tips from parents who have experienced what you are going through:

Get going. There are many details you will be managing in an intensive treatment program, especially if it is based in your home. If you know your child is engaged in meaningful activities, you will be more able to focus on moving forward.

It may also free up some of your time so you can educate yourself, advocate for your child, and take care of yourself so that you can keep going.